

Meeting Minutes

For the regular meeting of the Alger Conservation District Board

Tuesday, June 10th, 2025, 5:00 pm, located at the MSU Research and Extension Center, Chatham

Call to order: On the above date, Vice Chairperson Rowan Bunce called the ACD's regular meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Board members present: Hans Eriksen, Hilary Ludecke, John Highlen, Rowan Bunce.

Board members absent: James DeDecker

Associate board members present: None

Associate board members absent: Barb Isom, Charlie Todd

Staff present: Alex Kolton, Eryn Grupido, Misa Cady, Sara Kelso

Staff absent: Amy Frye, Holly Wendrick-Moss, Kyler Hanson, Landen Tetil, Elise Desjarlais, Rachel Guth

Guests: Marty Ludecke

Public comment: None.

Correspondence: Passed around; Livestock Weekly is in.

Approve agenda:

Motion by Bunce, seconded by Ludecke to approve the agenda with the addition of one new item, "f. Board Changes". All in favor; motion carried.

Approve minutes of May 13th, 2025, regular meeting:

Motion by Bunce, seconded by Ludecke to approve previous minutes with a correction to Marty's name (currently says Mark). All in favor; motion carried.

Board and Staff Reports: review written reports

Written reports were reviewed by the board and highlighted by staff.

a. NRCS SC: Report Received (LATE)

Cady announced half of applications have been funded, which is atypical as of the past 7 years. CSP 2026 Renewal offers are open for 2021 contract holders. Due to the current staff shortage the focus is on active agreements. CTAI in Gladstone has offered assistance. Federal updates on the reduction in force and restructuring are forthcoming.

b. FAP FORESTER: Report Received

Kelso reported that things are going well and the residents are interested in programming; 4 site visits completed and numerous scheduled for Alger County. Ludecke shared positive feedback given from high school students present at the MARESA Job Fair.

c. PRODUCE SAFETY: Report Received

d. L2L Cisma: Report Received

e. ACD DD (AK): Report Received

f. ACD DC (EG): Report Received

g. MDARD: Report Received

h. MAEAP: Report Received

Meeting Reports: Kolton met with Andy from DNR Marketing to share more on the story of the Burt Schools DHIPI project.

Old Business:

a. Additional Insurance

The board reviewed the presented accident policy. Discussion clarified the estimated number of participants is based on our annual average but introduced further questions. Kolton will reach out for a new quote and answers to the new questions to review at the next regular meeting.

b. Board letter of support partner programs

Kolton presented a draft letter of support for our partner programs. Discussion concluded where it should be sent to and the purpose of it is to affirm support. In addition, a call to action to discuss our community anytime was recommended.

c. Grant Updates: DHIPI, Scrap Tire - Mathias Clean-up, Stream Monitoring

Kolton updated the current status of both DHIPI projects and announced Scrap Tire was awarded. This will allow us to perform the collections this year; schedule TBD. Mathias Township will be hosting a household collection at the same time; Kolton proposed co-sponsoring an additional dumpster for this clean-up as the last one was filled within hours of opening. Discussion included how to market that and details related to organizing it.

Motion by Bunce, seconded by Ludecke, to co-sponsor up to \$1000 for an additional third dumpster to match the township's two current dumpsters. All in favor; motion carried.

Grupido updated the status of Stream Monitoring as complete and awaiting the results for the water samples sent for laboratory testing; announced CBCW first Outreach event will be this weekend and a Letter of Inquiry was approved to submit a full proposal to the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust for enhancements to the Chatham Community Garden.

d. Legal Advisor Update

Kolton updated that Diane is happy to be invited to assist and will provide a contract for review soon. Revisit the next meeting.

e. DC Reimbursement, Cell Phone

Kolton reported that the cell phone statement for the DC contract reimbursement is billed annually and requested approval to reimburse the monthly allowance as a single check for the remaining FY 25 months of eligible reimbursements versus monthly reimbursements.

Motion by Bunce, seconded by Ludecke, to approve a single reimbursement. All in favor; motion carried.

New Business:

a. New Partnership Opportunity

District Staff presented a letter for Dr. Seuss Enterprises licensing team to engage in collaboration with educational programming, outreach, and marketing. The board agreed and will sign once a letterhead copy is able to be printed.

b. MI Media Coverage

The board discussed the potential impacts of the MLive article about conservation districts across the state.

c. Preliminary budget review FY26

Kolton explained the new layout of the budget and pointed out that it includes an additional line item for a third hire. Discussion presented questions about the T-shirt Contest, staff will present more on this at a later date.

d. Website Migration - Shopify

Kolton reported that we have outgrown our current website and are in need of a new platform. Migration will take 12 - 18 months and be partially covered and included as part of the Tech Migration allowed for FY25.

e. Recommendation to hire a full-time 3rd person

Kolton proposed immediate release of the presented job announcement for a new hire and outlined the expectations and goals for the position; aiming for a mid-August start date.

Motion by Ludecke, seconded by Eriksen to approve posting the announcement and condensed ads. All in favor; motion carried.

f. Board Changes

Board Chairperson John Highlen announced that due to shifting demands on his time he is preparing to step down from the board but will remain as long as needed for a smooth transition. Associate Board Member Todd has agreed to join as an interim member until the next election. Vice Chair Bunce has agreed to step in as interim Chair. Kolton will assist Todd with completing the Oath of Office and MDARD certification by the next regular board meeting. Discussion concluded that a letter from the board will be required to change signatories on the bank accounts. Changes will be revisited at the next regular board meeting.

Accept Treasury Report; pay bills

Motion by Eriksen, seconded by Ludecke, to pay bills as presented. All in favor; motion carried.

Public comment

Ludecke thanked Highlen for his years of service.

Adjourn

Motion by Bunce, seconded by Eriksen, to adjourn at 6:23 pm. All in favor; motion carried.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Tuesday, July 8th, 2025, 5:00 pm

Grupido has transcribed these minutes.

Submitted by James Dedecker | Minutes are subject to approval until signed below

APPROVED: _____



DATE: _____

7/8/25

John Highlen, Chairman

OR

Rowan Bunce, Vice President