

Meeting Minutes
For the regular meeting of the Alger Conservation District Board
Tuesday, October 14th, 2025, 5:00 pm, located at MSU Research and Extension Center, Chatham

Call to order: 5:01pm

Board members present: Rowan Bunce, Hilary Ludecke, Charles Todd

Associate board members present: Barbra Isom

Board members absent: Hans Eriksen, James DeDecker

Staff present: Alex Kolton

Staff absent: Eryn Grupido, Helena Moleski, Misa Cady, Sara Kelso, Elise Dejarlais, Michael Paling, Landen Tetil, Holly Wendrick-Moss

Guests: None

Public comment: None

Correspondence: Kolton passed the correspondence.

Approve agenda: Motion by Todd, seconded by Ludecke, to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor; motion carried.

Approve minutes of September 9th, 2025, regular meeting: Motion by Todd, seconded by Ludecke, to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor; motion carried.

Board and Staff Reports: review written reports

NRCS SC: Not Received (furloughed)

FAP FORESTER: Received

L2L CISMA: Received

ACD DD (AK): Received

ACD DC (EG): Received

ACD JR DC (HM): Received

MDARD: Received

MAEAP: Received

PRODUCE SAFETY: Not Received

Meeting Reports: Kolton reported that he, Bunce, and Ludecke attended the MDARD director training and the Region 1 and 2 meetings. Kolton also participated in the Trenary Lions' meeting in September to present the MI Health Endowment subaward for fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

Old Business:

a. **2026 CNA Overview - Tabled to next regular meeting**

b. **Safe Working Conditions Policy Revision** - updated per board feedback, district lawyer reviewed and recommended that section 6.10 be deemed redundant and to be removed. Minor edits to the verbiage were recommended for clarity and staff safety.

Motion by Ludecke, seconded by Todd, to approve policy with revisions. All in favor; motion carried.

The Wilderness First Responder Course was identified; the cost per staff member is \$1000.

Motion by Todd, seconded by Ludecke, to approve \$3000 for Wilderness First Responder course. All in favor; motion carried.

c. **Soil Testing Kit Subsidy for Alger County Residents** - Kolton recommended using A&L Labs to subsidize soil testing for Alger County residents under the appropriated budget "community promotion" in the amount of \$300.00. Residents will register at the office by providing proof of residency. The district will then offer a soil extraction tool and submit the sample for analysis.

Motion by Todd, seconded by Ludecke, to approve \$300 from the budget "community promotion" toward subsidized resident soil testing. All in favor; motion carried.

- d. **T-shirt Contest Overview** - Kolton presented the contest parameters and stated that the contest will be hosted within the schools that are participating in the Michigan Health Endowment grant. The contest is designed to raise awareness of the project, increase engagement, and ultimately help fund conservation-related programs within the schools. Designs will be featured on shirts for sale and available during the annual tree sale.

New Business:

- a. **Review board drive - Tabled to next regular meeting**
- b. **D&O Liability Insurance** - Kolton presented the recommended policies from our insurance agent. Director and officer liability insurance is recommended to provide litigation protection for the District's directors and officers. Several other subcategory policies were also recommended, such as terrorism insurance.
- c. **Electronic signatures after approved motions for Board Directors - Tabled to next regular meeting**
- d. **Staff Organization and Succession Planning** - Kolton presented a plan for staff organization and succession planning. Kolton proposed shifting Grupido from Senior Coordinator to District Manager and initiating training for her in administrative duties. Kolton also requested that the probationary period be removed from Moleski's hiring requirements, as Moleski has already served with the District. Kolton recommended including additional soft benefits in the compensation models to assist with long-term staff retention. The board requested that Kolton conduct additional staff conversations, draft necessary work agreements, and speak with staff, returning with further information and feedback at the next meeting. Bunce recommended a plan for director succession planning and would like to discuss the topics with Eryn and Heleni.
- e. **Staff liaison** - Kolton recommended a permanent subcommittee or an individual be available to staff for any staff issues that could not be resolved or addressed by Kolton. Bruce suggested that the board chair would be the best fit for permanent placement on this subcommittee. Ludecke recommended a member of the opposite sex also sit on the board at all times, volunteering herself, Ludecke, as second on the committee. Motion by Ludecke, seconded by Todd, to create a staff liaison sub-committee of the board chair and another director of the opposite sex. All in favor; motion carried.
- f. **Holiday Hours** - Kolton reported that the office will be closed due to holiday hours on December 24, 25, 26, and December 31, as well as January 1 & 2, 2026. Kolton recommended closing the office through the holidays to accommodate staff. The District office is recommended to be closed on December 22nd and reopen on Monday, January 5th. Motion by Ludecke, seconded by Todd, to close the district office from December 22nd and return to the office on Monday, January 5th. All in favor; motion carried.
- g. **MACD Annual Conference** - Kolton reported that the MACD annual meeting will be held on December 8–10, 2025, at Shanty Creek Resort, Bellaire, Michigan. Should any director wish to attend, RSVP to Kolton by October 31 so reservations can be made.

Accept the Treasury Report; pay bills. Kolton reported that several reimbursements are still pending; however, to date, the district has met its end-of-year budget targets. Agripalooza donations totaled \$ 1,850 in 2025. \$979.96 was fully expensed in FY25, effectively rolling over \$870.31. Kolton stated that these funds were solicited for Agripalooza use and should be set aside in the FY26 Agripalooza budget. Motion by Todd, seconded by Ludecke, to create a FY26 Agripalooza account for \$870.3. All in favor; motion carried. Motion by Ludecke, seconded by Todd, to accept the financial statements and pay bills. All in favor; motion carried.

Public comment - Kolton reminded that the next meeting is on Monday, November 10th, due to the holiday.

Adjourn - Motion by Ludecke, seconded by Todd, to adjourn at 6:15pm. All in favor, motion carried.
NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Monday, November 10th at 5:00 pm

Submitted by Alex Kolton | Minutes are subject to approval until signed below

APPROVED:  Rowan Bunce DATE: 11/10/25

Rowan Bunce, Chairperson OR Hilary Ludecke, Chairperson