



St, Joseph County Conservation District  
693 E. Main Street  
Sept 18, 2024  
Centreville, MI 49032  
(269)467-6336 x5

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September 18, 2024  
Board Minutes

3:02 pm Call to order by Howard Avildsen

**Directors Present:**

Howard Avildsen, Board chair  
Chad Clark, Treasurer  
Carol Higgins  
Dan Blasius  
Nelson Evers, associate board member

**Board members absent**

Todd Hironimus, vice chair

**Staff Present:**

Shaun Grace, Harlie Miller, and Charles Ronk

**Introductions/Visitors:** None

**Budget Hearing:** Avildsen opened the discussion at 3:08pm. After discussing the budget and the new form for FY25 Higgins made a motion to accept the FY25 Proposed budget Blasius second and the Budget hearing closed at 3:38pm

**Additions or Deletions to agenda:** Two additions to the agenda. Higgins motioned to approve the agenda. Clark Second. Motion passed

**Public Comment:** None

**Approval of August board meeting minutes.** Higgins motioned to accept the August board minutes Clark second. Motion passed. There was one minor change to the Region 8 meeting place. Grace changed the information from Dr. Lawless park to Camp Friedenswald.

**Treasurer Report:**

Higgins motioned to place on file the August treasurer reports on file. Clark second. Motion passed. Grace explained the new report that was added to the financials. This will continue FY25.

## Correspondence Reports:

**Administrator:** spoken and written. Grace explained that Mike Censke and she have been writing a Technical Assistant grant through NACD. This grant would support the NRCS in Berrien, Cass and St. Joseph counties.

**MAEAP:** written. Miller discussed her report. Exciting things happening around the county and she has been doing a number of site visits.

**NRCS:** Charles spoke about his contracts and payments he is making for the producers that completed their contracts this past year. He explained more about the Technical grant and that he felt that 1.8 Million dollars has been brought to the county through the federal programs.

**CISMA:** S. Grace discussed his workload and the visits with the DDA, Centreville Superintendent, and Nottawa Gas, Urban Forest Grant will cover this grant.

**MDARD:** written.

**CTAI:** written.

**Board:** Blasius asked about the Dam Removal in Constantine and will attend the FoSTJ meeting later this month at the Elkhart Environmental Center. Blasius also inquired about having an inter in the office. Grace will reach out to the MSU/GO professors to see if we can make that happen.

## Old Business:

- **Conflict of interest:**
- **Audit:** Paperwork signed and will be sent October by the board.
- **Insurance:** Stay \$450 per month
- **Board Elements:** Sent to the Jack Knorek.
- **Handbook Changes:** Grace discussed the cost of the NRCS admin hours given to the staff. She recommended that only the full time or CTAI type grant employees receive this benefit. No action was taken. The board will discuss next month.
- **Fair:** Several staff and 3 board members have visited the booth.
- **Michigan Class:** Jeff Anderson presented the information about the financial capabilities of the program. All board members present had many questions and comments. The board decided to wait until Blasius and Hironimus are present before making a final decision. This was once again tabled until next month

## New Business:

- **Wages 2025:** During the Budget hearing Higgins made a motion to accept the budget as presented. This included wage increases within the grant proposal and grant acceptance. However, the MAEAP and CTAI grant language has not been sent at this time. Higgins motioned to give the CTAI position a \$0.50 increase provided the employee meets with the Administrator and NRCS DC to discuss tardiness, after 30 days of satisfactory work, the raise will be given. Blasius second. Motion passed. MAEAP and Administrator wages were not discussed.
- **Grants and Mi Class bullet points were tabled until next month.**

**PA116: NONE**

**Adjournment:** Higgins motioned to adjourn at 6:01pm pm Clark second. Motion passed.

**Next Meeting:** , 2024, at 3pm at the St. Joseph County Conservation District Offices.

**Board Chair Signature:** *Howard Ovilson*

**Date** *Oct. 16, 2024*