



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

Board Meeting Minutes for July 15, 2026

6:00 pm Call to Order by Board Vice Chair Dan Blasius

Directors Present:

Chad Clark, Board Chair
Dan Blasius, Vice Chair
Todd Hironimus
Carol Higgins, Member

Director Absent

Mike Sherman, Member

Associate Board Members:

None

Staff Present:

Carolyn Grace
Ashley Waltke
Mike Censke

Introductions / Visitors:

Terry Conklin
Jack Knorek

Public Comment: none

Additions / Deletions to Agenda: none. Higgins motion to accept the board agenda. Hironimus second. Motion passed

Approval of Board Minutes:

Higgins moved to approve the agenda as presented. Blasius second, motion passed.

Treasurer Report: Hironimus explained he looked over the financials and felt we are in good shape for the third quarter of FY26. Higgins motioned to accept the treasurer report to be placed on file, Hironimus second. Motion passed

Correspondence Reports:

- **Administrator:** Written. Grace briefly gave an overview of the report, nothing to note.
- **CTAP:** Mike shared his report with many accomplishments this past month and we will be achieving our CTAP goals for FY26. Also board is excited that Censke will be working with farmers to educate them about soil health, regenerative agriculture and offering free in depth soil sample collections.

- **CISMA:** Written
- **MACD:** written
- **MDARD:** Written. Knorek had one highlight to the board for his report about upcoming events.
- **NRCS:** None.
- **Board:** none

Old Business:

- **Conflict of Interest:** None
- **Interview Update:** Clark and Hironimus explained they have interviewed one candidate and the other two will be done on July 27th. An offer will be quick and hope to have an administrator in place by August 10th
- **MACD resolution:** Higgins presented her point of view about the Kent County resolution. The board had a wonderful discussion about how we could share information to the community about cover crops, regenerative agriculture, solar panels, and agrivoltaics. Many farmers want to do the right thing but cost, contracts and the time to change are all obstacles.

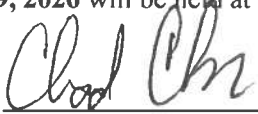
New Business:

- **Work Agreements:** Grace presented three work agreements so they know what changes will happen immediately And at the start of FY27. Blasius made a motion to accept new work agreements for Grace, S. Grace and Waltke. Hironimus second, motion passed. When CTAP or other grants come available C. Grace will be sure to get the new work agreements to the board.
- **Budget Review:** Grace presented the FY26 and FY27 budget for the Board to review for August board meeting. The new Budgeting template from MDARD is lengthy, however, the information shared on the template gives an amazing class by class look at each grant the District holds. It then is condensed into the total compressed budget to be given to the public and the county commissioners. With Terry Conklin present he can help the county to understand all that goes into our planning and board approval of the FY27 budget. Grace also explained that she has accounted for and budgeted for her "extra" time in helping the new administrator for a smooth transition without unnecessary funds being spent.
- **Region 8 Meeting:** August 10th is the Region 8 meeting and Higgins encouraged the board to attend. It is located at 402. E, Michigan Ave in Kalamazoo from 3-5pm.
- **Capital thinning of equipment:** Grace asked the board if she could retire the donated Ford Escape. It has several issues to be fixed and may be better to sell rather than keep on inventory. Higgins motioned to allow administrator to sell/scrap/dispose of Ford Escape. Hironimus second. Motion passed. Grace will complete that task before next board meeting.
- **Kim Sinclair bookkeeping proposal:** Higgins made a motion to accept Sinclair's proposal of tax preparation monthly, quarterly and annually, along with bank reconciliations, payroll and general QuickBooks help up to \$5,000.00 to be spent by September 30, 2027. Hironimus second. Motioned passed. Also, Grace mentioned she could help with day-to-day invoices and other QB information.

PA116: Fanning Farms LLC

Adjournment: Hironimus motioned to adjourn at 7:36 pm, Higgins second, Motion carried.

Next Meeting: August 19, 2026 will be held at the St. Joseph County Conservation District Offices at 6:00pm.

Board Chair Signature:  _____

Date: 8-19-26