



East Dakota Water Development District
132B Airport Drive
Brookings, SD 57006
605-688-6741 605-688-6744 Fax

MINUTES
June 18, 2026

The Board of Directors of the East Dakota Water Development District (EDWDD) held a regular meeting on June 18th, 2026, at the EDWDD office in Brookings. Vice-Chairman Hawley called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.. The following persons attended:

Directors Present

Jeff Barth*
Rick Bonander
Debra Elofson
Spencer Hawley
Troy Larson*
Julie Loveland-Swanstrom*
Sheldon Osborn

Others Present

Bill Eldridge, US Geological Survey*
Galen Hoogestraat, US Geological Survey*
Colton Medler, US Geological Survey*
Brad Preheim, Vermillion Basin Water Development District*
Kelly VanderWal, Brooking County Commission

Directors Absent

Mark Anderson
John Moes

Staff Present

Jay Gilbertson
Deb Springman

* - participated via video-conference

Administrative Items

Approval of Agenda - The Manager asked to have Item V - By Laws Proposal deferred to a later date as Director Anderson was not in attendance.

Motion by Bonander, seconded by Elofson to approve the agenda as so amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes - The Board reviewed the Minutes of the May 21st, 2026, meeting.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Bonander to approve the Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports - The Board reviewed the May 2026 financial statements.

Motion by Bonander, seconded by Elofson to approve the May 2026 financial statements. Motion carried unanimously. Vice- Chairman Hawley directed that the approved financial statements be placed in the District files.

Report of Meetings and Conferences - Director Bonander attend the Minnehaha Community Water Corporation Annual Meeting in Dell Rapids on May 22nd.

Vice-Chairman Hawley attended the Lake Poinsett Association's 'Coffee with Experts' event on June 13th at Alsville.

The Manager briefly commented on the following meetings he attended:

May 26th - Brookings. USBR WaterSMART project discussion (SDSU faculty).

May 28th - Sioux Falls. USBR WaterSMART project discussion (BSRP staff).

June 8th - Brookings. Brookings County Drainage Committee.

June 10th - Brookings. SDLA Board of Directors meeting.

June 11th - via video-conference. USBR WaterSMART project discussion (USBR staff).

June 11th - Watertown. Water topics presentation of Watertown Rotary Club.

Upcoming Meetings -

1. **June 18th - 9:00 a.m.** - Fort Sisseton State Park, Lake City. South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts Coteau Area meeting.
2. **June 24th & 25th** - Deadwood. South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) Board of Directors.
3. **June 25th** - Foss Building, Pierre. South Dakota Board of Water and Natural Resources.
4. **June 30th - 1:00 p.m.** - Webster. USACOE Waubay Chain of Lakes Existing Conditions Analysis & Preliminary Alternatives presentation.
5. **July 9th - 9:30 a.m.** - Mitchell. July James River Water Development District meeting.
6. **July 14th - 3:00 p.m. (MT)** - Rapid City. July West Dakota Water Development District meeting.
7. **July 15th - 10:00 a.m.** - Brookings. South Dakota Lakes & Streams Association meeting.
8. **July 15th - 3:00 p.m.** - Event Center, Salem. July Vermillion Basin Water Development District meeting.
9. **July 16th - 9:00 a.m.** - EDWDD Office, Brookings. July EDWDD Board of Directors meeting.
10. **July 23rd** - Elmwood GC, Sioux Falls. SDARWS Rural Water Open Golf Tournament.
11. **July 24th - 8:00 a.m.** - Sioux Falls. SDARWS Manager's Group meeting.

Payment Requests - The Manager presented four (4) payment requests that required Board action.

<u>Grant Recipient/Activity</u>	<u>Requested Amount</u>
SDSU - Environmental & Economic Assessment of SRAM (Mehan)	\$ 13,091.49
Dakota Mainstem RWS 2025 General Support	\$ 32,612.71
USGS Stream Gage Support (Dakota WSC)	\$ 9,016.68
SDWARN General Support Contribution	\$ 15,125.00
	\$ 69,845.88

He noted that the requests were in order, and consistent with conditions established at the time of the awards. He noted that the payments to Dakota Mainstem RWS for 2025 General Support and SDWARN would complete the specific obligation for these project. Director Larson noted he would abstain from the Dakota Mainstem RWS action, as he is a member of their Board of Directors.

Motion by Elofson, seconded by Bonander, to authorize payments totaling \$37,233.17 to SDSU, USGS and SDWARN as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Osborn, seconded by Elofson to authorize payment of \$32,612.71 to Dakota Mainstem RWS as requested. Motion carried unanimously, with Director Larson abstaining.

Project Assistance Requests

2026 International Legislators Forum - The Manager presented a request for support on behalf of the 2026 International Legislators Forum. He noted that each year, legislators from South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota and Manitoba meeting to share ideas and learn about regional issues of common interest. North Dakota is hosting the 2026 gathering, which will held in Fargo on September 21st - 23rd. He noted that the District had provided \$500 support to the 2025 event, held in Deadwood.

Motion by Bonander, seconded by Elofson to award District cost-share assistance in the amount of \$500 in support of the 2026 International Legislators Forum, and to authorize distribution of the funds. Motion carried unanimously.

Aquifer Distribution and Characterization Investigation

The Manager reviewed the process by which South Dakota Geological Survey (SDGS), supported by funding from the US Army Corps of Engineers, conducted a comprehensive assessment of ground water resources in eastern South Dakota. The result was a series of reports (collectively known as the Corps reports) that laid out the best available information of the physical distribution and characteristics of the various unconsolidated (Pleistocene and Recent) aquifers east of the Missouri River. Information presented in these reports, published in the 1980s, has served as the foundation on which a wide range of water management decisions have been made over the intervening years, up to and including the present time.

He noted that with very few exceptions, public water suppliers (PWSs) across the District draw their water from ground water sources, i.e., aquifers. Individual homes, farms and businesses that are not served by PWSs similarly rely on aquifers to meet the bulk of their needs. As such, a good understanding of the areal extent and physical and chemical characteristics of the aquifers in our area, and the state as a whole, is critical. The Manager has reached out to both SDGS and the United States Geological Survey about the possibility of updating elements of the Corps reports, particularly with regard to the calculated aquifer recharge rates and the areal extent of aquifers within the District.

The Manager received a response from Tim Cowman, SDGS Administrator, the prior day. The letter acknowledges that while the information in the Corps reports is in need of revision, the necessary resources to undertake such an effort are not currently available.

The Board discussed having someone from SDGS, or South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources Water Rights Program attend a future meeting to discuss the matter. The Manager indicated that with the SDGS response, he would pause any further actions on this matter.

District Updates

US Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Grant Application - The Manager reviewed a grant funding opportunity through the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). Under their WaterSMART - Enhancing Water Resources Projects program, support is available to cooperating entities for a range of activities, including watershed restoration. Dr. Sushant Mehan, South Dakota State University, has proposed pursuing this support, with funds directed toward expanding riparian buffer activities within the Big Sioux River Project and the Prairie Coteau Watershed Project, as well as further assessing the economic impacts of such efforts. Academic institutions are not eligible to be the primary sponsors of WaterSMART projects, but East Dakota can sponsor such an effort. It was the consensus of the Board that the pursuit of the WaterSMART funding would be a good idea.

2026 Big Sioux Water Festival - Deb Springman provided a summary of the 34th Annual Big Sioux Water Festival, which was held on Tuesday, May 12th, 2026, on the campus of South Dakota State University. There were 1,130 fifth grade students from 57 classrooms in attendance from 28 area schools. The festival theme this year was "Everyone Lives in a Watershed!". The water festival provided 30 hands-on activities, two assemblies (Zoo Man and the Science Museum of MN), and an Exhibit Hall with 23 stations. The festival also hosted a poetry contest as well as a trivia contest. Students wrote poems based on the festival theme and the trivia contest consisted of questions from the information contained in the WaterWise magazine about the Big Sioux River watershed. In total, 31 classrooms participated in the trivia contest and 94 students entered the poetry contest. The Teacher Resource Room provided posters, activities, and door prizes related to the festival theme, as well as an opportunity to sign-up for water related educational trunks for next school year, and flyers on professional development opportunities coming up this summer. She noted that the next Big Sioux Water Festival will be held on Tuesday, May 11, 2027.

Adjournment

There being no further District business, Vice-Chairman Hawley declared the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Jeff Barth, Secretary