



East Dakota Water Development District
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MINUTES
July 16, 2026

The Board of Directors of the East Dakota Water Development District (EDWDD) held a regular meeting on July 16th, 2026, at the EDWDD office in Brookings. Chairman Moes called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.. The following persons attended:

Directors Present

Mark Anderson
Jeff Barth
Rick Bonander
Debra Elofson
Troy Larson*
Julie Loveland-Swanstrom
John Moes
Sheldon Osborn

Others Present

Kindra Wiese, SD Association of Rural Water Systems

Staff Present

Jaelynn Dreckman
Jay Gilbertson
Deb Springman

Directors Absent

Spencer Hawley

* - participated via video-conference

Administrative Items

Approval of Agenda -

Motion by Barth, seconded by Osborn to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes - The Board reviewed the Minutes of the June 18th, 2026, meeting.

Motion by Bonander, seconded by Larson to approve the Minutes of the June 18th, 2026, meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Motion by Bonander, seconded by Loveland-Swanstrom to approve the June 2026 financial statements. Motion carried unanimously. Chairman Moes directed that the approved financial statements be placed in the District files.

Report of Meetings and Conferences - Director Loveland-Swanstrom attended a webinar on aquatic invasive species presented by the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center on July 8th.

The Manager briefly commented on the following meetings he attended:

1. June 25th - Deadwood. South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) Board of Directors.
2. June 25th - Deadwood. SDARWS Rural Water Center Board of Directors.
3. June 30th - Webster. US Army Corps of Engineers presentation on Waubay Chain of Lakes Study.
5. July 15th - Brookings. South Dakota Lakes & Streams Association Board of Directors.
6. July 15th - Sioux Falls. South Dakota Public Broadcasting In the Moment interview on microplastics study with Dakota State University.

Upcoming Meetings -

1. **July 21st - 1:30 p.m.** - Sioux Falls. SDARWS 2026 Rural Water Open.
2. **July 22nd - 9:00 a.m.** - Sioux Falls. SDARWS Manager's Group.
3. **August 1st - 9:00 a.m.** - Lake Poinsett. Lake Poinsett Plan Implementation discussion.
4. **August 4th - 11:15 a.m.** - Watertown. Lake Kampeska Water Project District.
5. **August 12th - 10:00 a.m.** - Brookings. SD Lakes & Streams Association Board of Directors.

The Manager requested to have the August Board of Directors meeting deferred to a later date, as he had a conflict on the scheduled date of August 20th.

Motion by Elofson, seconded by Bonander, to hold the August 2026 Board of Directors meeting on August 27th at the District office starting at 9:00 a.m. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **August 27th - 9:00 a.m.** - EDWDD Office, Brookings. August EDWDD Board of Directors meeting.

Payment Requests - The Manager presented one (1) payment/reimbursement request that required Board action. The request was in order, and consistent with conditions established at the time of the awards.

<u>Grant Recipient/Activity</u>	<u>Requested Amount</u>
Lake Madison Development Association - Riparian Area Support	\$ 600.00
Total	\$ 600.00

Motion by Barth, seconded by Osborn, to authorize payment of \$600.00 as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Schedule Finance & Personnel Committee Meetings - The Manager noted that meetings of both the Finance and Personnel Committees will need to be scheduled for the interim between the July and August meetings, in advance of the development of the budget for the coming year (2027). He would work with Chairman Moes to 1) appoint members to the committees and 2) select a meeting date for each.

Discussion of a Facilitated Board Session - The Manager noted that at the June Board meeting, Director Hawley suggested that it might be advantageous if the Board made arrangements for a facilitated session (or sessions) during which the Board could discuss District priorities, policies and procedures moving forward. It was the consensus of the directors present that this would be beneficial for a variety of reasons. Unfortunately, Director Hawley was not able to attend this meeting. Chairman Moes and Director Anderson, absent in June, endorsed the concept. The Manager stated that he would work with the Chair and Director Hawley on the matter prior to the August 27th meeting.

District Manager Retirement Notice - Chairman Moes shared with the Board a letter from the District Manager indicating his intent to retire on or before June 30, 2027. The Manager stated that an early notice should provide the Board with ample opportunity to plan for and complete the selection of a successor.

Updates to District By-Laws

The Manager noted that under the District By-Laws, changes must be presented and discussed at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board, but any formal adoption (or rejection) of the changes may not occur until a subsequent meeting.

Second reading of proposed By-Laws changes - The Manager reviewed the proposed updates Article IV of the District By-Laws that have been discussed at the April 2026 Board meeting. The changes involved replacing the terms 'nominating petitions' with 'letters of interest' in the text describing what potential candidates for a vacancy appointment to the Board must submit for formal consideration.

Motion by Osborn, seconded by Bonander to adopt the proposed changes to Article IV of the District By-Laws. Motion carried unanimously.

First reading of proposed By-Laws changes - Director Anderson proposed adjustments to Article VI of the District By-Laws pertaining to the role and duties of District employees.

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Elofson to table consideration of the proposed changes. He indicated that the proposed facilitated discussions concerning District priorities, policies and procedures might well address the matter, and he would prefer to pause consideration of changes to the By-Laws. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Moes asked that copies of the updated District By-Laws be distributed to the directors, and copies be made available for public inspection at the District office.

South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems Apprenticeship Program

Kindra Wiese, Apprenticeship Coordinator for the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS), provided an overview of their Apprenticeship Program. Over the next decade, the water and wastewater utilities in South Dakota is expected to lose between 30 and 50 percent of the workforce to retirement. Many of these employees have worked at the same utility for the majority of their careers, and they will depart with decades of valuable institutional knowledge. At the same time, many rural and small community systems have been unable to attract, train and retain the next generation of workforce.

The SDARWS Apprenticeship Program is intended to provide the necessary training and support for those utilities who have found new employees. Program participants receive on-the-job training under the supervision of a dedicated, on-site mentor. SDARWS has also organized a structured series of classes and on-line training sessions that cover a broad range of water testing, management and treatment topics. At the end of the process, participants should be well positioned to qualify as certified water systems or wastewater systems operation specialists.

Ms. Wiese noted that the first group (cohort) of six participants began the Program in February 2026, and a second, six-person cohort began the Program in April. To date, all are participants are pursuing training in water treatment and distribution. For the third cohort (October 2026), she expects to have a mix of water and wastewater participants. Of the 12 enrollees so far, one is from a utility within East Dakota. However, she noted that for Cohort 3, five (5) water or wastewater utilities from the District are expected.

The Manager indicated that he was exploring possible options for the District to provide support to this effort in hopes of encouraging participation by utilities within East Dakota's coverage area.

District Updates

Day County/Waubay Chain of Lakes Study - The Manager reported that at the request of the Day County Commission, the US Army Corps of Engineers has been examining options for the management of water levels in the greater Bitter Lake watershed, referred to as the Waubay chain of lakes. Lakes in the watershed, all located in eastern Day County, have risen dramatically in the past several decades, resulting in the loss of considerable public infrastructure and damage to private and public properties. This effort is of import to the District because any effort to export water would directed toward the Big Sioux River.

On June 30th, Corps representatives gave a briefing in Webster on their efforts. The meeting was attended by representatives of Day County, area communities, state agencies and local media, along with the Manager. The presentation was the final public event for the current effort, with the final written report likely to be released in late July or August.

The Corps summarized the data the Corps it had collected and used in their study, projections of future lake levels and the assumptions that were included in the models used, and four (4) potential options for lowering and or stabilizing area lake levels by evacuating excess water into the Big Sioux River. Three of the drainage options involved ditches/channels with gravity-driven flow, and one option that pumped water out of the lake basin. Preliminary prices for the projects ranged from \$115 to \$380 million.

The next step, if the County or some other local sponsor wanted to pursue one of the options would be a more detailed General Investigation (GI) by the Corps. They expected the GI study would cost roughly \$3 million, with Corps/federal funds covering fifty percent (50%) of the costs. The Manager noted that the Day County Commission is weighing it's options, and he would continue to monitor the issue.

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Adjournment

There being no further District business, Chairman Moes declared the meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Jeff Barth, Secretary

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