



East Dakota Water Development District
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MINUTES
August 21, 2025

The Board of Directors of the East Dakota Water Development District (EDWDD) held a regular meeting on August 21, 2025, at the District Office in Brookings, SD. Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:25 a.m. The following persons attended:

Directors Present

Mark Anderson
Jeff Barth
Rick Bonander
Debra Elofson
Spencer Hawley
Bob Kappel
Troy Larson*
Julie Loveland-Swanstrom*
John Moes

Others Present

Rebecca Lolling, ELO CPAs & Advisors*
Sushant Mehan, South Dakota State University

Staff Present

Barry Berg*
Jaelynn Dreckman
Jay Gilbertson
Deb Springman

* - participated via video-conference.

Administrative Items

Approval of Agenda - The Manager asked to have a request for out-of-state travel added to the Agenda. He also asked to move the discussion of the 2024 District fiscal audit up to follow the review of the July 2025 financial reports. Director Barth requested a discussion of District newspapers and public notices.

Motion by Bonander, seconded by Barth to approve the Agenda as so amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes - The Board reviewed the Minutes of the July 17th, 2025, Board of Directors meeting.

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

Financial Reports - The Board reviewed the July 2025 Financial Reports.

Motion by Moes, seconded by Barth to accept the July 2025 financial reports. Motion carried unanimously. Chairman Anderson asked that the reports be placed in the District files.

Report of Meetings and Conferences - Directors Barth and Bonander attended the August 7th meeting of the Brookings County CO2 Pipeline Committee in Brookings.

Director Larson attended the July 23rd meeting of the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) Manager's Group in Sioux Falls.

Director Loveland-Swanstrom attended the August 9th meeting of the Pickerel Lake Conservancy at Pickerel Lake in Day County.

The Manager briefly commented on the following meetings he had attended:

1. July 22nd - Sioux Falls. SDARWS Rural Water Open.
2. July 23rd - Sioux Falls. SDARWS Manager's Group meeting; Milbank water source discussions with Banner Associates.
3. August 4th - via teleconference. SDSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Connections presentations.
4. August 7th - Brookings. Brookings County CO2 Pipeline Committee.
5. August 11th - Mitchell. SDARWS activities.
6. August 12th - Vermillion. Revillo Aquifer discussions with SD Geological Survey staff.
7. August 13th - Brookings. SD Lakes & Streams Association Board of Directors.

Upcoming Meetings

1. **September 4th** - Aberdeen. South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems Board of Directors.
2. **September 4th - 9:00 a.m.** - Brookings. Brookings County CO2 Pipeline Committee.
3. **September 8th - 3:00 p.m.** - Sioux Falls. Minnehaha Conservation District Board of Supervisors.
4. **September 9th - 11th** - Brookings. 24th Annual Tri-State Drainage Research Forum.
5. **September 9th - 12th** - Deadwood. International Legislator's Forum.
6. **September 11th - 9:00 a.m.** - Aberdeen. James River Water Development District Board of Directors.
7. **September 17th** - Day County. Prairie Coteau Watershed Project Field Day.
8. **September 18th - 9:00 a.m.** - EDWDD Office, Brookings. September EDWDD Board of Directors meeting. Public hearing on 2026 District budget at 10:00 a.m..
9. **September 25th** - Pierre. South Dakota Board of Water and Natural Resources.

Payment Requests - The Manager presented three payment/reimbursement requests that required Board action. He noted that the requests were in order and consistent with the conditions established by the Board at the time of the award.

<u>Grant Recipient/Activity</u>	<u>Requested Amount</u>
SDSM&T - Big Sioux River PFAS Survey (Kunza)	\$ 11,901.93
SDSU - Establishment of a Certified PFAS Lab (Islam/Schmit)	\$ 2,961.76
SDSU - Environmental & Economic Assessment of SRAM (Mehan)	\$ 4,079.31
Total	\$ 18,943.00

DRAFT

Motion by Kappel, seconded by Hawley to authorize payments totaling \$18,943.00 as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Personnel Committee Report - Director Moes, representing the Personnel Committee, presented the results of the Committee's meeting held earlier in the day at the District Office. Directors Barth, Larson, Loveland-Swanstrom and Moes (Chair). Chairman Anderson participated in an *ex officio* capacity. The Manager had not yet completed the annual performance reviews on District staff, but he reported that there were no significant concerns or problems. Director Moes reported that the Manager's performance evaluation, a composite completed by all Board members, also indicated a high level of satisfaction with his efforts. For salary compensation for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, the Committee agreed to an across the board increase of 2.9 %, reflecting the Consumer Price Increase (CPI) adopted by the South Dakota Department of Revenue. It deferred making any recommendations on further staff salary adjustments until the staff evaluations were completed.

Finance Committee Report - The Manager reviewed the DRAFT FY 2026 budget developed at the Finance Committee meeting held earlier in the morning. Directors Bonander, Elofson, Hawley (Chair) and Kappel participated. Chairman Anderson participated in an *ex officio* capacity. The budget contains no increase in the District's tax levy, but the Manager was directed to determine what the levy would be if the inflation/CPI and growth factors were applied. He noted that there were no substantial changes in the proposed budget from the prior year. The Manager noted that the proposed budget contained sufficient funds to cover staff salary adjustments.

The Manager stated that no formal Board action on the proposed budget was necessary at this time. However, he did request that the Board establish the time and place for the public budget hearing. He suggested that it be held at the September 18th, 2025, Board meeting in Brookings.

Motion by Hawley, seconded by Barth to hold the public hearing on the District's FY 2026 budget on Thursday, September 18th, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the District office in Brookings and to authorize publication of the draft budget and necessary public notices. The Manager indicated that the draft budget will be published in all District newspapers in advance of the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Out-of-State Travel Request - The Manager requested authorization to have Barry Berg and himself attend the 2025 National Nonpoint Source Training Workshop, to be held in Baton Rouge, LA, on October 26th - 29th. The Manager, along with staff from the South Dakota Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources, will be presenting on how Clean Water State Revolving Funds are used to support watershed restoration efforts in South Dakota.

Motion by Kappel, seconded by Barth to authorize participation in the 2025 National Nonpoint Source Training Workshop by the Manager and Mr. Berg as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

District Newspapers - Director Barth noted that in the past month, two newspapers, the Brookings Register and the Moody County Enterprise, had ceased operations. As both were designated as official newspapers for the District, he asked the Manager how the closures would impact efforts to inform the public about District activities. The Manager indicated that the District was adhering to the formal

requirements of SDCL 46A-3D-11, which requires designation of official newspapers. The Board has designated every newspaper published within the District as an official newspaper. As such, although the closure of a newspaper is unfortunate, the District is making every possible effort to support the letter and spirit of the code. Further, he noted that while the newspapers in question were shut down for a period of time, indications are that both will re-start operations shortly. It is expected that both would be operational in time for publication of pending notices of the 2026 budget hearings.

2024 District Fiscal Audit Report

Rebecca Lolling, CPA, with ELO CPAs & Advisors, reviewed the Final Audit Report of the District finances during 2024. Draft copies of the final audit report were distributed to Board members in July. The DRAFT was also submitted the South Dakota Department of Legislative Audit (DLA), and their only notes were a couple of date adjustments. These changes have been made, and a 'final' version prepared. In general, there were no substantial accounting errors or significant problems. However, Ms. Lolling did note that there were two formal findings pertaining to the lack of segregation of duties and financial statement preparation. She noted that while these were technical deficiencies, both were common issues for small organizations with limited staff, and that she was satisfied that the District was managing the issues. Director Kappel asked if there were additional efforts that might be appropriate. Ms. Lolling reiterated that she believed that the District was handling things appropriately, and no additional effort was warranted. She noted that the report had been formally submitted to DLA, with formal acceptance anticipated in early September.

Motion by Moes, seconded by Bonander to accept and approve the 2024 fiscal audit report, and to authorize publication of the requisite Notice of Availability at such time as the report is accepted by DLA. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Larson left the meeting at 11:28 a.m.

Project Assistance Requests

2025 Eastern SD Water Conference - The Manager presented a request from South Dakota State University (SDSU) Water Resources Institute for support of the 2025 Eastern South Dakota Water Conference. The event is currently scheduled for Wednesday, October 15th, and will be held at the McCrory Gardens Education & Visitor's Center in Brookings. The request is for \$450, which represents a Gold Sponsorship.

Motion by Barth, seconded by Bonander to provide \$450 in District funding in support of the 2025 Eastern SD Water Conference as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Updates to District By-Laws

The Manager reviewed the proposed updates to the District By-Laws that have been discussed at prior meetings, summarized below:

1. Article I - JURISDICTION. Update to reflect current language found in SDCL 46A-3A-3 describing the District territory; and

2. **Article IV - DIRECTOR VACANCIES.** Update the text to 1) reflect the changes made during the 2025 Legislative Session (formal nominating petitions are no longer needed for vacancy appointments), and 2) reflect the current Board policy of designating all newspapers published within the District as official newspapers.

Motion by Moes, seconded by Hawley to adopt the changes to the District By-Laws as proposed. Motion carried unanimously. Chairman Anderson 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.

SDSU Environmental & Economic Assessment of SRAM

Sushant Mehan, with the South Dakota State University Department of Ag & Biosystems Engineering, provided the Board with an update on efforts to assess the environmental and economic impacts of the seasonal riparian area management (SRAM) best management practice being deployed by the Big Sioux River Project (Project). He noted that continuous grazing in the riparian zone has been found to degrade water quality and riparian health in Big Sioux River watershed. In response, the Seasonal Riparian Area Management (SRAM) program was introduced in 2013 as a voluntary conservation initiative to reduce livestock pressure during the growing season and promote vegetation recovery in 100-year flood plain.

The is evaluating the ecological and economic effectiveness of SRAM using a multi-dimensional approach that integrates Landsat-derived vegetation indices (NDVI, SAVI, NDRE), USDA Cropland Data Layer (CDL) land use maps, and in-situ water quality variables. Vegetation trend analysis using the Modified Mann-Kendall test revealed statistically significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$) increases in vegetation health across 30 of 114 polygons. Land-use analysis (2010-2023) showed that 75 enrolled polygons gained approximately min 3.15 acres (2016)-max 80.15 acres (2015) of pasture post-enrollment, yielding an estimated min \$12400-max \$316432 in land value and min of \$265-max of \$6733 in annual rental income for pastureland. Water quality analysis using Pettitt's test and Sen's slope estimator detected significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$) improvements in all parameters between 3rd year to 5th year of enrolment. The potential treatment cost savings after SRAM are about \$1,308 per month from nitrogen reduction (-148 lb/month) and \$949 per month from phosphorus reduction (-27 lb/month). Overall, SRAM appears to support ecological recovery while delivering measurable economic value. Future research should aim to identify key contributing areas and effective enrolled areas through the application of process-based modeling to support the stakeholders.

Adjournment

There being no further District business, Chairman Anderson declared the meeting adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Spencer Hawley, Secretary