

Minutes- Approved: 3.11.2026
Meeting Type: Personnel Committee
Time/Date: 8:00pm CST, 1.14.2026
Location: 112 E. 5th Street, #102 Chaska, Minnesota 55318



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Barisonzi called the meeting to order at 8:35 PM CST.

Managers Present: Joseph Barisonzi, Theresa Kuplic, Carter McNew, Kyle Bakkum

Staff Present: Will Lytle, Damaris Canales

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No formal public comment was received.

3. NEW BUSINESS

The Board moved into New Business with consideration of the designation of the official newspaper for 2026. Staff presented the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* as the recommended publication, noting that designation of an official newspaper is a statutory requirement. Staff explained that the district is required to use a print publication that provides coverage across the entire service area and adjacent regions, and no other newspaper was identified that met those requirements. While limited digital or bulletin-style options may exist for smaller jurisdictions, those options were not suitable for the district.

The Board then considered a proposed operational plan for a semi-annual fund development compensation framework recommended by staff. Staff explained that the framework uses mid-range figures from previously discussed proposals and is intended to support development of grant strategies, partnerships, and overall administrative capacity. It was noted that achieving bonus thresholds within the first two quarters is unlikely due to the timing of grant applications and award decisions, but that any compensation earned would result in a net financial benefit to the district and be reinvested into fund development efforts.

Staff also provided a brief informational update regarding a draft document outlining CAC bylaws and purposes. The document incorporates prior comments and revisions and is intended for further review by the Personnel Committee at a future meeting.

- Action: Recommend the Board designate the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* as the official newspaper for 2026.
 - First: Barisonzi.

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- Second: McNew.
- Decision: Motion Carried.

- Action: Recommend the Board approve the operational plan for the semi-annual fund development compensation framework as recommended by staff.
 - First: McNew.
 - Second: Kuplic.
 - Decision: Motion Carried.
- Action : Recommend the Board authorize the Administrator to spend up to \$1,000 to pre-purchase Savage Fen Restoration puzzles in support of an outreach, HVRA, and fundraising initiatives aligned with District goals. Decision: Motion Carried

Action: Recommend the Board Authorize the Administrator to spend up to \$1,000 to pre-purchase Savage Fen Restoration puzzles in support of an outreach, HVRA, and fundraising initiatives aligned with District goals

McN.	Y	Bak.	Y	Kup.	Y	Bar.	Abs.	Vis.	-
Motion Carried									

Action: Authorize Administrator to Schedule Monitoring Reports and Execute SWCD Agreements. Decision: Motion Carried

- Action: Authorize the Administrator to prepare and issue solicitations for legal, professional, and technical consultant services for the 2026–2027 term, including updated language reflective of District priorities and statutory compliance. Decision: Motion Carried

4. OLD BUSINESS

No new information was presented.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Lytle then gave highlights of any critical items requiring attention before the next meeting. He emphasized the importance of Board members submitting their per diem and reimbursement

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forms to the district before the end of the month, as well as filing their annual Statements of Economic Interest with the State and CCS. While this requirement will soon be formalized as policy, it was noted that it has effectively been the expected practice for some time.

Lytle also reported on upcoming activities, including that the March CAC meeting is expected to host an agricultural drainage discussion involving MCEA, MPCA, and potentially other organizations. This event will be promoted in advance. In addition, recent news activity has shared that efforts are underway to develop a district newsletter, with attention being given to creating a reliable and predictable distribution list.

Staff further reported that there were no other major issues requiring Board action at this time, though a list of current contractors and their activities was available for reference.

Staff informed the Board that work on the district's annual report has begun. Suzy will draft the report as part of her work plan, after which staff and the Board will review and enhance it prior to distribution. The audit process will be incorporated into the annual report development.

McNew then invites any additional questions, comments, or concerns. A Board member asked whether per diem form had been distributed, noting they had not been seen. Staff responded that the forms were sent by the district clerk to Board members' district email addresses and may have been caught in spam filters. Board members were encouraged to check their district email or contact staff if the forms could not be located. Staff clarified that submission of the forms is not immediately time-sensitive but is important for year-end closeout and general housekeeping purposes.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 PM CST.