

*These are DRAFT minutes, subject to amendment before final approval by the Sargent County Water Resource District.*

**SARGENT COUNTY WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 8:18 a.m.**

The Sargent County Water Resource District met on Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 8:18 a.m., in the water resource district board room at the Sargent County Courthouse in Forman, North Dakota. The following Board members were present: Managers Todd Stein, Bruce Speich, and Roger Zetocha. Also present were Wendy Schmiess Secretary/Treasurer, Nathan Trosen of Moore Engineering, and Tim Faber, Sargent County Road Supervisor. The following were also present virtually: Vice-Chairman Michael Wyum, Attorneys Sean Fredricks, Katie Schmidt, Stephen Hilfer, Ohnstad Twichell; Andrew Smith, Moore Engineering; and landowner Leon Mallberg.

**Public Comment:** None

**Minutes**

Manager Stein moved to approve the December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 regular meeting minutes, and the November 2025 financial statement. Manager Zetocha seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Bills**

The Board considered the following bills:

**Ohnstad Twichell-** Bd Mtg./emails/phone conference \$901.00; H. Bergstrom App.-\$1,018.50; Vculek App.-\$131.28; R. Ptacek App.-\$15.20

**Total: \$2,065.98**

**Moore Engineering-** EAP Nelson Dam-\$147.50; EAP Brummond-Lubke Dam-\$147.50; Silver Lake Dam-Construction permit \$4,268.75; Web Map development-\$9,550.00; Mtgs. \$593.75; Drain No. 4-Reassessment list \$393.75; Drain No. 8-Buried tile option \$337.50; Drain No. 9-Review DWR files (duck ponds) \$77.50; Drain No. 11-Reassessment list \$225.00; Drain No. 7-Reassessment list-\$506.25

**Total: 16,247.50**

Manager Wyum moved to approve the bills as presented. Manager Zetocha seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Drain No. 11:**

Manager Stein said the county had clipped the willows along the drain in Section 27.

**Drain No. 4:**

No update.

**Drain No. 2:**

No update.

**Drain No. 7:**

The question was asked if the City of Milnor is still pursuing a walking path. Manager Speich said that it sounded like due to potential liability, the City is not pursuing the path.

**Drain No. 9:** Trosen has been trying to determine the obligation of the SCWRD to maintain the duck ponds along this drain, if any. Trosen is awaiting a response from USF&W.

Manager Stein said that the county clipped the willows along the drain. The drain is still plugged however, and has a beaver dam within it.

The culvert at the crossing of Sections 17 and 20, a field crossing, appears to be nearing the end of its service life. This is the culvert south of the county road. The culvert is undersized and is above grade. Tim Faber had received a quote from a local contractor to add a culvert to the County Road 5 crossing, he reported the prices to add the culvert are roughly:

1. 48"x90' circular opening culvert \$16,000
2. 48"x90' arched opening culvert \$17,500
3. Trosen noted to replace the crossing completely with a new 8'x6' box culvert would cost approximately \$150,000 just for the culvert material and not the labor.

**Drain No. 9 Extension:** The next step with the proposed project is to calculate benefits. There is new methodology for determining benefits which Trosen recommended the Board utilize for this project.

The Managers through their continued discussion on the Drain 9 Improvement Project, agreed the Board should conduct the benefit calculations for both the Drain No. 9 Project and the Wild Rice River Maintenance project. A motion was made by Manager Stein and seconded by Manager Zetocha to proceed with calculating the benefit determinations for both projects. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.

**Wild Rice River Maintenance District:** The district will move forward on calculating the benefit determination of this project.

**Drain No. 8:** Trosen reported Moore is working on the study to look at potential project alternatives to Drain 8. Results to be presented to the Board at a future meeting.

**Cogswell Tile:** The NDDes has this project on its final review list but has not yet approved cost-share.

**Drain No. 12:**

No update.

**Short Foot Creek:** Trosen has been working with the NRCS on getting the plan for this project sent to the NRCS's corporate office. The NRCS is getting caught up after the government shut down and staffing cuts, and the project is now once again moving forward.

**Silver Lake Dam:** Trosen has been coordinating with the DWR regarding the permitting process and their new standards.

**Tewaukon District:** The EAP table top training for both the Nelson Dam and Brummond-Lubke Dam is set for today at 10:00 a.m. at the Sargent County Courthouse.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Elections:**

Manager Wyum made a motion to elect Lucas Siemieniewski as Chairman, Michael Wyum as Vice-Chairman and Wendy Schmiess as the Secretary/Treasurer, and to re-appoint the same Managers to the joint board positions as in 2025. Manager Zetocha seconded this motion. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.

Manager Zetocha moved to reappoint Sean Fredricks of Ohnstad Twichell as the Board's attorney and Nathan Trosen of Moore Engineering as the Board's engineer. Manager Stein seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.

### **Virginia Widmer Drainage Complaint Against Dave Zetocha and John Zetocha - Complaint for Water- Related Issues**

The Board next considered Virginia Widmer's Complaint for Water-Related Issues, dated May 9, 2024, against Dave Zetocha and John Zetocha.

In 2024, the Board dismissed Virginia Widmer's Complaint for Water-Related Issues, dated May 9, 2024, regarding the Zetochas' tile system in the Northeast Quarter of Section 14 in Denver Township due to lack of jurisdiction under Sections 61-32-03.1 and 61-32-07. Fredricks provided the Notice of Decision to the parties of record. Ms. Widmer appealed the decision to the Department of Water Resources. This week, DWR notified the parties that DWR concluded DWR lacked jurisdiction to consider Ms. Widmer's appeal. With that in mind, the matter is concluded.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **Moore Engineering On-Line GIS Webmap:**

The WebMap, presented by Trosen, is a website where Managers and stakeholders can view GIS data of the District including drain locations, assessment districts, dams, etc. Trosen displayed the WebMap for all those in attendance and said that login information will be forthcoming in the near future.

### **Harvey Bergstrom Tile Application:**

The applicant plans to submit a new, revised map to accompany his permit application. The Board cannot consider the application until the Board has the updated map.

**Dickey-Sargent Joint Board**

**DSJTB bills for approval:**

DVEC - electricity -	\$	150.00
Moore Engineering- Bond/Maintenance	\$	143.75
Assessment List		

A motion was made by Manager Zetocha and seconded by Manager Stein to approve the bills as presented. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.

**November 2025 Financials:**

Maintenance Account Balance:	\$	47,892.50
Improvement Account Balance:		\$330,059.10

**Richland-Sargent Drain #1 Maintenance Fund Financial Statement**

**Bills:**

<b><u>November 2025 Financials:</u></b>	<b>\$484,954.96</b>
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With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

APPROVAL:

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Michael Wyum, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

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Wendy Schmiess  
Secretary-Treasurer