

**BOIS DE SIOUX WATERSHED DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 16, 2026**

- CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order by President Vavra at 8:00 a.m. Present in the District Office: Linda Vavra, Jason Beyer, Ben Brutlag, Doug Dahlen, Steven Deal, Scott Gillespie (arrived later), John Kapphahn, Steven Schmidt, and Allen Wold. Also present: Administrator Jamie Beyer, Attorney Lukas Croaker, District Engineer James Guler, Engineer Technician Troy Fridgen, and Engineer Chad Engels.
- AGENDA** Upon motion by Kapphahn, seconded by Dahlen and carried unanimously, the Regular Agenda was approved with a change to move the Lake Samantha / Elbow Lake agenda item to 9:00 am.
- CONFLICTS OF INTEREST** Board Manager Kapphahn stated a conflict of interest with Lake Samantha.
- PUBLIC COMMENT JD #11 LAT 4** Landowner Chester Raguse asked for an update on development of JD #11, Lateral 4. District Engineer Guler stated that the detailed survey report is complete and was filed with the District, and a viewing team was designated in August 2025. The viewing team provided an August 2026 deadline in their proposal for delivery of the required viewer duties.
- CONSENT AGENDA** Upon motion by Wold, seconded by Kapphahn and carried unanimously, the Consent Agenda was approved.
- 26-030 S. GRIMES** Engineering staff presented the subsurface drainage project proposed in the North half of Section 15, Leonardsville Township, Traverse County, highlighting that the project area has very little change in topography from east to west, and that low flows split directions. Upon motion by Kapphahn, seconded by Schmidt and carried unanimously, the permit is approved with that condition that a control structure is installed to at least control outflow from the NE1/4 during periods of downstream flooding.
- 26-036 ATF L. PEDERSON** Engineering staff described a proposed drainage project in the East half of Section 21, Leonardsville Township, Traverse County in response to concerns from a downstream landowner. In an effort to reduce cross-field erosion, the applicant conducted ditch cleaning that resulted in a channel that cut into the ditch's clay bottom, and required an approved District permit. The project, as constructed, directs flow north instead of west. Upon motion by Kapphahn, seconded by Schmidt and carried unanimously, the permit is approved as long as one of the following conditions is met: 1) the applicant must reestablish the high spot of the ditch that was removed, or 2) the applicant must clean the ditch at the north edge of the property, from east to west and install a berm on the NE corner that ensures the flow from the south is routed to the west (instead of north).
- 25-109 ELDORADO TWP** Eldorado Township Official David Horning requested culvert sizing be finalized by the District for the project described in Permit Application #25-109. Engineering staff confirmed that the capacity of TCD #37, Lateral 1 was sized for the full contributing watershed area, including the area in Stevens County. District Engineer James Guler stated that, although culverts are undersized in the project area, any culverts installed must work in a systems' approach, with the current most downstream culvert set at 36". The engineering staff has to consider: 1) the historical flow pre-project (in which base flows were directed north to a small public water in Section 24 and uncontrolled high flows migrated south); 2) impacts to flow based on recent construction (TCD #37, Lateral 1; the 640<sup>th</sup> road raise project; and the project described in Permit Application #25-109); and 3) the TCD #37 benefit area. The central issue appears to be appropriately coordinating the downstream 36" culvert on the west side of Section 19 (controlled by Dollymount Township) with the size of the culvert immediately downstream from a farmstead on the east side of Section 19 (controlled by Eldorado Township). Engineering staff stated that the north-south culverts and field approach culverts could all be sized and installed following standard permit procedure and that it is the east-west culverts causing concern. All discussion participants stated a need for protection from frequent flood damage and uncontrolled flows, and better road conditions. Engineer Chad Engels stated that the District's policies are mostly concerned with coordinated culvert sizing, and that the applicant could reach an agreement between the two townships to achieve a mediated culvert sizing outcome. If culvert sizing is not coordinated, flood damage and erosion will continue throughout the project area, in both Dollymount and Eldorado Townships. Engineering staff believe that design features could mimic the pre-project split flow, and that road raises could add some additional control and storage. Engineer Chad Engels requested that a small project team be assembled to finalized project details.

**GILLESPIE ARRIVES**

Gillespie arrived at 9:26 am.

Upon motion by Kapphahn, seconded by Dahlen and carried unanimously, staff are authorized to coordinate a small project team meeting.

**SAMANTHA & ELBOW LAKE EAW**

Engineer Aaron Weinandt provided an update on efforts by Grant County to lower Elbow and Samantha Lake levels, stating that a draft Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) was provided to DNR Staff Emily Siira, and that Siira had requested additional items to be included. Siira stated that a public waters permit application has not been submitted. Board Manager John Kapphahn asked Siira to confirm that it would be possible to petition the DNR Commissioner directly for a decision to lower the water levels. Engineer Aaron Weinandt stated that the EAW will be complete next week, and that Grant County will submit a permit application.

**GRANT CONS. JD #2 REPAIR**

Administrator Jamie Beyer stated that additional signatures were received for the petitioned repair of Grant County Consolidated Judicial Ditch #2, but that Attorney Lukas Croaker reported the new signatures result in a 29% coverage of the benefitting landowners. Administrator Jamie Beyer will request additional signatures from landowners as the District strives for 50%.

**WCD #25 IMPROVEMENT**

Engineering staff filed the Detailed Report and Survey, and it has been forwarded to the required parties. It is expected that the DNR's Advisory Report will be provided before the May 2026 board meeting. Administrator Jamie Beyer stated that delays in Wilkin County audit completion may cause a delay in when Wilkin County seeks a project bond; she is meeting with Wilkin County staff again later today, and will determine if the District has enough funds to carry the balance of the construction until a time at which Wilkin County is ready to issue project bonds.

**SCD #1 IMPROVEMENT**

Administrator Jamie Beyer stated that a petition may be imminent for the improvement of Stevens County Ditch Nos.1, 7, and 8. Due to specific engineering, viewing, and future repair/maintenance conditions informally requested by Stevens County representatives – District staff and County staff are meeting on April 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss jurisdictional, legal, engineering, and administrative issues.

**BWSR DISTRICT ASSESSMENT**

Mr. Don Bajumpaa, Board of Water and Soil Resources, presented a draft Organizationl Assessment of District operations. There are no required actions for the District, but succession planning and cross-training were recommended for long-term stability of staff directed operations.

**CLA 2025 AUDIT**

Ms. Shawna Jenson, CliftonLarsonAllen, presented the draft audit and financial statements. Upon motion by Kapphahn, seconded by Dahlen and carried unanimously, the audit and financial statements were approved.

**FARMLAND LEASES: TERMINATIONS & NEW TERMS**

Attorney Lukas Croaker stated that, although the board had extended lease payment due dates to end of day March 27, 2026, the payments provided on behalf of Lessees Truman and Trisha Raguse were returned by the financial institution to the District on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, and again on April 9<sup>th</sup>. The applicable leases were terminated, and Administrator Jamie Beyer worked with next-in-line bidders to quickly secure negotiated lease contract terms for the defaulted leases. Upon motion by Schmidt, seconded by Dahlen and carried unanimously, the following leases were approved:

For Crop Year 2026:	
Moonshine Lease #24-01: Bear Claw Farms	\$36,051.60
Redpath Lease #24-06: Jon Duhme	\$40,650.00
Redpath Lease #24-07: Colin Kjesbo	\$62,190.00
Redpath Lease #24-08: Colin Kjesbo	\$22,860.00
Redpath Lease #26-03: Bear Claw Farms	\$94,009.60
Redpath Lease #26-04: Bear Claw Farms	\$110,630.00
North Ottawa Lease #26-05: Vold Partnership	\$60,604.00
North Ottawa Lease #26-06: Vold Partnership	\$11,488.50

For Crop Years 2026 & 2027:	
Redpath Lease Section #15: Cody Allred	\$500.00

**AG LEASE  
DEFAULTS**

Attorney Lukas Croaker stated that there are serious criminal and civil consequences for presentation of a bad check over \$500. Criminal proceedings require formal notices and demands for payment that follow a prescribed format; civil proceedings can be used in an attempt to recover the \$304,538.48 the District is owed for the difference between the terminated signed leases and the mitigated leases. Board managers discussed possible outcomes, noting both a responsibility to recover lease proceeds and potential legal expense exposure if recovery is not successful. Upon motion by Kapphahn, seconded by Dahlen and carried unanimously, staff are authorized to file a civil complaint with District Court. Board managers requested a future board meeting agenda discussion on the District's chances for recovery, and consideration of future lease bidding prohibitions.

**DRAFT 2025  
ANNUAL REPORT**

Administrator Jamie Beyer distributed the draft 2025 Annual Report, for consideration of approval at the next board meeting.

**2026 BILLABLE  
RATES**

Upon motion by Beyer, seconded by Kapphahn and carried unanimously, the 2026 Billable Rates were approved.

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
ENHANCED  
WATER LEVELS**

Board Manager John Kapphahn stated that he has requested staff and board managers consider a resolution to request that the state's Ordinary High Water Level designation be replaced with an environmental enhanced designation.

Board Managers Dahlen and Deal left the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am.