

Chippewa River Watershed Association Joint Powers Board (JPB) Meeting Minutes

Date: October 17th, 2025
Time: 9:00 – 11:00 am
Location: Pope County Courthouse
Note Taker: Katie Disrud

Attendees

Name	Organization	Attended	Name	Organization	Attended
Katie Disrud	CRWA	X			
Holly Kovarik	Pope SWCD	X	Jason Weinerman	BWSR	X
Ron Staples	Stevens County	X	Debbi Anderson	Stevens SWCD	
Larry Mahoney	Swift County		Orvin Gronseth	Swift SWCD	
Paul Gerde	Pope County	X	Keith Nygaard	Pope SWCD	
Robert Lahman	West Ottertail County	X	Wayne Rotz	West Ottertail SWCD	
Dale Anderson	Kandiyohi County		Donnel Williamson	Kandiyohi SWCD	
Ken Johnson	Grant County	X	Aaron Weinandt	Grant SWCD	
Jeff Way	Douglas County	X	Rod Froemming	Douglas SWCD	
Matt Gilbertson	Chippewa County		Calin Eisenlohr	Chippewa SWCD	
Mark Weimerskirch	Swift SWCD				
Randy Mitteness	Pope SWCD	X			
Rod Wenstrom	West Ottertail SWCD	X			
Darin Hanson	Grant SWCD				
Steve Fieldlein	Kandiyohi SWCD	X			
John Ledermann	Douglas SWCD	X			
Michelle Overhosler	Chippewa SWCD				
Dennis Feuchtenberger	Stevens SWCD				

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Agenda

Agenda Item

Welcome & Introduction

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 by Chairman

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Robert Lahman. Motion was seconded by Paul Gerde. Motion passed.

Approval of previous meeting minutes

a) September 19th, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes from September was made by Jeff Way. Motion was seconded by John Ledermann.

Motion passed.

New Business

a) Keep it Clean grant application

Coordinator shared details about the Keep it Clean grant that TAC expressed interest in. Katie has been working on the application to present to the board today. The draft gives thorough details at what the watersheds goals and plans are. Some of the purposed activities to utilize this grant are sponsoring trash bins, Lake clean up events, education and outreach materials, advertising and setting up geofencing layers to notify people when entering a lake boundary. She has discussed partnering with lake association like Minnewaska, Norway/Games, and others on priority lakes identified in the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (CWMP). These partners are already putting forth good ice clean up skills locally. These two lake associations have committed to sending a letter of support and will provide match toward the grant with the local efforts they are making. The grant requires a 10% match, and this should meet that requirement easily.

A motion to approve the coordinator and the fiscal agent to complete the application as described with edits they will make and submit for up to the \$40,000 grant maximum was made by Mark Weimerskirch. Motion seconded by Rod Wenstrom. The group discussed some of the questions the coordinator and fiscal agent had asked other entities that will help us refine the budget and workplan. Motion passed.

b) WBIF Workplan progress update

Progress update was given to the group. Final budget draft was completed by the TAC at last week's TAC meeting. The activity categories and amounts dedicated to each category are shared in the packet. We hope to have the workplan drafted and ready for approval by the next meeting.

Coordinators Report

a) Website

b) Chippewa Article

Katie Disrud gave the coordinators report. The report stated that she is working with the website company, and getting an events calendar added. She is also working with the website company to get our site up to ADA Compliance. We have until 2027 to become fully ADA compliant; our site is estimated to be 72% compliant as of now. There will be \$570 fee for the site to have an audit done, this fee will be consumed in the coordinators Education/Outreach budget that was established this last summer. She shared an article that was prepared for partnerships to use in newsletters or websites. She mentioned the extensive time of putting together the Keep it Clean grant at such short notice, as it has a due date of October 29th. Disrud also shared that she is preparing for an annual progress report to look at total progress of the watershed goals, but this data needs to be entered by all partners to see an accurate representation of the watershed. Katie will start to focus on next year's events including workshops and a tour. She asked this group for feedback on tour. Feedback consisted of shorter tours (about half day), looking only at 2-4 projects as it will be easier for others to remember. Disrud emphasized visiting partnerships to see ongoing projects, issues and different landscapes across the watershed.

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Financial Report

- a) Fiscal Agent Report
- b) Treasurers Report

Holly Kovarik gave the fiscal agent report. She stated that she is still waiting on some county appropriation request and has notified those partners. Third quarter payments are still coming in, so changes to the account shown today are expected. **Motion to approve the treasurer report was made by Robert Lahman. Motion was seconded by Paul Gerde. Motion passed.**

c) Accrued Interest Discussion

The TAC requested input from the JPB regarding the use of interest earned on the account and how much should be accrued before considering its use. The JPB recommended maintaining a minimum reserve of 10%—or more—of the WBIF grant total in the account. This fund balance or reserve is important to ensure funds are available in situations where WBIF dollars have not yet been received but payments are due. It also provides a buffer for non-grant-eligible expenses, such as audits. The group discussed that some of the SWCD partners may need to wait to be paid until reimbursement is made from the state when we get to the final payment amounts. It was discussed that priority would be to have enough in the account for that final 10%. It was discussed that the only income that CRWA generates is the interest accrued on the account and appropriations from the Counties. It was discussed that until the JPE reaches that amount or in exceedance of that which is approximately \$210,000 that the income generated needs to go toward building that reserve. It would need to be more than \$210,000 because that would zero out the account to make a payment. It was also discussed that we would soon have two WBIF grants. We should not be using one grant to cover for the other grant while we wait on payments. This would be a practice we would want to avoid. Once we have built the fund balance to that appropriate level we will revisit the use of the interest toward

her items. Until that happens, this will be our policy moving forward that the interest is accruing in the fund balance as shown on our monthly treasurer report. The group also discussed that other partnerships are using the interest earnings in different ways. The TAC did have members mention promotional items to be given to participating landowners. The group consensus was that this was not something of interest and priority would be the fund balance. **Robert Lahman made a motion that interest earnings will accrue in our fund balance until the account fund balance exceeds 10% of the WBIF grant total. In cases where funds are temporarily unavailable for a project as the CRWA awaits reimbursement from the state to pay partners, SWCD partners are expected to hold the expense until grant funds are reimbursed. If this creates a hardship, the group decision was that SWCDs are encouraged to coordinate with their respective counties for support. The Counties could assist the SWCDs with the temporary expenditures but that would need to be discussed by that partner with their County. The motion was seconded by Jeff Way. Motion passed.**

Next Meeting Topics:

FY-26 Workplan Approval

Open Discussion/Agency Updates

BWSR gave update that BWSR Academy is next week, and they appreciate the board allowing staff to attend this important training. Another update provided by BWSR was a multipurpose drainage grant, which is awarded quarterly vs annually. The TAC did discuss this grant option but didn't feel we are at a point capable of utilizing it. We have a couple of assessments in process and when those are completed, we would be better prepared to apply.

Closing

Meeting was adjourned at 9:45

APPROVAL SIGNATURE & DATE:

*Paul B. Gerde Soc/Treas. Chippewa River Watershed
Dec. 19, 2025*

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A Look Ahead:

November:

- 11/13 TAC Meeting
- 11/21 JPB Meeting

December:

- 12/11 TAC Meeting
- 12/19 JPB Meeting

January:

February: