KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON: Supervisors Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller.
MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None.
MEMBERS ABSENT: None.
OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON: Pam Tomevi, Jolen Simon, Austin Vinar, Austin Wallin, James Aasen
OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Jody Peek (NRCS), Micheal Miller

Chair Reller called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

2026/10-1 **Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt to approve consent agenda items: 10/5/2026 Agenda, 9/14/2026 Minutes with correction, Ratification of paid bills for August 2026 totaling $48,731.54, Treasurer Report ending August 31, 2026, and to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills not to exceed budget.**
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

Guest Introductions:
None.

Supervisor Reports
Voigt reported on his attendance at the Timber Expo noting a presentation on the state of MN forests showing that harvest was down, as a potential fire hazard. An MASWCD awards meeting will take place tomorrow.

Aitchison reported on his attendance at the Big Fork River and Little Fork River 1W1P public hearings, noting that the plans were approved by the respective Policy Committees.

Committee Reports:
None.

NRCS District Conservationist Report
Discussion included end of fiscal year reporting, CSP payments are in order. A pie chart was shared showing where 2026 EQIP funding obligations have gone. Lake of the Woods SWCD is hosting a forestry event on October 22nd.

Watershed Coordinator Report
Discussion included the Big Fork River and Little Fork River 1W1P Public Hearing meetings participation. Projects in September included the aforementioned public hearings, Policy Committee meetings, outreach to 1W1P partners, ordering trees for 2027 tree sale, tree planting planning, forest stewardship development, working on the 319 grant amendment and preparing for a field visit from MPCA this Thursday, attending an Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P Steering Team meeting, and ongoing project coordination.

Program Coordinator
Discussion included the completed well testing workshop where nine participants attended and two MDH staff presented. The well testing clinic is currently on hold until MDH is able to complete the contract. Interested participants will be notified.

Clean Water Forester Report
Discussion included water sampling for MPCA, tree planting and outreach, cost share, forest stewardship plan writing, and building tree cages for the 2027 tree sale.

Resource Conservationist Report
Discussion included working with WCA restoration orders, soil samples received for beneficial reuse program, water sampling as a backup, assisting with the well testing workshop, building tree cages, meeting with a landowner for tree planting, and the Lake of the Woods drone flight for re-meandering the Rapid River.

2026/10-2 **Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis authorizing trained staff to conduct the Lake of the Woods drone flight for re-meandering the Rapid River, with work to be billed at current hourly billing rates.**
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

District Administrator Report
Discussion included work on the Big Fork River and Little Fork River 1W1Ps such as public hearings, Steering and Policy Committees, budget updates; the LF 1W1P draft plan has been distributed to state agencies; resolutions to approve and adopt the plans will be presented to partner boards this month for approval; an implementation MOA will be drafted and distributed to partners for review. A presentation was made at the Koochiching County Board meeting for budget approval. Other activities included financial management and general administration as well as staff meetings and oversight.

OLD BUSINESS
None.

NEW BUSINESS:
Cost Share Payments
Tomevi reviewed cost share contract RR-RL WBIF_2026-3, a forest stewardship plan.

2026/10-3 **Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt approving payment for RR-RL WBIF_2026-3 in the amount of $913.75 with DNR approval noted.**
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (LFR/BFR CWMP)
Tomevi reviewed the draft resolutions presented for approval and Chair signature.

2026/10-4 **Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Lewis approving Resolution to Approve, Adopt and Implement the Little Fork River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan:**

Whereas the Koochiching Soil & Water Conservation District approves the final draft of Little Fork River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan; and

Whereas the Koochiching Soil & Water Conservation District supports sending the final draft of the Little Fork River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources for final approval according to Minnesota Statutes §103B.101, Subdivision 14; and

Whereas the Little Fork River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan replaces the Koochiching County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan for the area of the county identified within the Plan.

Now; Be it Resolved the Koochiching Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) hereby adopts and will begin implementation of the approved Little Fork River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for the area of the county identified within the plan, contingent upon the approval from the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

2026/10-5 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Lewis approving the Resolution to Support Adoption of the Big Fork River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan:

WHEREAS the Big Fork River Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan identifies high-priority erosion, sedimentation, and water quality issues and concerns in accordance with Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) rules and guidelines; and

WHEREAS the Big Fork River Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan identifies high-priority erosion, sedimentation, and water quality improvement projects to maintain and improve the natural resources of the watershed in accordance with Board of Water Soil Resources (BWSR) rules and guidelines; and

WHEREAS the Big Fork River Comprehensive Local Watershed Management Plan replaces the Koochiching Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Comprehensive Water Management Plan for the area of the county identified within the Plan; and

WHEREAS Koochiching SWCD supports sending the final draft plan of the Big Fork River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to BWSR for review; and

WHEREAS the BWSR Board will review and approve the Big Fork River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan according to Minnesota Statutes §103B.101, Subdivision 14.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Koochiching SWCD adopts and will begin implementation of the Big Fork River Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan as its Comprehensive Plan within the Big Fork River Watershed from 2027 - 2037 upon approval from the BWSR Board.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

Tomevi reviewed the Little Fork River 1W1P planning grant budget and discussed options supported by the Steering Committee to utilize remaining planning dollars prior to the grant end date of 6/30/2027.

2026/10-6 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis approving the revisions to the work plan and budget for the Little Fork River Watershed Comprehensive Water Management Plan planning grant as discussed; motion supports utilizing the remaining planning funds as recommended by the Steering Committee and reviewed by BWSR staff.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

2026 MASWCD Resolutions
Tomevi reviewed each of the eight resolutions. All votes were noted and will be submitted to MASWCD.

Upcoming Meetings/Trainings:
MASWCD State Convention November 30-December 2 in Bloomington

2026/10-7 **Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison authorizing all Supervisors and staff as approved by the District Administrator to attend the 2026 MASWCD State Convention in Bloomington November 30-December 2.**
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

Permits:
None.

General Business:
Discussion included the Littlefork yearbook advertising request.

2026/10-8 **Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the District Administer to submit a business card sized ad to the Littlefork School Yearbook in the amount of $50.**
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT
None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:
The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, November 2, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. at the Cobblestone Hotel & Suites.**

2026/10-9 **Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 a.m.**
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker, Reller. Motion carried.

Approved: _____ _____
Chair, Jody Reller **Date**