

MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers
August 5, 2025

The regular meeting of the Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers was called to order at 4:00 p.m. Present were managers Tom Ahlberg, Steve Bousema, Casey Ingenthron, Rolf Mahlberg and Jeff Rogers. Also present were Bob Demuth, Jr, County Commissioner; Al Langseth, district landowner; Paul Langseth, SWCD Supervisor and Dan Livdahl, administrator.

The July meeting minutes were discussed. Rogers moved to approve the minutes. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report and bills payable were discussed. Rogers moved to approve the report and pay the bills. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

A letter was received from the DNR stating the Crailsheim project conceptual plan submitted to them had significant problems to overcome before a permit could be issued for it. The range of potential phosphorus and sediment pollution removal rates the letter stated could be achieved by installing stream meanders, restoring the flood plan and creating offline basins was too broad to be useful to the engineers. Ahlberg, Mahlberg and Livdahl met with Alex Schmidt and Chris Otterness to discuss the next steps. Otterness will write a letter pointing out our errors in the DNR letter and asking how the proposed project may be modified to be eligible for a permit.

The Administrator's job description and announcement were discussed. Livdahl suggested publishing an advertisement in the Globe, posting the job announcement on Indeed and on the Minnesota Watersheds and Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees websites and emailing the announcement to surrounding county SWCDs and Public Works offices. Ahlberg moved to post the job announcement. Rogers seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Ben Krohn said he wants to be appointed to the board when Mahlberg's term ends. A Nobles County application for board appointments will be obtained and sent to Ben.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

The Kanaranzi-Little Rock Watershed District raised its well sealing cost-share rate. Bousema moved to match the K-LR rate of 50% of the actual cost, not to exceed \$800 per well. Rogers seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Ahlberg and Ingenthron will be the voting delegates at the Minnesota Watersheds resolutions and petitions online meeting on August 25th.

Two sets of samples have been taken for the agricultural land vs urban land runoff comparison project. Samples were analyzed for ortho phosphorus, total phosphorus and total suspended solids. Phosphorus concentrations were similar at both sites.

NEW BUSINESS

The state Paid Family and Medical Leave Act takes effect on January 1, 2026. The district needs to decide how to pay for the benefits, incorporate the requirements into the leave policy, and communicate the information to all employees before the end of the year.

The draft 2026 budget was reviewed. Rogers moved to approve the budget and publish it in the Globe with the 2026 budget hearing notice. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The 2026 budget hearing will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, in the Nobles County Public Works Department building conference room at 960 Diagonal Road, Worthington. The regular board meeting will be held immediately following the hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

Ahlberg moved to adjourn the meeting. Bousema seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Administrator's Report
September 2, 2025

Okabena Water Quality

Okabena is acting like two different lakes in 2025. Water clarity was the best ever measured during the growing season sampling at 1.42 meters (4.66') in June and 1.12 meters (3.67') in July. Algae and total phosphorus levels were through the roof in July and August. I think water clarity, total phosphorus and algae measures will be near record bads in September.

Taking Annual Leave to care for mother until assisted living can be arranged.

Health Issues

Financial Fraud