

Board of Directors – Meeting Minutes

August 6th, 2025 10:00am Forest County Courthouse, Crandon, WI



Members Present: Scott Goodwin, Shawna Dishaw (Florence County LCD), Sheri Denowski (Marinette County), Kayla Littleton (Forest County LWCD), Sherry Pethers (Forest County), Susan Krage (USFS), Dana Nelson (Dickinson CD, online)

Members Absent: Aaron McCullough (WI DNR), Connie Westrich (Menominee County), Tracy Beckman (Lumberjack RC&D)

Guests: Garret Vucenic (Florence Co AIS Technician), Lucas O'Brien (Forest Co Conservation Technician)

Staff: Lindsay Peterson (Coordinator), Natalie Hunding (Project Manager)

Meeting called to order at 10:14am by L. Peterson.

Election of Officers

1. Nominations and Election for Chair

- a. The following members were nominated for Chair:
 - i. S. Goodwin – accepted (June 6th)
 - ii. S. Dishaw – declined (June 6th)
 - iii. S. Pethers – decline (August 6th)
- b. L.Peterson called for additional nominations. Hearing none, L. Peterson called for a motion to approved S. Goodwin as Chair. Motion made by K. Littleton / S. Pethers. **Motion carried.**

2. Nominations and Election for Vice Chair

- a. The following members were nominated for Vice Chair:
 - i. S. Denowski – declined (June 6th)
 - ii. S. Dishaw – accepted (June 6th)
 - iii. K. Littleton – accepted (August 6th)
- b. L. Peterson called for additional nominations. Hearing none, ballots were passed around for board members to vote on Vice Chair position. L. Peterson tallied the ballots. With one additional vote, S. Dishaw won the nomination, which she accepted. L. Peterson called for a motion to approve S. Dishaw as Vice Chair. Motion made by S. Denowski/S. Krage. **Motion carried.**

3. New Officers assume duties

- a. Officers were congratulated and assumed their designated roles. S.Goodwin took over running the meeting as Chair.

Note: Financials are handled through the WRISC fiscal agent, Dickinson Conservation District

Board of Directors Meeting

1. Approval of the Agenda – Motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by S. Pethers / K. Littleton. **Motion carried.**

2. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes

- a. Minutes from the June Annual Meeting was presented. Motion to accept the June minutes as presented made by S. Denowski / K. Littleton. ***Motion carried.***

3. Grant/Treasurer's Report

- a. D. Nelson presented the grant report and reported that the WRISC undesignated fund had a current balance of \$11,294.16 and the cost share fund had a balance of \$11,729.12.
- b. Motion to place the grant report on file was made by K. Littleton / S. Dishaw. ***Motion carried.***

4. Project Updates

- a. L. Peterson presented the project update report. Please see attached report for full details.

5. Old Business:

a. Non-Profit Filing Update

- i. L. Peterson provided brief updates on non-profit filing status. Saying that Dickinson CD has found an accountant to help clean up quickbooks and get things sorted which will be needed for WRISC to move forward with filing with IRS. Articles of Incorporation are being reviewed by lawyer and will be submitted soon.

b. Rebrand

- i. L. Peterson will be filing the non-profit as Roots and Rivers Collaborative. Brand design will occur in the off-season this winter. Input is welcome.

c. Contingency Plan

- i. L. Peterson shared a draft of a contingency plan with the board. This contingency plan is to provide guidance and protocol for responding to major disruptions in funding, particularly grant-related income, and provides guidelines for maintaining operations, protecting core services, and making staff-related decisions. It also outlines a chain of command and a decision-making process for emergency scenarios.
- ii. L. Peterson noted that this plan was developed from the WRISC perspective and does not account for how these processes may differ as WRISC moves to a 501(c)3. Primarily, differences would occur with the decision-making process which currently includes the Dickinson CD board approvals.
- iii. WRISC Board agreed that this plan looked good but would want to see the alternate version for Roots and Rivers. L. Peterson will rework a draft plan and send it out for review for the October meeting.

6. New Business:

a. Bylaws Update

- i. L. Peterson presented a draft of bylaws for Roots and Rivers Collaborative as an early look at changes for the new organization format. There were a few suggestions made and there are several articles that need to be changed yet, including ones detailing the fiscal agent relationship with the Dickinson CD.
- ii. WRISC Board appreciated the review and requested a draft be distributed prior to the next meeting in October.

b. Staff Cost of Living Increases

- i. L. Peterson stated that typically the Dickinson CD has provided a 4% cost of living increase to staff in the past few years as part of the wage review that was conducted in 2021. L. Peterson noted that the Dickinson CD has not brought this up this year, but the increase is budgeted in all WRISC grants going forward and L. Peterson would like to make the recommendation to the Dickinson CD Board on behalf of WRISC staff.
- ii. The WRISC Board agreed to make a formal recommendation to the Dickinson CD board to approve a 4% cost of living wage increase for all WRISC staff positions. A motion was made by S. Pethers / K. Littleton. ***Motion carried.*** L. Peterson will draft a recommendation and have S. Goodwin sign it, and will present it at the upcoming Dickinson CD Board Meeting on August 13th, 2025.

7. Round Robin:

- i. **Aaron McCullough (WI DNR):** Not in attendance but submitted an update via email, stating that they have one LTE staff out of Peshtigo who is a certified applicator and another who is working toward certification. They were able to complete knapweed control at Amberg, Dunbar, and Athelstane Barrens and added some control work on created forest openings on Peshtigo River State Forest.
- ii. **Sheri Denowski (Marinette Co LID):** Conducted DASH on Little Newton Lake, Thunder lake was determined to have too much to effectively do DASH. Exotic Pet Surrender Event will occur in 2026. Environmental Days coming up in September.
- iii. **Kayla Littleton (Forest Co LWCD):** Introduced technician, Lucas; has been talking with county for management on county ROW and wild parsnip is a priority; raised and released purple loosestrife beetles with FLOW and WHIP; Environmental Days coming up in October.
- iv. **Shawna Dishaw (Florence Co LCD):** Introduced technician, Garret; new milfoil on Long Lake in Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes – looking at testing benthic mat; Checked Purple Loosestrife beetle release sites; Participated in Food, Fun, and Fitness and Outdoor Adventure programming; Mentioned receiving some complaints about Asplund spraying activities – people asking if it were WRISC.
- v. **Susan Krage (USFS):** Casey (technician) is working throughout the district; did have an ACE crew; Contract out for Butternut Franklin Garlic Mustard, Wild Parsnip on USFS road system, and gravel pits – trying to continue that grant; Wildlife Biologist position filled, not sure about Ecologist position. Lots of movement of positions and uncertainty still.
- vi. **Sherry Pethers (Forest Co):** Frustration with new invasive grass on property.
- vii. **Scott Goodwin:** No Update.

8. Any other Business:

- i. Next meeting: October 1st, 2025 – Menominee County Annex Building, Stephenson, MI (Menominee Co.)

9. Future Agenda Items: Contingency Plan, Bylaws

10. Adjourn – meeting adjourned at 12:07pm

Minutes compiled and submitted by L. Peterson.

Minutes approved as presented on October 1, 2025 on motion by S. Dishaw / K. Littleton.