Present: President Kurt Beckstrom, Vice President and Metro Area 4 Director Roland Cleveland, Secretary Treasurer and Northwest Area 1 Director Paul Krabbenhoft, West Central Area 2 Mike Jorgenson, Northeast Area 3 Director Bob Hoefert, Southwest Area 5 Director Clark Lingbeek, South Central Area 6 Director Mark Schnobrich, North Central Area 8 Director Bob Albrecht, MASWCD staff LeAnn Buck, Sheila Vanney and Stefanie Martinez, BWSR staff Kevin Bigalke, Nobles SWCD District Manager John Shea and Minnesota Extension Lisa Hinz.

Absent: Southeast Area 7 Director Bill Thompson

President Beckstrom called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and led the board in the pledge of allegiance. Motion by Albrecht and seconded to add HF1 807/SF-182 and HF1291-SF1087 to the agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Schnobrich and seconded to add report on Minnesota Shade Tree Committee to the agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Albrecht and seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried. Motion by Krabbenhoft and seconded to approve consent agenda including the February 28, 2017 board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

MASWCD President’s Report. Beckstrom called on Albrecht to provide an update on correspondence he received from Lake of the Woods County pertaining to House File 1807; managing wetland credits under a permit to mine.

Finance Report. Krabbenhoft presented monthly finance statement. Motion by Albrecht and seconded to approve finance report. Motion carried. Krabbenhoft presented the annual financial review for years ended October 31, 2016 and 2015. The year-end financial review was completed by Mahoney Ulbrich Christiansen Russ P.A. Motion by Jorgenson and seconded to accept annual review. Motion carried.

Executive Director’s Report. Buck reported that Governor Dayton announced an initiative for improving Minnesota’s water quality 25 percent by the year 2025. The initiative does not propose specific tools to accomplish that reduction at this time. Instead, the Administration wants to solicit citizen input in the eight SWCD areas around the state this summer and make proposals based on that input in 2018. Buck has scheduled a meeting for the Board of Directors and eight district managers to meet with Governor Dayton’s Policy Advisor Anna Henderson on March 21, 2017. Buck reported on to contract for additional communications services. This is a board focus area and an item that was included in the 2017 budget. Motion by Lingbeek and seconded for the MASWCD to enter into an agreement with Goff Public for communication services retainer from May 1 to October 31. Motion carried. Buck highlighted MASWCD training opportunities for members including: SWCD Governance 101, MASWCD’s 2017-18 Leadership Institute; MASWCD/BWSR/U of M Buffer Education and MCIT SWCD staff training on May 11, 2017. Buck highlighted discussions with Association of Minnesota Counties. Motion by Lingbeek and seconded to approve the establishment of a taskforce with approximately 8 SWCD representatives to meet with the Association of Minnesota Counties to discuss future funding options for SWCDs. Motion carried. Buck met with the SWCD forestry association. Motion by Albrecht and seconded for MASWCD to send correspondence to BWSR to develop a forestry webinar for Dan Stewart’s prioritized and targeted private forestry management presentation. Motion carried.
Board Focus Area: 2016/2017 MASWCD Leadership Institute for Problem Solving. The MASWCD recently completed the latest one-year Leadership Institute for Problem Solving for SWCD supervisors and staff. Lisa Hinz, U of M Extension Leadership & Civic Engagement, provided an assessment of the MASWCD Leadership Institute that included facilitated learning, guest presenters, and practical skill building in a cohort group setting with six in-person gatherings from March 2016 – March 2017. The institute was structured differently from previous trainings and included a technology policy topic. Also included in the training were webinars to connect between in-person sessions and provide additional content. The leadership competencies focus on skill building and are based on the University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality’s leadership model and are designed from best practices in leadership development. Hinz asked the board and staff to provide feedback for the next leadership institute that is scheduled to start in August, 2017.

Board Focus Area: MASWCD Leadership Institute Technology White Paper. The mission of the 2016-17 MASWCD Leadership Institute was to strengthen the leadership capability of supervisors and staff while addressing a current SWCD issue that leads to more effective conservation delivery throughout the state. The MASWCD Board of Directors assigned technology; specifically on infrastructure, district operations, and landowner services. Cohort participants have developed a white paper to support technology strategies that meet the SWCD needs. John Shea, Leadership Institute graduate and Nobles SWCD District Manager and Mark Schnobrich, Leadership Institute graduate and MASWCD Area 6 Director provided information on the leadership institutes technology white paper. Motion by Krabbenhoft and seconded to create a taskforce for the further development of the Leadership Institutes’ technology strategies that meet the SWCD needs. Motion carried.

MASWCD Resolution #2-2015 Soil Health Guiding Principles (authors Mille Lacs, Crow Wing and Big Stone SWCDs). The MASWCD membership passed a resolution requesting MASWCD to develop a set of soil health guiding principles as it has with wetlands, groundwater, forestry, and water management guiding principles. Jorgenson provided a set of guiding principles for the board’s review and consideration. Discussion followed. Motion by Jorgenson and seconded to adopt MASWCD soil health guiding principles. Motion Carried. Staff will update the policy handbook to include these principles.

Shade Tree Advisory Committee. Buck reported that Wadena SWCD Assistant Manager Ann Oldakowski serves as the MASWCD representative to the Shade Tree Advisory Committee. The advisory committee is reviewing their board and membership structure. Schnobrich attended the March meeting. Motion by Schnobrich and seconded to request continue participation in with the MN Shade Tree Committee and on a statewide basis and provide correspondence to the Shade Tree Committee. Motion carried.

MASWCD Standing Committee Appointments. Beckstrom provided an overview of the MASWCD standing committee appointments to date. Motion by Cleveland and seconded to accept updated committee list members for the awards, finance and resolution committees. Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned. The next MASWCD board meeting will be May 23, 2017.