

JAMES RIVER WATER DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 15, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Wiese called the meeting of the James River Water Development District (JRWDD) Board of Directors to order at 9:30 AM on January, 15, 2026 at the District Office in Huron, South Dakota, with some members participating via Zoom.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Following the Call to Order the Board observed a moment of silence in honor of Dan Koupal, long-time past board member.

ROLL CALL: The following people were in attendance:

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Carol Millan – Mitchell  
LeRoy Braun – Mellette  
Mike Wiese – Aberdeen  
Dennis Bennett – Huron  
John Rubendall – Mitchell  
Randy Stanley – Groton  
Robert Braun – Aberdeen  
Pat Cerny – Yankton  
Dan Klimisch – Utica (via ZOOM)

DIRECTORS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Judy McDonald, CFO & Associate Manager  
Dave Bartel, District Manager  
Rocky Knippling, Watershed Coordinator  
Matt Cavanee, Watershed Coordinator  
Shane Deranleau, Watershed Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT: Brad Preheim, VBWDD and representatives from Upper Crow Creek Watershed

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion by Director Cerny, seconded by Director Bennett, to approve the agenda as printed. **Motion carried.**

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Chair Wiese asked if any Directors had a conflict of interest regarding any agenda item. No conflicts were noted for the current agenda. The following is ongoing until otherwise disclosed:

- Director Mike Wiese is currently a Brown County Commissioner
- Director Dan Klimisch is currently a Yankton County Commissioner

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Representatives from the Upper Crow Creek Watershed provided an overview of prior dam work and discussed additional work anticipated in the future. The concept of an advisory board was discussed in relation to watershed coordination.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 13, 2025 MINUTES: A correction was noted to the November 15, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes. Pat Cerny was listed as both present and absent; the minutes will be corrected to show that Pat Cerny was absent. **Motion** by Director Millan, seconded by Director Stanley to approve the Minutes as corrected. **Motion carried.**

TREASURERS REPORT: The Board reviewed the October, November and December 2025 financial reports. **Motion** by Director Bennett, seconded by Director Cerny to approve the October, November and December 2025 financials as discussed and printed. **Motion passed.**

2025 BUDGET TRANSFER: The District needs to transfer \$3,000 from the Contingency Account to the Administrative & Technical Account, as authorized in Resolution #2026-01. The Contingency account has sufficient funds to cover this transfer, and this will allow the District to remain in compliance and allow for an accurate closeout of the 2025 financial records. **Motion** by Director Millan, seconded by Director R. Braun to approve Resolution #2026-01. **Motion passed.**

2025 CLOSEOUT: The District needs to encumber 2025 financial obligations that remain unpaid; this will give the District spending authority for these items in 2026. The amount to be carried forward is \$426,112.62 and this resolution will allow for a timely and orderly closeout of the 2025 fiscal year. **Motion** by Director Bennett, seconded by Director R. Braun to approve Resolution #2026-02. **Motion passed.**

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2026: Chairman Wiese indicated that officers need to be elected for the office of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. **Motion** by Director Cerny, seconded by Director L. Braun to retain the current officers for 2026 as follows:

- Chair – Director Mike Wiese
- Vice-Chair – Director Carol Millan
- Secretary – Director Robert Braun
- Treasurer – Director Dennis Bennett

**Motion passed.**

APPOINTMENT OF 2026 COMMITTEES: Chair Wiese appointed the following committees for 2026:

- Policy Committee: Directors Millan (Chair), Klimisch and Cerny
- Personnel Committee: Directors R. Braun (Chair), Rubendall and Wiese
- Finance Committee: Directors L. Braun (Chair), Stanley and Wiese

DESIGNATION OF OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS FOR 2026: **Motion** by Director R. Braun, seconded by Director Cerny to designate the Aberdeen Insider, Britton Journal, The Courier (Freeman), Huron Plainsman, Mitchell Daily Republic, The Redfield Press, Yankton County Observer, and Yankton Press and Dakotan, as the official newspapers of the District. **Motion passed.**

DESIGNATION OF LOCAL DEPOSITORY FOR 2026: The District's current depository is with First National Bank in Woonsocket, South Dakota. In addition, two signatures are needed to sign all checks, drafts, and other withdrawal orders for normal operations of the organization; all other matters of the organization are signed by two, one of which must be a Director. **Motion** by Director Cerny, seconded by Director Bennett to approve Resolution 2026-03, designating First National Bank in Woonsocket, SD as the District's local depository and that any two signatures are needed to sign all checks, drafts, and other withdrawal orders for normal operations of the organization; all other matters of the organization are signed by two, one of which must be a Director. Authorized signers on the account will be Judy McDonald, Rocky Knippling, David Bartel, and Dennis Bennett. **Motion passed.**

TOWN OF LESTERVILLE: STORM DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS: Trevor Munkvold, Board President of the Town of Lesterville was present to request project assistance funds in the amount of \$50,000 for storm drainage improvements. The project discussion included the Phase 1 cost and the long-term benefit of upsizing drainage infrastructure for durability and future capacity. **Motion** by Director Cerny, seconded by Director L. Braun, to approve \$50,000 in funding assistance for the Town of Lesterville storm drainage project, with a strong recommendation that the proposed 1,200-foot drainage pipe be upsized to 24-inch, subject to engineering feasibility. **Motion passed.** These funds will expire on January 15, 2028.

SOUTH CENTRAL WATERSHED PROJECT: The James River Water Development District is committed to continuing the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), which have been successful in the South Central Watershed Implementation Project. **Motion** by Director R. Braun, seconded by Director Bennett to authorize \$115,000 in cost-sharing assistance for the South Central Watershed Project for 2026. **Motion passed.** These funds will expire on December 31, 2026.

SOUTH CENTRAL WATERSHED AND WATER QUALITY MONITORING UPDATE: Shane Deranleau provided the following updates on the South Central Watershed Project:

- Nonpoint funding: \$793,000 awarded out of \$1.6 million requested
- RCPP (5-year) funding: \$20 million allocated for feedlots.
- ARPA: Approximately \$4 million fully spent
- Davis County Project: Possible tour in late summer/early fall when project is complete.
- Water sampling: Will continue as usual; new contract will be forthcoming.
- SCWP staff has been assisting Vermillion Basin Water Development District and payment for those services will be issued to the District.

DISTRICT UPDATE: Staff and Directors reported on the following activities of the District:

- Terms of office for directors in odd-numbered areas expire at the end of 2026. Petitions are to be filed with the Secretary of State office in Pierre by March 31 2026 and must include 25 valid signatures from the specific director's area.
- Draft minutes will be sent to the Board of Directors as soon as completed.
- Personnel Committee: Currently no changes are recommended to the bylaws, job descriptions, or policy document.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 11:02 AM, **Motion** by Director Millan, second by Director Stanley to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel. Motion passed. Chair Wiese declared the Board out of Executive Session at 12:40 PM. **Actions Out of Executive Session:**

**Motion** by R. Braun, seconded by Cerny, to approve compensation for Rocky Knippling, previously appointed as District Director, structured as follows:

- JRWDD District Director salary of \$87,000, compensated at 70%, and
- SCWP Watershed Coordinator salary of \$70,295, compensated at 30%.

The motion further included approval of David Bartel as a part-time employee at a rate of \$35 per hour, with authorization to use a District vehicle for work related travel in accordance with District policy. **Motion passed.** Rocky Knippling will bring remaining staff salary recommendations forward at the March 2026 meeting.

BOARD OF DIRECTOR AND STAFF REIMBURSEMENTS: The board packet included staff travel expense submissions, provided for informational purposes and to allow for any questions from the Board. Directors reported on the meetings and activities for which reimbursement is being submitted for. All reimbursement requests are administered in accordance with established District policy.

ADJOURN: Being no further business, Chair Wiese declared the meeting adjourned at 12:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

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Robert Braun, Secretary

DRAFT