



SEPTEMBER 3, 2025
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
NICOLLET COUNTY DRAINAGE AUTHORITY

The Nicollet County Drainage Authority met in special session on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. Present at the meeting were Commissioners Dranttel, Kolars, Zins, Dehen and Helget. County Attorney Michelle Zehnder Fischer and County Administrator Landkamer were also in attendance.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Dehen and seconded by Commissioner Helget to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Appearances:

There were no public appearances.

Public Works

Consider Action on County Ditch 75 Culvert

County Attorney Michelle Zehnder Fischer noted that in 2022, the Minnesota Department of Transportation presented the Drainage Authority with a Minor Alteration Petition involving the County Ditch 75 culvert that runs under County Highway 22. During a recent petition for cleaning CD 75, landowners expressed concerns about the height MN DOT would be placing the culvert as part of the road construction project. County Attorney Zehnder Fischer noted actions taken by staff to address the concern and potential actions the Drainage Authority may take in response to the concern raised.

Houston Engineering Inc. Engineer Chris Otterness explained to the Drainage Authority the process to determine the culvert grade as part of a ditch repair process. Engineer Otterness noted that the original grade of the culvert is not known. When the as-built records are not available for a system, the Drainage Authority could use the statutory process to reconstruct the drainage system records. The estimated cost is approximately \$30,000, involving a five-step process including initiation, engineer's report, notification of beneficiaries, and public hearing that ends with an order that establishes the official drainage record. This process can take several months to complete.

There is a second option which is to complete a single location grade review. This process could be completed within a few weeks and would result in a report for the Drainage Authority's consideration. It is not a statutory-based process. Engineer Otterness noted that he would not be comfortable proceeding with this second option given the potential for disagreement with the outcome.

Engineer Otterness noted that the existing culvert is likely the original culvert and at the original elevation from 1949. MnDOT is currently planning to replace the culvert in the same location and elevation as the existing culvert. He questioned whether reestablishing the records would be a prudent use of funds given that the outcome is unlikely to differ significantly from current conditions.

Director Greenwood noted that MnDOT was prepared to begin work on the culvert the week of September 1. MnDOT has suspended work on the project pending direction from the Drainage Authority regarding the correct culvert grade. He noted that MnDOT will likely seek

construction delay costs from the drainage system if the project is delayed as the delay could cost MnDOT road construction equipment demobilization costs and construction contract modifications.

At 2:06 p.m. Chair Dranttel opened the meeting for public comment.

Tom Eckberg (Tom Eckberg Tile LLC) expressed his opinion that the culvert needed to be lower.

Fred Miller expressed his opinion that the culvert has been incorrectly installed for 75 years. He questioned whether the original design was ever correct and noted the culvert grade has not changed. Mr. Miller stated he has experienced crop loss.

Gary Miller expressed his opinion that the ditch has not functioned properly for a long time.

Matt Herberg expressed that he has experienced no yield situations due to drainage issues.

Greg Annexstad expressed that he has had crop loss due to drainage issues.

In response to a question by landowners about lowering the culvert, Engineer Otterness noted the culvert is owned by MnDOT, not the Drainage Authority. He further noted that landowners could initiate an improvement proceeding to lower the culvert.

Commissioner Dehen excused himself at 2:37 p.m.

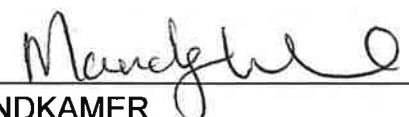
Motion by Commissioner Kolars and seconded by Commissioner Helget to take no action. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.


MARIE DRANTTEL, CHAIR
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST:


MANDY LANDKAMER,
CLERK TO THE BOARD