

# **HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 10, 2009 REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

Minutes from the Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting. 212 ½ Second Street West, Park Rapids, MN.

Members present: Don Sells, Chair  
Don Rettinger, Vice-Chair  
Carol Berg, Secretary  
Doug Ralston, Treasurer  
Lynden Nelson, PR&I

Members absent: None.

Others present: Shane Foley, District Manager  
Marilyn Berry, District Secretary  
Russell Johnsrud, NRCS District Conservationist  
Cal Johannsen, County Commissioner

Sells called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **AGENDA AND MINUTES**

An item was added to the agenda. Motion by Ralston, seconded by Nelson, to approve the amended agenda. Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Rettinger, seconded by Ralston to approve the minutes of October 13, 2009. Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The treasurer's report for the month of October, 2009 was reviewed and accepted by the board subject to auditor's review.

Foley alerted the board to financial information given at the BWSR Academy in Brainerd Nov. 2-4. It was recommended that the board treasurer open the monthly bank statements and review transactions. Also, any certificates of deposit should have board action to redeem them. Motion by Ralston, seconded by Berg that the board would adopt procedure that the treasurer would open bank statements and any action on certificates of deposit would be authorized by the board. Those authorized to sign checks will also be authorized to sign certificates of deposit. Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no public input.

## **REPORTS**

Chair's Report: Sells attended the last COLA meeting. Foley also attended and gave an informative presentation on funding opportunities and use of the Hydrolab. Sells also called attention to an article on sphagnum moss being harvested in Minnesota and used as a filter in swimming pools.

A copy of the letter written to the Resolutions Committee was reviewed.

Supervisors' Reports: Berg attended the Giziibii RC&D board meeting on October 14. This was a goal setting meeting and job descriptions were reviewed. This meeting will be continued until the tasks are completed. Job description revisions are being made for both employees and committee members.

Ralston attended two Local Water Plan meetings in October. Several possible projects were discussed. Ralston also stated that it is not his current intention to run for re-election next year, citing his recent purchase of a home in Florida and the impact that will have on the amount of time he will be able to devote to district meetings and business. He expressed a willingness to resign if another person could be found to take his place. Several ideas were discussed on how to handle this. The consensus was that no action would be taken unless Ralston resigns.

Manager's Report: Foley's activities for the last month were:

- Clean Water Fund meeting with BWSR on the grant process;
- 2 Local Water Plan meetings. They were well attended; Dick Devine, Commissioner, offered Environmental Services assistance and possible future county funding for projects;
- Attended BWSR Academy in Brainerd—very good meeting; gained lots of information;
- Monthly well run;
- Submitted Surface Water Assessment grant application for 13 lakes in Hubbard County, 6 to be monitored by the SWCD and 7 by volunteers;
- Presented funding opportunity and use of Hydrolab at the COLA meeting; volunteers would be trained on using the Hydrolab. The board discussed volunteer use of the Hydrolab. Motion by Berg, seconded by Ralston to ask the county attorney to write a disclaimer that anyone using the Hydrolab would sign. Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.
- Completed NRBG match reporting with BWSR;
- Healthy Lakes and Rivers planning meeting with Northwest Foundation and other SWCDs;
- WCA activities included 2 restoration checks, 1 exemption, 1 replacement plan, 2 violations checks with Conservation Officer;
- Met with DNR on stream restoration site on Hay Creek. A walleye specialist will be looking at the site with DNR and Foley.

Upcoming activities:

- Well run;
- Clean Water grant application due Dec. 4 (matching funds from HL&R, shoreline BMPs, and possible coordination with Clearwater SWCD on hiring a part-time shoreland expert); the Board discussed this position. Motion by Ralston, seconded by Nelson that if a position could be funded through grant funds, the Hubbard County

- Healthy Lakes and Rivers meeting;
- Review annual work plan to be presented at next board meeting;
- 3 WCA restorations should be completed;
- SWAG reporting will be completed;
- Meet with county assessor regarding Green Acres changeover to Rural Reserves. This program will no longer be funded by year 2013. Landowners will need a management plan, approved by the SWCD, to change over to the Rural Reserves program. Fees may be charged to either review or write the management plans. Foley will work with the assessor to find out the number of landowners who have to decide whether or not to switch to the new plan or drop out. There is a deadline for switching before a penalty would be invoked. A tax benefit is the incentive for this program. Many now in it are not really eligible, thus the need for the change.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Health insurance for district employees was discussed at length. The personnel committee had reviewed information and options, and these were discussed. Foley asked that the board approve a cafeteria plan. Motion by Ralston, seconded by Nelson to authorize the personnel committee to talk with an accountant about a cafeteria plan and enter into a contract for a Section 125 cafeteria plan for employees to be effective for 2009-2010 at a cost not to exceed \$6000, and up to \$300 for administration fees. Discussion. Ralston amended his motion to delete “not to exceed \$6000” and instead read “of \$250/month/employee.” Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

The district tree planter was discussed. According to contracting bid laws for Minnesota, contracts of \$25,000 or less may be made through best value procurement by unanimous vote. Johnsrud has housed and serviced the tree planter for several years and is willing to trade it for 4 planting bars that the district could loan out to its tree customers. The planting bars would have more value than the tree planter. This trade would be beneficial to the district as the tree planter is seldom rented. Motion by Berg, seconded by Ralston to write a contract with Johnsrud stating the SWCD will trade the tree planter to him in exchange for 4 planting bars. Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger, Sells. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Berg, Nelson and Sells will be attending the state convention in Duluth. Motion by Rettinger, seconded by Ralston that Berg purchase a wine basket to donate to the MASWCD auction. Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Since the convention conflicts with the next board meeting date, an alternative date was discussed. Motion by Ralston, seconded by Rettinger to change the next board meeting date to December 15, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Foley discussed the possibility of the SWCD selling plat books. Historically, the 4-H program in the county has been doing this, but due to several factors will no longer undertake this project.

Sells asked that Foley check on sales in other counties to see how many may possibly be sold. Motion by Ralston, seconded by Berg that Foley proceed with investigating this project and report to the board at the next meeting. Affirmative: Berg, Nelson, Ralston, Rettinger. Opposed: None. Motion carried. It was also noted that ads can be purchased to help defray the cost of the books.

Berry reported that she presented a program on wetlands to five 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Pay Equity compliance notification was received.

Foley asked Berg to check with Helga Township as he cannot reach anyone regarding the cost-share project that was completed.

### **DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST**

Johnsrud handed out a publication, "Board Diversity and Board Members Recruitment Community Outreach Guide," published by NRCS and NACD.

Two notices were received: MPCA NPDES permit reissuance for wastewater treatment discharge for Bemidji and EPA public notice of a draft permit for testing water discharge for Enbridge Energy.

With the moderate climate creating an extended field season, Johnsrud has been able to check many EQIP practices for certification.

Past meetings and events include:

Oct. 20—Forestry Field Day at Mahnomen; Oct. 22—Students to Brush Lake School Forest; Oct. 30—Completed the entry of 20 applications for CSP program into computer; Nov. 4—Met with DNR Fisheries and Trout Unlimited at Pierce fencing project; Nov. 5—Provided irrigation uniformity training in Mentor to personnel from four other field offices: East Polk, Clearwater, Norman and Mahnomen.

RC&D report included:

- Gasifier ready to go and may have already begun;
- Council is doing capacity building;
- Grazing Tour 2010 probably will in Lake of the Woods;
- Working on Annual Plan so if anyone has a project, forward it to Berg or Casey Olson.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Tuesday, **December 15, 2009** at 8:30 a.m. in the office at 212 ½ Second Street W, Park Rapids.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by Berg to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Carol Berg, Secretary

