

# HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## MINUTES FROM May 9, 2018 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Minutes from the Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting at 603 Central Avenue North, Suite 100, Park Rapids, MN.

Members present: Lynn Goodrich, Chair  
Don Sells, Vice-Chair  
Bob Iles, Treasurer  
Don Rettinger, Secretary  
Marcel Noyes, PR&I

Others present: Julie Kingsley, District Manager  
Annette Olson, Administrative Assistant  
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist  
Ed Smith, Hubbard County Commissioner (arrived 8:48)  
Curtis Elke, (Acting) Minnesota State Conservationist  
Chad Severts, Board Conservationist

Supervisor Goodrich opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Introductions around the table.

### AGENDA AND MINUTES

No additions to the agenda at this time. **A motion was made by Supervisor Iles to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

Supervisor Iles requested to add supervisor's last name and name of article to the minutes in Supervisor Sell's report on bottom of page 2. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve the minutes as amended. Supervisor Rettinger seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Iles requested information on Capital Outlay-Field Equipment, purchase of the hydrolab tablet from our 2016 Local Capacity Grant dollars. Supervisor Rettinger also inquired about the 2017 Buffer Law dollars. This grant is good through 2019 and should be used on a project this summer. Supervisor Iles presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review.

### PUBLIC INPUT

Curtis Elke, Acting MN State Conservationist: Mr. Elke started with the important message that Hubbard SWCD will not be required to pay for past rent, at our current location, from May 2016

through present, and any future rent until the rent issue is resolved with USDA. He also advised that we sit down with our landowner to renegotiate a rental agreement, a separate lease for the SWCD, and include the FSA and NRCS in the discussion to continue our co-location. After coming to an agreement with our landlord, he recommends that we let Tessa Garcia (USDA), Jennifer Sweeney (NRCS), Joe Martin (FSA State Executive Director) know what has been discussed and agreed upon. We should get back to him if any issues.

Other items of interest:

- Mr. Elke reported that they just interviewed for an Assistant Conservationist for Federal Programs and an Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations and both will be located in the Thief River or Fergus Falls office. They have hired Dave Jones as State Engineer from Thief River Falls and will be located out of the St. Paul office. They will be hiring more technicians and soil conservationists, 7 new people in all to cover areas of need. He commented that four years ago staff numbered up to 419, now there are at 237.
- He will be making a trip to Washington DC on June 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> to formally share information on how things are going in Minnesota and encourages us to forward our concerns and opinions to him so he can present them. He is visiting with producers, landowners, foresters, field offices and agencies to find out what is needed to make a better customer service experience with our clients.
- He mentioned that they will be revealing a proposed reorganization plan for the NRCS staffing structure on May 11<sup>th</sup>, and there will be a two-week period to comment on the draft. A town hall meeting is scheduled for May 15<sup>th</sup> where more information will be available.
- He commented on questions asked about job approval authorities, what producers would like to see in the future, the Farm Bill and concentration of larger farms and if we will get CRP back, wetlands and ACEP.
- He also encouraged us to submit a 'special project' proposal to him for help through the Conservation Innovation Grants to help fund the project along with our dollars.
- Statement made on our rent issue: Let FSA know what we plan to do; SWCD Lease Team should meet with landlord and come up with an agreement for a separate lease for SWCD; then meet with local FSA, NRCS; then forward information on to Tessa. Mr. Elke indicated that we would continue with what we are doing now, for the remainder of the 10-year contract, if nothing gets resolved.

Commissioner Smith:

- New Human Resources Coordinator, Eric Nerness is good fit. Their new fulltime IT person just started May 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Tax season has been busy.
- New transfer station is in the bid process, and they hope to complete construction in fall.
- The Heritage Center-Living at Home is almost ready and suggests taking a tour of the facility during their open house.
- Hwy 36 will be getting a complete overlay this summer.

Chad Severts, BWSR Board Conservationist:

- Reported that they are still waiting for legislature to see what is coming. Our grant compliance specialist will visit this summer to look over our available funds.

## DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik reported on the following:

- May is Asian Pacific Islander recognition month and handed out an article about it.
- Program Update: CSP-10 applications received, 8 applications moving forward with evaluation deadline of June 6<sup>th</sup>. (2 cancelled) EQIP-all preapprovals out for FY2018 applications, all eligible applications were preapproved and are now obligated. (some applications were cancelled or ineligible) RCPP-ranking deadline is May 18<sup>th</sup>, there is one American Bird Conservancy Golden Wing Warbler application.
- Current activities: Mid-year performance reviews for staff are complete. Conservation Planning Partnership IDPs were submitted by April 13<sup>th</sup>. Dan attended the National Conservation Planning Partnership listening session on April 18<sup>th</sup>. MN NRCS reorganization planning teleconference being held on May 11<sup>th</sup> with area meeting/town hall meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup> in Detroit Lakes. Rainfall Simulator-reserved and here for Freshwater Festival on May 16<sup>th</sup>, for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, and also reserved for Wadena on May 24<sup>th</sup>. Soil samples collected on May 7<sup>th</sup> with Brandon DeFoe. Currently completing CSP interviews/evaluations. Working on HELC requests. Mike Stevens is leaving Hubbard/Wadena FSA for Yuma, Arizona, with his last day on June 8, 2018. Julie Welter will be acting CED.

Chair Goodrich called for a break at 10:20 am.

Meeting reconvened at 10:37 am.

## REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Goodrich: attended the Leech Lake 1W1P advisory and policy meetings on April 20 and next meeting is May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Hackensack Fire Department. He took Annette to the Administrative Assistant Appreciation Luncheon on May 25<sup>th</sup>. Attended Crow Wing Lake Township meeting on May 3<sup>rd</sup> where he informed them we do nitrate testing. Personnel Committee met to go through 15 applications for the Water Quality Resource Specialist Position, selected 6 to interview the week of May 21-25<sup>th</sup>. He will attend the Leech Lake 1W1P meeting from 10am-12pm at the Community Center in Walker on May 10<sup>th</sup>. This meeting is geared toward townships, cities and community members.

Supervisor Sells: plans to attend the Forester Meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup>, they are working on hiring a new BWSR Forester. Attended the Prairie Lakes Coop meeting, the community voiced their concerns about the ground water and surface runoff, the coop still needs permitting. He sent an article around about land stewardship project and large farms. Attended Finance Committee Meeting to draft our budget.

Supervisor Noyes: attended the Hart Lake and Lakeport township meetings. He wore his SWCD t-shirt when he had a chance to substitute teach with 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders and was able to visit with them about what our SWCD does. Was involved with the Laporte music program discussion.

Supervisor Iles: attended the Finance Committee meeting to draft our budget on April 26th.

Supervisor Rettinger: attended the Personnel Committee to review the 15 applications for the open position. He wrote a short article about Terry and Jean Diffley and the 40 years of rain monitoring they volunteered to do, and presented the certificate of appreciation to them. The article is scheduled to be in the Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup> Park Rapids Enterprise Newspaper.

District Manager's Report: Julie Kingsley reported on the following:

- Meetings: Budget Committee Meeting; WASCOD webinar; Envirothon at Bemidji State Park-Trek North won, Nevis Senior Class came in second, Grand Rapids/Roosevelt came in third, and will all go to state competition; Nitrate testing in office.
- Leech Lake 1W1P: Planning Committee conference call, Advisory and Policy meetings, Planning Committee conference call, will attend the Walker Township and City meeting at Walker Community Center and do a presentation.
- MARC&D Deerview Road: Henrietta Township Meeting approved the plans for Deerview Road construction with addition of one additional storage unit under the road (total of 3 units should be able to handle a 100 year rain event). Bids will be opened and awarded on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10am, at a special township meeting at Henrietta Town Hall.
- Nature Conservancy Crow Wing Healthy Lakes Project: Developed RAQ report on most important parcels and sub-watersheds to narrow priorities, developed by Mitch Brinks.
- Tree Sales: Trees come in May 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, staff sort May 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>, disburse May 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Upcoming Events and Programs: Freshwater Society in Minnesota Webinar on Artic Meltdown available after May 9<sup>th</sup> on their website. Pack trees for Freshwater Festival on May 15 and festival on May 16<sup>th</sup> at Camp Wilderness Boy Scout Camp. Leech Lake 1W1P Advisory and Policy Committee meetings May 18<sup>th</sup> at Hackensack Fire Hall. Resolutions due to Jim Ballantine by May 24<sup>th</sup> to be presented at the June 1<sup>st</sup> Area 8 Meeting. TNC Crow Wing Healthy Waters meeting at Northwoods Bank on May 29<sup>th</sup> at 9am. We have 1,360 acres signed up so far for Forest Stewardship Plans through 3 foresters. Next board meeting – June 13<sup>th</sup>.

Nitrate Clinic on May 4<sup>th</sup> – 18 walk-ins with 23 total tests with 3 from Hubbard Township above 10.0 ppm. Farden Cleanup Days on May 5<sup>th</sup> – 10 people with 11 tests, one tested at 18.0 ppm. Grace Lake would like us to do nitrate testing again on June 1<sup>st</sup>, indicated that we could do a pick up like last year. Verified 2018 Nitrate Clinics: Grace Lake pick-up on June 1<sup>st</sup>, Akeley Paul Bunyan Days on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Laporte Celebration Days on July 7<sup>th</sup>, Hubbard County Fair on July 13 & 14<sup>th</sup>, Lake George Blueberry Days on July 28<sup>th</sup>, Becida Days on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Signup sheet passed around to fill in volunteers to help for open spots.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- Tree distribution – sign up for helping with distribution of trees May 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Regional Envirothon review covered earlier.

Mr. Severts asked Commissioner Smith if the County choose not to pass the resolution for the Upper Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P. The County did not pass the resolution, but discussed later and reversed their decision.

### NEW BUSINESS

- New resolutions and resolutions to sunset in December – Supervisor Sells presented a new resolution Aitkin County SWCD will be presenting for their region and they are requesting support from other counties. The board discussed. **Supervisor Iles moved to support the Aitkin County SWCD Resolution ‘Private Forest Management Service Delivery in Minnesota’.** There was more discussion and **Supervisor Sells seconded the motion.** It was decided that the motion on the floor was not needed and be withdrawn. Supervisor Iles withdrew his motion. There are no other resolution to be presented by the board at this time.

Commissioner Smith, Curtis Elke and Dan Pazdernick left the meeting at 11:30am.

- 2019 Budget Draft – Treasurer Iles presented the draft to the board and there was discussion to find ways to raise money for our 2019 budget: raise tree prices, find more grants and rent reserve. Mr. Severts gave input on what will need to be done about the Local Capacity Grant dollars remaining from the rent reserve, and questioned the County Allocation Grant. He mentioned that we might offer to do other projects for the county to help get more county dollars. There should be additional matching funds available from BWSR if we can get the county to increase our amount. Rent committee was formed and will consist of Julie, Bob and Don S and plan to meet soon to figure out what can be done. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to table the budget until next month. Supervisor Noyes second. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion passed.**
- Freshwater Festival tree packing will be May 15<sup>th</sup> and event on May 16<sup>th</sup>. Board members volunteered.
- Area 8 Meeting: June 1<sup>st</sup> at the Beltrami Admin Bldg – Julie and all supervisors plan to attend.
- Cost Share for Well Sealing for Lois Avenson – Client is selling their property and staff presented information for the two bids submitted. **Supervisor Iles moved pay \$180, half of the cost for the less expensive bid. Supervisor Sells seconded.** Question about where the property was. **Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion passed.**
- Decide nitrate clinics for the summer – covered earlier.
- Plan fair booth activities and donation to Educational Building – nitrate clinic on Friday and Saturday and possibly get the Rainfall Simulator. **Supervisor Iles moved to donate \$100 to the Education Building for table space at the county fair. Supervisor Rettinger seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None.**
- SWCD Administrative Training Session (June 27-28 in Brainerd) – for administrative assistant – registration \$65 and hotel \$93. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to authorize Annette to attend the administrative session on June 27 & 28<sup>th</sup>. Supervisor Rettinger seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None.** Board suggested that staff charge mileage at half cost when using personal vehicle.
- Julie is planning to attend the district manager session on July 24 & 25<sup>th</sup> by St Cloud, a \$25 registration fee.

- Water Quality Resource Specialist applications/interviews – covered earlier - interviews will be done the week of May 21-25 and staff will update the interview questions and send on to the committee before they interview.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Supervisors needing to register to be on election ballot this year are Lynn Goodrich, Don Sells and Marcel Noyes need to register between May 22 and June 5<sup>th</sup>. Do we need to put a notice in the newspaper about open supervisor openings? General elections do not need to publicize for open elections, just if we would appoint, per BWSR. BWSR's Supervisor Handbook has guidelines to go by.

Future job posting costs, for open positions, need to be kept to a minimum with the local newspaper and take advantage of the free online services available.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Wednesday, June 13, 2018, at 8:30 a.m. in the office at 603 Central Avenue N, Suite 100, Park Rapids, MN. Items on the agenda: Area 8 meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>, budget draft and staff will have refreshments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by Supervisor Sells to adjourn the meeting; meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

APPROVED: 6-13-2018 SECRETARY: Don Rettinger  
Date Don Rettinger, Secretary