

# HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## MINUTES FROM November 13, 2019 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

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

Members present: Marcel Noyes, Chair  
Don Rettinger, Vice-Chair  
Bob Iles, Treasurer  
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary  
Don Sells, PR&I (arrived at 8:53am)

Others present: Julie Kingsley, District Manager  
Crystal Mathisrud, New District Manager  
Annette Olson, Administrative Assistant  
Jody Peek, District Conservationist  
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner

Others absent: Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist

Guests present: Richard Black & James Kramer (present for Grace Lake Bathtub Study)

Chair Noyes opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### AGENDA AND MINUTES

**A motion was made by Supervisor Iles to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: Noyes, Rettinger, Iles, Goodrich. Opposed: None. Absent: Sells. Motion carried.**

**Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve the minutes as presented. Supervisor Rettinger seconded the motion. Affirmative: Noyes, Rettinger, Iles, Goodrich. Opposed: None. Absent: Sells. Motion carried.**

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Iles questioned the PERA amount and staff indicated this amount was not collected from new staff salary from first paycheck but has been collected and cleared this amount. Supervisor Goodrich requested staff to send checkbook register report as a PDF file in the future. Treasurer Iles presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review.

Jody Peek arrived.

### PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger reported on the following items:

- The new Cabin Lease Policy, application form to use, proposed rental rates and signage to identify that it is leased property, not private.

- Public meeting will be held on the County's proposed recreation plan on November 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:30pm in the county board room.
- Discussion at the November 12<sup>th</sup> work session about the county management options for the county, they now use the coordinator model. Other models would allow an appointed administrator for the department heads to report to, or give the coordinator more authority in administration.
- Question on the speed limit on County 4 – there are no speed limit signs posted along that road.
- County has a tax forfeited land between Shallow and Deer Lake that has potential for a future county camp ground, it has limited right of way in some areas along the road but could hold up to 14 tenting or RV sites, they are thinking about getting a planner to create a design.

### **DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST**

Dan Pazdernik was absent and Jody Peek reported on the following:

- CSP funds have been certified for all 27 - 2019 contracts and payments are being made; 28 contracts allocated on an annual basis from previous years are still waiting for payments because funds are not available; certification paperwork is coming in and status reviews are being completed.
- EQIP applications for potential 2020 contracts are being taken; deferral letters were sent out to 2019 applicants that didn't get funded; payments are going out and Dan and Alicia are helping out a couple days each month in the Beltrami Field Office.
- Performance Reviews have been completed on all staff.
- Telework Agreement Updates will allow NRCS staff to have the opportunity to work at home if inclement weather instead of taking personal leave.
- Staffing updates for Detroit Lakes, Waite Park, Bemidji, Baudette and Bagley Field Offices and she also indicated that the northern area is really short staffed for the time being, it will take time, but they are planning to fill the open positions.
- Training/Meetings/Outreach – highlights were in notes presented.

Jody fielded questions on her meeting with Zach Gutknecht from Beltrami regarding the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P and the number of acres to be covered with cover crops. Annie's Project was a class held in Blackduck for women landowners with presentations focused on Farm Programs. Jody also indicated that John Crellin, Area Resource Conservationist, would like to visit the Park Rapids area and interested SWCD staff could possibly get training through him to acquire job approval for NRCS practices on an individual basis.

Supervisor Sells, Richard Black and James Kramer arrived.

### **REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS**

Chair Noyes:

- Attended the well-attended Mississippi Headwaters Biennial Meeting and they had a lot of good information.
- He was able to visit with Senator Carrie Ruud and Senator Klobuchar's assistant/aide.
- Attended the October Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P that didn't have a quorum, they hope to have better attendance for the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting with a topic of governance

and how to manage going forward and mentioned the steering committee is about a month behind in their schedule.

- He shared information from the Star Tribune newspaper that the St. Croix River is now impaired between Potato Falls and Stillwater and that 56% of all Minnesota lakes are impaired.
- He plans to attend the annual conference and awards luncheon with Gary and Sandy Roerick, our nominee for outstanding forest steward.
- Laporte stormwater issue is being addressed for the Leech Lake River 1W1P.

Supervisor Goodrich:

- Attended the Leech Lake 1W1P Policy Meeting and discussed the first projects to fund and additional staff that Hubbard SWCD could possibly house as a part-time position earlier in the year to share with our part-time staff duties we need covered starting spring
- Attended the Mississippi River Headwaters Board Biennial Meeting.
- Attended the last COLA meeting for the year on October 31<sup>st</sup> and reported the COLA Restore the Shore tree order has been received; staff confirmed that it has been paid.
- Attended a 2-day workshop through the DNR about Community Based Social Marketing.

Supervisor Iles: Attended the Finance Committee Meeting to discuss the revised budget.

Supervisor Rettinger: No report.

Supervisor Sells:

- The Forestry Meeting will be coming up soon and he plans to attend.
- Attended the Finance Committee Meeting.
- Attended the Park Theater “Paris to Pittsburg” a free presentation about climate change.
- He passed around 3 articles to share with the board: “5 Year Strategic Initiative” about healthy soils, “Protecting the Mississippi River’s Headwaters Area” in the Prairies to Pines publication, and the Goodrich recognition article in the Park Rapids Enterprise.
- He asked a few questions about geocell wall for the Tails Up Dime Cost Share Project and if pavers will be put on top of the gravel shown in the pictures. (staff sent final photo to supervisors via email showing the installation of the pavers)
- He reported that he attended the Trestle Bridge meeting and plans to attend future meetings as an interested citizen and will report back to the board as needed (this report was given during ‘Financial Management’ at the end of the meeting).

District Manager-in-training: Crystal Mathisrud reported on the following:

- Attended the Leech Lake River 1W1P Policy Group meeting and read through the background information.
- Attended the Mississippi Headwaters River 1W1P Advisory meeting.
- Attended the Nature Conservancy Crow Wing Healthy Waters RCPP collaborative meeting to discuss grant proposals.
- Went on 4 site visits with Julie for WCA inspections in Steamboat Lake Twp., Little Mantrap Lake-Clover Twp., Akeley Twp. and Arago Twp.
- Went on 2 site visits with Julie for possible future cost share projects.

- Attended 2 meetings for the Northern Waters Land Trust/DNR/Cass Cooperation to discuss collaboration across organizations to acquire and protect properties in the Leech Lake River Watershed.
- Wrote and submitted a commitment letter draft of in-kind-contributions for Irrigation RCPP.
- Did a walk-through for data entering procedures for Forest Stewardship contracts and completed plans.
- Started with Freshwater Festival 2020 planning.
- Attended the BWSR Academy and highlighted the sessions attended.
- Attended the Grazing Workshop meeting to catchup on the planning for the January 29, 2020 event with a make up date of February 5<sup>th</sup> at the Guthrie Community Center.
- Plans to attend a MASWCD Shoreline Training on December 12<sup>th</sup> in Alexandria.

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

- Meetings attended were: Financial Committee Meeting, nitrates meeting with the City of Park Rapids, Manager's Meeting with Chris Pence, RCPP Irrigation Management proposal/letter of support, League of Women Voters talked about nitrates, Grazing Workshop planning meeting and phone call regarding the Hubbard Twp meeting to review the Chippewa Loop Project.
- Cost Share: Met with new contractor and Admin. Asst. for the Hauser project.
- Leech Lake River 1W1P Implementation Policy meeting to review the by-laws, discuss priority projects and conservation easements.
- Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P: attended the advisory, policy and steering committee meetings.
- Nature Conservancy Crow Wing Healthy Waters: highlighted information on an easement agreement, reviewed the RCPP application for grazing/pastured land and looking for other partners.
- WCA: several calls and 4 site visits with new district manager in Steamboat Lake Twp., Clover Twp., Akeley Twp. and Arago Twp.
- Upcoming Events: TSA8 Managers Meeting on 11/14/19, LLR 1W1P Policy Meeting on 11/15/19, Present the Revised 2020 Budget to the county board on 11/19/19 and last work day before retirement is 11/22/19.

Administrative Assistant's Report: Annette Olson's report covered the following:

- Cost share: met with new contractor several times to get him up to speed on what is needed for grant tracking, update on the Hauser and Tails Up Dime projects.
- Forest Stewardship Plans: update with 4 new contracts and paid out 2 contracts.
- MASWCD Application for Outstanding Forest Steward Award: Gary Roerick will be honored at the annual convention and staff asked to run an article in the Enterprise in December after the annual convention.
- Tree orders: have received about 3 dozen orders.
- Rain monitoring sheets: we now have 34 monitors for spring/summer/fall and should have about 2 dozen monitors through the winter months.

- Financial: second CD opened, Financial Committee revised the 2020 Budget, signatures need for the bank accounts, updated eLINK with financial information early October on completed grants so narrative can be added to close each grant.
- Nitrate Clinic: November clinic brought in 5 clients with 7 tests, 3 tested under 10 ppm, 1 tested over 10 ppm (Straight River Twp.) and 1 tested over 15 ppm (Henrietta Twp.).
- Workshops attended: highlights were included in notes for the Workers' Compensation and Payroll Law 2020 workshops and the BWSR Academy sessions attended.
- Newsletter: the newsletter with tree order form were mailed out the beginning of October.
- Social Media: updated Facebook with the Extension office workshop on Farm Rental Agreements Workshops, we received 6 responses on our Grazing Workshop survey.
- Grazing Workshop: Alicia is working on booking presenters/speakers, we have reserved the Guthrie Community Center for the event on January 29<sup>th</sup> and February 5<sup>th</sup> will be the make-up date, we are getting quotes for catering the lunch.
- Plat books for the Historical Society: Mapping Solutions printed the 2013 and the 2016 books for us to give to the Historical Society, Supervisor Sells will find out who to contact and report back to staff.

### OLD BUSINESS

- Grace Lake bathtub study: Richard and James made a brief request again for Hubbard SWCD to provide financial help for this project. The project has started with a verbal agreement with Julie Blackburn, RESPEC Agency, Beltrami SWCD and Grace Lake Association. Chair Noyes indicated that Zach Gutknecht from Beltrami SWCD has the capability to do the study in-house so wouldn't have to go through RESPEC, and that the 1W1P will be addressing Grace Lake problems. Much discussion about the project. **Chair Noyes moved to participate in the bathtub study. Chair Noyes asked for a second. With no seconds, to the motion, the motion is off the table (motion died).** The Board thanked the Grace Lake representatives for their work over the years to protect Grace Lake and coming to us to request funding and indicated that we would be interested in helping implement future projects.

Crystal excused herself to attend her 10:00am meeting and Mr. Black and Mr. Kramer left the meeting.

- Revised budget comparison report: staff presented the updated budget comparison report with the revised budget numbers and presented to the board.
- Forestry Association Forms requested and turned in: staff typed up the recommended responses from the October Board Meeting and a second form, that Supervisor Sells requested the Finance Committee help complete for possible topics for future Forestry Association meetings and presented a copy of both to the Board.
- Jim Hauser Cost Share Contract: staff updated the board on the status of the contract and indicated that because of the cold weather, this project is put on hold until next spring.
- Forest Stewardship Policy: staff updated the edits for the policy from last months meeting and plan to incorporate it starting January 1, 2020. **Supervisor Sells moved to approve the Forest Stewardship Policy effective January 1, 2020. Supervisor Iles seconded the motion. Affirmative: Noyes, Rettinger, Iles, Sells. Opposed: Goodrich. Motion carried.** Staff requested clarification if the available funds run out before the end of the

year. Supervisors agreed that if any requests are received after all present available funds run out, they will be asked to wait until January 1, 2020 to implement.

- 2020 Revised Budget: staff updated the 2020 Budget with edits the Financial Committee made. The Finance Committee is requesting approval from the Board for the revision presented. **Supervisor Iles moved to approve the revised draft budget as presented. Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Staff will rename as “Revised 2020 Budget” and send a copy to the County Board to distribute to their board members and present it at the next meeting on November 19<sup>th</sup>.
- RCPP Irrigation grant proposal-letter of support: staff presented the draft letter of in-kind support towards the federal grant and is looking for approval. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve our participation in the funding as stated in the letter dated 11/1/19. Supervisor Sells seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

Chair Noyes called for a break at 10:22am.

Meeting reconvened at 10:37am.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Tails Up Dime Project: staff gave a brief update on project and had pictures to share.
- Review Annual Work Plan: staff asked for requests and comments from the supervisors for the year-end report and indicated that the financial report will be different than what we have published in the past. BWSR is requesting a yearly audit for each SWCD and that we only need to turn in the basic year end reports.
- Area 8 Regional Forester Funding: staff requested final decision and the Supervisor Sells indicated that the Forestry Association has not met since last month’s board meeting and that there is no change in the Board’s decision. We are not interested in supporting the forester’s position at this time.
- NACD Dues: staff requested what amount to send and indicated that we have sent \$300 the last 3 years. **Supervisor Sells moved to continue at the same membership level. Supervisor Iles seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- RCPP Grazing grant proposal-letter of support: staff requested the Boards approval to send a similar letter as the RCPP Irrigation letter with other in-kind funds we can associate towards grazing. **Supervisor Sells moved to support the RCPP Grazing Pasture Land Proposal letter of support through the Nature Conservancy. Supervisor Iles seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- DM duties and financial: staff submitted a resolution requesting Crystal Mathisrud to have the authority to sign checks or other bank documents after Julie Kingsley’s retirement on November 22, 2019. **Supervisor Sells moved to approve the 2019-07 Resolution (Regarding the District Managers Authority for Financial Transactions for Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District). Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Chair Noyes signed the resolution. Staff also requested verification on monthly checkbook funds and Crystal’s credit card limit. The board agreed to allow a \$10,000 credit limit for her credit card and to transfer money as needed (estimated approximately \$30,000/month) into the checking account on a monthly basis. This information should be noted on the monthly treasurers report. Staff reported on the 2020 Local Capacity proposed breakdown of funds.

Crystal's meeting finished and she joined the meeting again.

- Personnel Policy Discussion – closed session: this will be after the remaining items on the agenda are covered.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- State Convention (Dec 8-10): Marcel will plan to attend with Gary Roerick and his wife and requested staff to register them for the full convention and Monday and Tuesday Luncheons as well as reserving rooms for both him and the Roerick’s for both Sunday and Monday night. Crystal will check to see if she can attend the convention. Hubbard SWCD will also cover the costs for the Roerick’s charges.
- Vegetation Management – Power Line Right of Way flyer was handed out to supervisors.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. in the office at 603 Central Avenue North, Park Rapids, MN. Items on the agenda: Part-time 1W1P/SWCD position discussion, Review 2020 Calendar, Approve Annual Work Plan. Office Staff will provide refreshments.

**Leadership:** Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P meeting, visited with Senator Klobuchar’s aide & Carrie Ruud, attended the Trestle Bridge Meeting (Sells gave a brief report), Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P Biennial meeting and policy and steering committees.

**Financial:** committee revised budget and passed by board, discussed 2020 Local Capacity breakdown.

Chair Noyes requested to move into a closed session at 11:22am for Personnel Policy discussion.

Meeting reopened at 11:48 am.

The Board had a discussion about the Personnel Policy. The Personnel Committee will review the pay equity of the SWCD staff positions and come back with a report at the next board meeting. Staff mentioned that BWSR suggested to do a yearly review of our Personnel Policy Handbook and include the step increase information in our Personal Policy Handbook. Staff asked for supervisors to bring possible dates for the 2020 Strategic Meeting to next month’s Board Meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Supervisor Sells to adjourn the meeting; meeting adjourned at 11:52am.

APPROVED: 12-11-2019  
Date

SECRETARY: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary