

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM February 12, 2020 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

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

Other absent: Dan Pazdernick, District Conservationist

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 Goodrich to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve the January 9, 2020 minutes as presented. Supervisor Rettinger seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve the January 13, 2020 Strategic Work Planning Session minutes as presented. Supervisor Iles seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Iles requested information regarding the dues amount and then presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review. Chair Noyes requested reason for the high balance in the checking account. Staff will check into a higher interest rate for short-term savings account and move funds into a savings account until needed.

OLD BUSINESS

- Edgewood Estates: Crystal updated the latest information after visiting with engineers and will visit further with individual landowner on needs and possible future project.

- Update on equipment needed: Crystal reviewed information on the standup desktops and mats of interest and will verify measurements before ordering. Other items we were considering will be put on hold for the time being. **Supervisor Iles moved to approve the purchase of 2 standup desks and mats for the staff they have chosen (estimated at \$640). Supervisor Rettinger seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- Part-time 1W1P & SWCD WQRS and Technician positions: Crystal announced we have received 1 application for the WQRS position and 10 applications for the technician position and anticipate more to come. Staff would like to have the Personnel Committee interview the WQRS applicants the week of February 24-28th and would like to interview the full-time technician position shortly after that. Crystal plans to call the technician applicants also that week to let them know that we are still interested and get a feel of their interest and skill levels. Crystal has also been in contact with Miriam Rios-Sanchez, the Assistant Professor of Hydrology at Bemidji State University, who shows interest in working with us for our need of a summer intern and ability to use some of their equipment and tools. BSU has grant money to support their summer experience while helping them find an interest in conservation fields.

NEW BUSINESS

- Grazing Workshop Review: Workshop was very good and well attended. Supervisors would like better attendee interaction to give vendors better value for their participation at future events. Crystal passed around a grazing flyer “Conservation and Cattle”, our graphic artist Dain made, to hand out at future grazing workshop, visits at the watershed meetings, our county fair and other contacts with landowners.
- Update regarding county attorney help: Crystal shared the outcome about our county attorney assistance per the Minnesota Statute #103C.321, Subd 4. We look forward to working with him.
- Present supervisor committee assignments: All supervisors are good with current assignments and note that other supervisors can be called if needing a sub.
- MASWCD Area 8 meeting in Bemidji on March 6th: All supervisors and district manager plan to attend and staff will send registration in.
- MH 1W1P discussion on MOA & JPE: Hubbard SWCD wants to support the Counties position by staying with the collaborative and not going with the JPE. Crystal will visit with Commissioner Ted Van Kempen and Marcel before the next meeting. Supervisor Sells is the alternate for attending meetings when Chair Noyes is not available to attend.
- Regular Enterprise column: Crystal will write a 300-500-word column for February, April and then every month. Nitrates will be the topic for February and tree sales for the April column. Supervisor Sells can help with editing.
- Financial Reports and Work Plan: Staff sent out the financial information for 2019 and will work on the rest of the report and work plan as soon as time allows, then bring to the board for approval. We would like this to be a tool to promote what we do as a SWCD.
- Update billable rate: Staff would like our billable to match the billable used in the 1W1P duties. Staff is asked to verify the surrounding billable rates and bring info back to the board.
- LLR 1W1P Work Plan, Budget & Resolution: Supervisor Goodrich and Crystal gave updates on decisions made and requesting that Hubbard SWCD also pass Resolution

#2020-01 as presented. The budget can be revised as needed and reviewed in 2021 by the policy committee. One project to be included is to implement the use of winter “brine” on county plow trucks used in the watersheds. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to adopt Resolution # 2020-01 “Leech Lake River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Budget and Work Plan” that has already been adopted by Hubbard County with a notation that the budget will be reviewed at the beginning of 2020-2021 and at that time we will possibly want to include stating that this covers only the physical boundaries of the Leech Lake River Watershed Management Plan. Supervisor Sells seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** The SWCD Board noted that we should update the wording to state this plan only covers the land within the Leech Lake River Watershed when reviewing in 2021.

- Personnel Policy updated/approval: Staff made updates as directed at our Strategic Meeting and requesting approval for the corrections/updates. **Supervisor Iles moved to approve the updates and corrections to the Personnel Policy as presented. Supervisor Sells seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- Review/Re-Adopt Retention Schedule: Staff requests a formal adoption of the schedule. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to adopt the retention schedule as presented. Chair Noyes seconded, as of today (February 12, 2020). Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- SWCD Policies & By Laws (Rules for Supervisor): There were no suggested edits.
- Sustainable Grazing Incentive Act Idea/Easements: Crystal, Supervisor Goodrich and BWSR BC, Chris Pence, met with John Voss here for a boot camp regarding easements. A fresh idea to encourage best management practices in grazing on both open and forested land. This could benefit landowners that don’t qualify for other programs while encouraging the use of grazing BMPs..Staff will check with surrounding districts to see if anyone is working on putting a MASWCD resolution together and indicate that we are interested in working with them. Information will be brought back to March meeting.
- Chippewa Loop: Hubbard Twp. is interested in moving forward on this project and Crystal has visited with our TSA engineers to do paperwork correctly. Staff is asking the board to approve the agreement in hand to allow the landowner to pay for the estimated cost of the TSA plan so the TSA engineer can proceed. **Supervisor Sells moved to approve the Chippewa Loop Road-North & South Access to Long Lake Agreement. Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Supervisors would like to know the exact spots on a map of the lake to show where these accesses are located on Chippewa Loop before going on to the next step of putting together a contract for their project.
- SWAG Project Agreement: Crystal received confirmation that Hubbard SWCD has been awarded the contract to sample 20 lakes and 2 rivers in 2020 and 2021 for a variety of chemistry testing along with other monitoring with our sonde. This grant will cover the lab costs through RMB as well as supplies needed and will help us bring more money into our district with our billable rate. Staff is requesting authority to sign. **Supervisor Sells moved to approve the SWAG Agreement and authorize Crystal to sign the contract. Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None.**

Chair Noyes called for a break at 10:26 am.

Meeting reconvened at 10:40 am.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger: Mr. Krueger reported updates on the 'Itasca Heartland Connection Trail' indicating they will be requesting 3.8 million of the \$10+ million project for the first part of a 10 mile segment by Itasca State Park to Hwy 71 where a tunnel will join up with a snowmobile trail. Hubbard County will be updating their job descriptions and pay equity for 220+ positions over a 4-year period and will monitor/update them going forward. The Housing Redevelopment Advisory (HRA) Board is looking for recruitments to fill a spot in District 3. This board meets the first Tuesday each month and pays \$50/meeting. The person to fill the open position needs to be a resident to District 3 including the East side of Park Rapids, Straight River, Hubbard, Crowing and Badoura Townships. He attended a meeting for Trestle Bridge removal and reported that they discussed ideas for art projects from the demolition of the bridge as well as improvements and restoration of the land.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik was not present, Jody Peek gave report and notes are available upon request.

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Noyes: Attended the Strategic Planning Session, Grazing Workshop, participated in the STRAP meeting and reported the Ice Racers cancelled all their events due to bad ice conditions and won't have monies for project match requests in 2020. He plans to attend the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P and the Hendrickson Twp. meeting and would like to have the approved grant money available in each of the watersheds. He will take some grazing flyers.

Supervisor Goodrich: Attended Strategic Planning Session, Grazing Workshop, the Leech Lake River 1W1P are working on approval of the comprehensive plan and budget with all the member Counties and SWCD. This should be achieved by the end of the month. HCCOLA will be on February 27th.

Supervisor Iles: Attended the Strategic Planning Session. He would like to see if we can open the Freshwater Festival to the public or do something similar.

Supervisor Sells: Reminded us that the Local Work Group (LWG) meeting is supposed to be held in the near future. Attended the Strategic Planning Session, missed the January Area 8 Forestry meeting but plans to attend the March 19th meeting. Attended the Trestle Bridge meeting. Don is looking for nominations for the Area 8 officers as part of the nominating committee.

Supervisor Rettinger: Attended the Grazing Workshop. He will attend the JPB meeting after the Area 8 meeting in March.

District Manager's Report: Notes are available upon request.

Administrative Assistant's Report: Notes are available upon request.

CORRESPONDENCE

MASWCD sent out the ‘SWCD Leadership Self-Assessment Tool’ the beginning of February. Supervisors will go through it individually before the March meeting and asked staff to add it to the March agenda.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular board meeting of the SWCD Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Wednesday, March 11, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. in the office at 603 Central Avenue North, Park Rapids, MN. Items on the agenda: Annual Report & Annual Financial Report, Spring Newsletter, Review Sun-setting Resolutions, New Resolutions, Billable Rate update, Self-Assessment Guide, Check Equipment for summer, Contacts for Summer Nitrate Clinics. Refreshments by Marcel Noyes.

WORKING LIST OF PRIORITIES

- LEADERSHIP: Crystal attending several trainings and making contacts, Trestle Bridge meeting, Jody suggested the MNDNR Fish & Wildlife could be a source for matching funds for future projects, Hendrickson’s annual meeting invite, information coming across the desk from Pheasants Forever and Turkey Hunters Club have possible funds available for projects, Grazing Workshop is good publicity, think about ideas for adult/community education topics/events.
- FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: Donations for events – sending out request letters, visit with Cat Donat for answers to accounting/bookkeeping questions; looking to find better interest rates for short term saving accounts.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Supervisor Sells to adjourn the meeting; meeting adjourned at 11:56 am.

APPROVED: 3-11-2020
Date

SECRETARY 
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary