

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM October 9, 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
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary
Don Sells, PR&I

Members absent Don Rettinger, Vice-Chair
Bob Iles, Treasurer

Others present: Julie Kingsley, District Manager
Annette Olson, Administrative Assistant
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner
Grace Lake Association Members:
Richard Black & Edward Marthaler (Hubbard County residents)
Dick Sampson & Jim Kramer (Beltrami County residents)

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

AGENDA AND MINUTES

Items added to the agenda: under New Business–Action Items: add Personnel DM–Closed Session. **A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: Supervisors Noyes, Sells & Goodrich. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** (Supervisors Iles and Rettinger absent for this meeting.)

Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve the minutes as presented. Supervisor Sells seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Treasurer Iles was absent. Staff indicated that there were no unusual transactions in September. Staff reported the maturing CDs were deposited into the savings account for a better interest rate and gave a short update on grant balances. Staff also reviewed the Budget Comparison Report. There were no questions and alternate Treasurer Sells presented the treasurer’s report to the board, subject to the auditor’s review.

PUBLIC INPUT

Grace Lake Association-Bathtub Study: Grace Lake Association members presented their request for funding from Hubbard SWCD (1/3 of \$15,000) along with Beltrami SWCD and their

Lake Association to do a 'Bathtub Study' that would gather more information on phosphorus and TSS (Total Suspended Solids) affecting Grace Lake. They presented information from Julie Blackburn (RESPEC), MN Pollution Control Agency and Zach Gutknecht, Clean Water Specialist from Beltrami SWCD. They covered steps they've taken already and are requesting funds to help do this study/research to find the best way to clean up their lake. They concluded that their lake association is eager to work on improving their lake quality and willing to contribute a third of the cost themselves for the study with Beltrami SWCD contributing the final third. They are looking for assistance so that they can continue to use more of their funds to cover their AIS inspections and other activities that benefit their lake to be proactive and have this study done prior to the Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P funding. The supervisors indicated that they will review the information and will bring it to next month's agenda for another vote.

Commissioner Krueger: Commissioner Krueger reported on last month's Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Policy meeting. Mr. Krueger belongs to the Environment and Natural Resource Policy Committee where they selected the top three items of priority, which are: 1) statewide marketing for disposal of materials recoverable from waste (recyclable items), 2) support the assumption and collaboration of local governments of Federal Section 404 Permit Program – permit for drainage or fill that would flow into watersheds and 3) support funding to counties to reimburse costs associated with cleanup of tax forfeited properties. An idea was mentioned that maybe some of the items from forfeited properties could be passed on to residents that could use these items and the actual properties might be updated with minimal costs and made available for the homeless or resident's in need. He then briefly discussed the topic of legalized cannabis use. The AMC is not taking a position of 'for' or 'against' legalized use but is preparing counties for the possibility. Based on experience from County Commissioners from both Colorado and Washington State who attended the September meeting and gave presentations. They recommended that should the legalized use become law in Minnesota, counties should be proactive in requiring certain guidelines such as counties should be able to opt out and be able to establish their own ordinances regulating the use of cannabis in their counties if its citizens desire.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik reported on the following for DC Jodi Peek who was not able to attend: NRCS started new fiscal year on October 1st.

- End of Year Report: Hubbard County has 27 new CSP obligated contracts; 5 new EQIP contracts; 57 of 75 High Erodible Land (HEL) determinations have been completed and they're working on completing the rest and they have served roughly 260 brief technical assistance.
- Completed Work: the Area Northeast Team had a total of 58 new CSP obligations and Hubbard County had 66%; CSP letters are in process for land owners to bring in papers to be certified and field checks done with payments to start when funds are available; Hubbard County NRCS is helping Beltrami, Lake of the Woods and Koochiching offices with Performance Reporting System (PRS) entries into Toolkit; Individual development plans (IDP's) are to be completed by October 11, 2019 and Jodi is working on completing end of year performance reviews.

- **Staffing Update:** update on the 2 staff vacancies for the Bemidji office and that remaining NRCS staff will rotate duties to help cover the Bemidji office until new staff arrive.
- **Trainings & Meetings:** Jodi Peek and Steve Cole attended the Area 8 MASWCD Tour and meeting at Itasca State Park (Sept. 12 & 13); toured LOW, Koochiching, Beltrami & Clearwater Counties with State Conservationist NRCS Troy Daniell and NRCS ASTC-FO Steve Cole (Sept. 17 & 18); attended Area NE all employee meeting in Mora, MN (Sept. 24); traveled to Brainerd, MN for CAP 106-Forestry Management Plan training (Oct 3) and met Celie Borndal, NRCS State Forester who provided information on CAP Policy, CAP development and CAP guides, checklists and templates; attended Conservation Desktop (CD) training in Bemidji (Oct 4) that will replace Toolkit in ArcGIS and hope to start using CD by January 2020.

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Noyes: met with Commissioner Stacey; noted Gary Roerick was submitted as nominee for the Forest Steward Award; worked with DM interviews; asked if an update article could be done on the Laporte project (staff should plan to do one in spring); mentioned doing a consultant contract (will be discussed in closed session); mentioned that he wore his SWCD Shirt and hat when he did his interview at a fundraiser which was featured on local PBS television news.

Supervisor Sells: reported on the BWSR approved/partnering pollinator program for resident land owners to change their lawns to legumes (pollinator friendly lawns) in summer 2020; mentioned that the local Historical Society is looking for old plat books, staff will notify them if any are found; attended the Forestry Association meeting and reminded the SFIA renewal deadline is October 31, indicated that the new BWSR forester, Lindberg Ekola, gave a report and requested input on a short survey. Staff will send the survey results on to Mr. Ekola via email.

Supervisor Goodrich: worked with personnel/interviews; commented on the new 'enhanced wake boats' (wake board boats have a bigger motor and have lake water ballast tanks in their design) that are the now the new recreational toy. He reported that Tim Terrell presented at a HCCOLA meeting and is looking for funding from the counties to get involved in the Traditions MN Program that he is spearheading to get articles about lakes and involvement with lakes out to media outlets.

Chair Noyes mentioned the Mississippi Headwaters Board Biennial Conference is November 1, 2019 at the Walker Bay Ballroom, at Chase on the Lake. Supervisors Noyes, Goodrich and Sells plan to attend. Staff will turn in head count to Tim Terrell for the event.

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

- **Meetings:** Area 8 Fall Tour and Area 8 Meeting; interview for DM position; final E. coli sampling on Sept 25 and reported that the numbers are way down.
- **Cost Share:** Westfield project completed and site visit was done after project completion; waiting on plans from Bill Westerberg for project on Lake Belle Taine; site visit for possible cost share project on Straight River.

- LL 1W1P: Sept 23 Policy Committee meeting canceled, next meeting scheduled for October 18 and only received one comment on revised By-laws for Implementation.
- Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P: started to prioritize issues at the September 18th Advisory meeting.
- Nature Conservancy–Crow Wing Healthy Waters: Sept 20th meeting, BWSR and Hubbard SWCD signed contract for conservation easement.
- WCA – reported on information and site visits in Helga Twp., Farden Twp., Lake Emma Twp., Steamboat Lake in Hart Lake Twp. and Hubbard Twp.; notice of decisions for Hart Lake Twp., Notice of Decision Exemption in Farden Twp., Notice of Application in Hart Lake Twp. and possible violations on Potato Lake in Lake Emma Twp.
- Upcoming Events: next board meeting October 9th; Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P Advisory meeting October 16th, Leech Lake 1W1P Policy meeting October 18th and Mississippi Headwaters Policy meeting October 24th.

Administrative Assistant’s Report: Annette Olson reported on the following:

- Cost Share: finalized cost share contracts for Tails up Dime project; tracked down invoice information for completed Westfield project, reimbursement processed and sent; and will present cost share amendment for Westfield 3-year maintenance project amount.
- Forest Stewardship: received one new contract and paid out one plan, we still have over 1,000 acres available to contract out with available grant monies.
- MASWCD nominee for Forest Steward Award: application completed and submitted.
- Tree Orders: 2020 order is available through our website and will be mailed out this week with the fall newsletter. We are still waiting on tree confirmation for items ordered.
- Rain monitor information: 31 sheets turned in for September.
- Financial: put funds from matured CDs into savings for better interest rate until dollars are needed for new CDs; monitoring remaining WQRS funds still available to use from 2017 Local Capacity grant so they are used before December 31; working on information to submit into eLINK on several completed grants.
- Newspaper, Website & Social Media: ran a small classified ad in local newspaper for DM position, updated Facebook and website with DM position information; updated other items as needed; have 2020 tree order activated on website and will post info to Facebook soon; running a poll/survey on Facebook for grazing workshop input/suggestions for topics.
- Training: reviewed training session attended and upcoming sessions in October.
- Other: compiled in-kind information for LL1W1P; starting to work on gathering information for 2020 Summer Admin Session and many hours spent tracking down information on transaction paid to us through MMB/SWIFT portal and account verification to remain active.

OLD BUSINESS

- Tree Order: highlighted new info on order form and update on the COLA Restore the Shore program.
- MASWCD Award Application: staff sent application in for Gary Roerick as outstanding forest steward and sent application around to supervisors to read.

- Fall Tour & Area 8 Meeting recap: weather was bad for boat tour; election of officers for secretary; by-laws will need to be updated at the next annual meeting; 50-year award presented to Hubbard SWCD and article was put in the local newspaper.
- Westfield Cost Share Project Amendment: staff requested an amendment to original cost share contract to show itemized amounts paid out for the 2019 expenses of \$6,972.50 and future vegetation maintenance amount for 2020-2022 of \$1,200.00 that will come out of the 2020 Cost Share Grant. **Supervisor Sells moved to approve the Westfield Cost Share Project Amendment (contract 17-8A). Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- District Managers Position: Personnel Committee and Chair Noyes interviewed the three applicants and the position was offered to Crystal Mathisrud at \$28.00/hour with the \$800 medical stipend. Staff will let her know that Hubbard SWCD does a 6-month probationary review with possible compensation adjustments. Crystal accepted the position and will start on October 15, 2019 and plans to stop in today to complete necessary paperwork. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to have the Board hire Crystal Mathisrud as the new District Manager with a start date of October 15, 2019 at the rate of \$28.00 an hour. Supervisor Sells seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Supervisor Goodrich indicated that Supervisor Rettinger is in agreement.
- Hauser Cost Share Project: Staff requested to add this item because final information was just received. This client has been trying to get assistance since 2017 and got tied up with Bill Westerberg and the new TSA8 forms this year. Staff recommends we work with part of Hauser's shoreline project as cost share. Staff is requesting to receive a better breakdown of labor and detailed information on how the project will be handled. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve 50% of Jim Hauser's Cost Share Project of \$4,730.00, conditional upon the acceptance of the details by the District Manager. Supervisor Noyes seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** (SWCD share will be up to \$2,365.00)
- Forest Stewardship Policy: Staff had more questions on parts of the proposed policy and so contacted our foresters for their recommendations. Staff reviewed information received and recommend that we no longer charge a \$50 administration fee, have the client pay the initial \$200 fee to the forester and also pay the full bill to the forester, then bring a paid receipt in to the office for reimbursement, up to 160 acres at the rate of \$7/acre. Supervisors requested staff to update the policy with recommendations just presented and bring back to Board next month for approval.

Chair Noyes called for a break at 11:00 am.

Meeting reconvened at 11:15 am.

NEW BUSINESS

- Budget Comparison Report: Staff updated the budget comparison report with information requested. Staff will update the budget with figures for the new DM salary and new Local Capacity amounts. The Budget Committee will meet before the next SWCD Board Meeting to review and revise. A new draft will be presented in November to the Board for approval.
- Awareness Article: Article for our 50 years of service was published in September; staff will plan to put an article in the paper about Gary Roerick-Forest Steward nominee; staff

was requested to send out a grazing topic survey via emails to past grazing workshop attendees and put an article in the paper the beginning of December to promote the grazing workshop.

- Start Annual Work Plan: Staff asked for input to incorporate into the LWP within the Annual Work Plan. Supervisors requested staff to incorporate a statement about the 5–year update for the LWMP and staff will also add new grant information. Staff will check with BWSR on what is needed for the update.
- Boat & Trailer Winter Storage: Staff took the motor in to have it winterized and will bring the motor, with a motor stand, and boat to Supervisor Sells’ residence for winter storage. Thank you Supervisor Sells!
- Area 8 Regional Forester Funding: Supervisor Sells gave a brief report on the last meeting and indicated he relayed our message that Hubbard SWCD is not interested in contributing to the regional forester’s position due to lack of past benefit from the program. The Board requested staff to send confirmation regarding this decision via email to Steve Hughes.
- Edgewood Estates-Larson Cost Share: Staff updated the Board on this project. The board requested staff to send notification to Bill Westerberg that Hubbard SWCD will not be a part of the Larson request for plans at this time and will not be contributing towards the request unless we formally notify him of a change.
- District Manager yearly review: this will be covered in the closed session and report later.
- Resolutions Voting: Staff collected responses from Supervisor Rettinger before he left on vacation. The 3 supervisors present gave their responses for each of the resolutions presented. Staff will get Supervisor Iles responses and add to the form. Staff will then send responses on to MASWCD and a copy of the form to each supervisor.
- Personnel-Closed Session: this will be covered in the closed session later.

CORRESPONDENCE: Staff passed around items received: an e-mailed thank-you for support for the Targeted Pine and Leech Lake Watershed Rim & Easement Application (\$2.8 million grant); informative meeting on Fair & Profitable Farm Rental Agreement (Nov 5th) through the U of M Extension Office; Mississippi Headwaters Board Biennial Conference (Nov 1st) Supervisors Noyes, Goodrich and Sells indicated they plan to attend; the Trestle Bridge Project would like someone from SWCD to be on the October 21st Steering Committee, Supervisor Sells from District 4 was asked to attend the first meeting for information and report back; and staff handed information on Road Salt Symposium for Oct 21st.

Chair Noyes called for closed session at 12:18 pm to discuss personnel-district manager position. Chair Noyes reopened the meeting at 12:40 pm.

Crystal Mathisrud stopped in to say hi and meet staff and supervisors.

Chair Noyes thanked Julie for her service and indicated that they will not do the normal annual review but offer a new rate of \$33.00/hour and will offer a flat rate of \$33.00/hour for consulting after retirement with possible travel reimbursement for out of town case-by-case trips.

Supervisor Goodrich: The Personnel Committee make a motion to increase Julie’s rate retro-active to the first pay period of October, through her retirement, to increase her hourly rate to \$33.00/hour and offer her a rate of \$33.00/hour as an independent consultant

once she retires on a case-by-case basis as needed. Supervisor Noyes seconded.
Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried. The Board plans to take Julie and her husband out for supper upon retirement (November 22nd).

NEXT MEETING: The next regular board meeting for the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in the office at 603 Central Avenue North, Park Rapids, MN. Items on the agenda include: Review Annual Work Plan, Grace Lake Bathtub Study, Forest Stewardship Policy and Revised Budget for approval.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Supervisor Sells to adjourn the meeting; meeting adjourned at 12:47pm.

APPROVED: 11/13/2019
Date

SECRETARY 
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary