

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM December 11, 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
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary
Don Sells, PR&I

Members absent: Bob Iles, Treasurer

Others present: Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager
Annette Olson, Administrative Assistant
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist

Others absent: Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner

Chair Noyes opened the meeting at 8:35 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA AND MINUTES

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to accept the agenda as presented. Supervisor Rettinger seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Supervisor Goodrich requested to remove “follow the county pay scale” from last page, the section before the meeting adjourned. The other supervisors were in agreement. **Supervisor Rettinger moved to approve the minutes with the retraction. Supervisor Sells seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

TREASURER’S REPORT

Treasurer Iles was absent. Staff answered several questions from the board. Supervisor Sells presented the treasurer’s report to the board, subject to the auditor’s review.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger: absent-no report.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik reported on the following:

- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP): no information on FY2020 signup yet; FY2019 contract funding is available and a majority of the payments have been issued in

Hubbard County; FY2016-2018 contract payments are still on hold due to statewide issues; FY2015 contract funding was allocated and clients are being contacted; completing contract reviews and collecting documentation in preparation for payments.

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): no information on FY2020 signup yet; taking applications in preparation for the next signup; assisting Bemidji team in EQIP contract maintenance/payments.
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP): general signup is December 9, 2019 – February 28, 2020.
- Bemidji CST Staffing Update: new staff at Bagley office, 2 vacancies in Bemidji office and 1 vacancy in Baudette; all staff are working in Bemidji 2 days per month to help until vacancies are filled.
- Other Items: All team leads and DC's in offices with no team leads attended the MASWCD convention on December 9th and 10th; Dan handed a copy of the USDA Anti-Harassment Policy to all supervisors and staff and indicated that everyone should read through it and all future hire's should be aware of it also.

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Noyes: Attended the Mississippi Headwaters River 1W1P Policy Meeting where they discussed the governing processes. He attended the MASWCD State Convention with Gary Roerick and wife to present the Outstanding Forest Steward Award to Mr. Roerick at the Monday luncheon. He also mentioned their budget was approved, highlighted the voting results of the resolutions and mentioned Troy Daniell covered EQIP and CSP information. Supervisors requested staff to submit materials regarding Mr. Roerick's award to the local newspapers. The Enterprise has already been contacted.

Supervisor Goodrich: The November Leech Lake River 1W1P meeting was canceled and the next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2019. The Laporte storm sewer lines documentation has been completed and billed out to the grant. He worked on staff compensation and will report later in meeting.

Supervisor Sells: no report.

Supervisor Rettinger: no report.

Supervisor Iles: absent-no report.

District Manager's Report: Crystal reported on the following:

- Leech Lake River 1W1P: Reported on the Leech Lake River 1W1P proposed work plan, funds to cover the personnel needed for this grant and handed out a position announcement draft for the (1,000 hours) personnel they would need for 2020 and their proposed funds to cover this position. Discussion also included a position announcement for a SWCD part-time position to go along with the LLR 1W1P position that would cover our needs. Supervisors requested a well-defined description of responsibilities and how we would manage his/her achievements.

- Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P: Reported there is a new on-line tool to identify and map projects; a request for issues of fragmentation in the Chippewa National Forest should be covered with this grant and preparation needed regarding septic systems inspections prior to the grant implementation was also discussed.
- Nature Conservancy – Crow Wing Healthy Waters RCPP: Reported they are working on the plan for writing the grant draft with focus on grazing conservation easements and ecological grazing plans with the goal of protecting land and water while allowing the landowner flexibility to use the land and make income from it. NRCS staff has reached out to Todd Holman about speaking at our grazing workshop about the RCPP grant.
- Irrigation RCPP: Reported on the proposal, objectives and comments of this grant (\$5,000,000 with \$4,000,000 matching funds and in-kind contributions) and grant goals through education including the impact of more precise irrigation practices with the use of available technology.
- Wetland Conservation Act (WCA): Matt Johnson of BWSR was here to bring Crystal up to speed with WCA documentation, delineations, reporting, notice of decisions and other duties required through WCA. She reported on active WCA violations and a Notice of Decision (NOD) she is currently working on, with the understanding that good communications with the landowner is the best way to start working with them regarding WCA. Supervisors suggested having 2 complete copies of NOD's available to sign when the DNR is serving the paperwork, one for landowner and one for SWCD records.
- Cost Share: Crystal requested information/activity regarding the previous Edgewood Estate cost share project interaction that was worked on and then dropped. She has updates for other projects in process.
- SWAG: Highlights covered the second cycle of lake monitoring for 21 lakes and 2 rivers in Hubbard County and Crystal is working on a plan to collect the requested data over the next 2 years for the SWAG Grant through MPCA.
- Forest Stewardship: Crystal has provided a contract to Joel Holden to be one of our forest stewardship plan writers after reviewing one of his plans he provided. The new paperwork is available to review for edits before using them in January 2020. She recently received a new plan from Kent Wolf, DNR Forestry written by Mr. Brokl.
- Obwells: Had a meeting with hydrologist Colton VanZee, MN DNR/Obwell, to learn what to do for monitoring Obwells in Hubbard County. We are now waiting to receive a replacement cable for the device needed to do the readings before completing the remaining wells.
- eLINK Reporting: Meeting rescheduled with Chad from BWSR on grant reporting requirements and procedures.
- RIM Easements: received paperwork for a new easement.
- Grazing Workshop: Staff met with NRCS to discuss and verify the event planning.
- Upcoming Events: MASWCD Shoreline Training in Alexandria on December 12, 2019; next board meeting is Thursday, January 9, 2020 and Grazing Workshop is January 29, 2020 with a backup date of February 5, 2020 in the event of inclement weather.

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

- Forest Stewardship: Received 1 new contract and paid out 1 contract in November. There are 1,649 acres in process with a possible 700 more acres available with Local Capacity grant dollars assigned to forest stewardships and a possible 500 more acres

through other grant dollars that have not been completely expended for previously assigned projects within the 2017 and 2018 Local Capacity grants.

- Tree Orders: receiving orders regularly through the mail and our website.
- Rain Monitoring Sheets: We had 31 monitors turn in sheets in October and have received 20 monitoring sheets so far for November.
- Financial: Stopped at both banks to verify paperwork needed. Will turn in all paperwork needed with copies of signed October minutes once everything is complete. Our first 2020 Fresh Water Festival donation was received in November. Two of four grant narrative reports have been completed in eLINK and Crystal will work on the other two with Chad.
- Nitrate Clinic: The December nitrate clinic had 4 walk-ins and 6 tests. One tested under 1.0 ppm, 3 under 3.0 ppm and one just under 20.0 ppm.
- Website and Social Media: Updated both sites with Crystal's welcome.
- 2018 Local Capacity Reconciliation: Jeannette from BWSR was here on 12/10/19 to reconcile this grant. A small amount still needs to be verified before completion. I will work with her to complete the task.
- Other: notes were given on plat books for the Historical Society and the Grazing Workshop (covered in Old Business).

OLD BUSINESS

- Grazing Workshop: Staff updated information on the event. Flyers are ready to go to the printers with a planned mail out date the beginning of January. Speakers are lined up and they have given Alicia their topic and the agenda/poster has been completed. Sponsors have been contacted and cash donations are starting to come in. Bar 209 will be catering. Coca Cola has donated pop and water. Hugo's will put a cash donation toward our purchase of donuts and cookies. The banners will no longer be used and a-framed signs are being made for the event with a backside for our tree sales.
- State Convention Review: Supervisor Noyes reported the keynote speaker, David Horsager's, topic was about trust and how to gain it and 'how to get to the completion of the project'. Other topics from the convention were covered earlier.
- Client from Edgewood Estates: Crystal gave a brief overview and still needs to schedule a visit with client, Bill Westerberg and Beth Hippert to go over the specifics.
- RCPP (grazing): Staff presented the completed contribution letter submitted on November 29th that was approved at the November board meeting.
- Forest Stewardship Letter & Application, Forest Stewardship Planner Contract: Staff presented the forms and letter for edits. Supervisor Sells recommended one edit. Staff will update and forward onto the county attorney for legal recommendations. After verification is complete, staff will have foresters sign contracts for the 2020-2022 plans. Staff will start using the new landowner's contracts starting January 1, 2020.

Chair Noyes called for a break at 10:34 am. A video of Mr. Roerick receiving his Outstanding Forest Steward Award at the state convention was shown during break.

Meeting reconvened at 11:00 am.

NEW BUSINESS

- Review 2020 Calendar of Events: Chair Noyes announced that he will not be available for activities between mid-March through mid-April. Edits were discussed and staff will update as requested and send copies out as soon as we have the Area 8 meeting dates.
- Review By-Laws for Annual Strategic Meeting – and set date: Staff will send out list via email for supervisors to review and will add to next meeting. Strategic Work Session is scheduled for Thursday, January 16, 2019.
- SWCD Legislative Days (March 24 & 25) in St. Paul and a Managers Meeting (March 25-26) in St. Cloud: Staff wanted the supervisors to know the dates and who will be representing our SWCD.
- Part-time 1W1P & SWCD WQRS shared personnel: covered earlier
- Approve 2020 Work Plan and Annual Report: Staff didn't have time to review and update. **Supervisor Sells moved to table the review of the 2020 Work Plan and Annual Report. Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- Personnel Review – Closed Session: This item will be addressed after completing Correspondence, Next Meeting, Leadership & Financial items.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Staff reviewed the Recycling, Rain Barrels, Compost Bins Invitation 2020; RCPP Irrigation Proposal & Map and the RCPP Grazing Proposal. The MACDE request for dues was just received and staff will send payment (\$25/staff). A thank you note was received from Julie Kingsley. A holiday greeting was received from Always There Staffing and staff will send out the 2019 Nitrate Clinic information to supervisors.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Thursday, January 9th, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. in the office at 603 Central Avenue North, Park Rapids, MN. Items on the January agenda are: declare bank and newspaper for 2020, Grazing Workshop review, awareness articles for local newspaper(s), Strategic Meeting items, Annual Report Draft and refreshments will be by Lynn Goodrich.

LEADERSHIP

- Met with Commissioner Stacey; attended 1W1P meetings; Mr. Roderick's award and submit information to local papers; new district manager article in local papers; district manager will attend the BWSR shoreline training; post grazing workshop posters around county and on news media and newspapers.

FINANCIAL

- BWSR reconciliation for our 2018 Local Capacity Grant; discuss additional staffing, salary rates and budget; year-end reporting training session.

Chair requested that they go into closed session to discuss Personnel Review at 11:36 am. Session reopened at 12:16 pm.

The board had a Personnel Committee Meeting to discuss that they have an annual review of staff compensation to be sure salaries are in line with our area. Supervisor Goodrich announced

that they would like to adjust the administrative assistant salary to \$20.50 an hour starting the first full pay period in January 2020. **Supervisor Rettinger “so moved”. Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

Staff verified with NRCS that the grazing workshop poster, rip off sheets and flyers are ready and handed out copies requested to supervisors.

Staff handed out the updated staff salary information prior to today’s change.

Staff handed out contact information of present staff and supervisors to review. Supervisors suggested edits and staff should update and send out via email upon completion.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Supervisor Goodrich to adjourn the meeting; meeting adjourned at 12:29 pm.

APPROVED: 1 - 9 - 2020
Date

SECRETARY


Lynn Goodrich, Secretary