

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM May 13, 2020 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Supervisors meeting held via Zoom.

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

Members absent: Bob Isle, Treasurer (not able to attend)

Others present: Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager
Annette Olson, Administrative Assistant
Alicia Gohmann, WQR Technician
Peter Jacobson, WQR&E Specialist
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner

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

AGENDA AND MINUTES

Items added to the agenda: Supervisor Goodrich requested to add a ‘closed session to discuss personnel’ after Correspondence. **A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: Goodrich, Sells, Noyes. Abstain: Rettinger was having technical issues and was not able to respond. Opposed: None. Absent: Iles. Motion carried.**

Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve the minutes as presented. Supervisor Sells seconded the motion. Affirmative: Goodrich, Sells, Noyes. Opposed: None. Abstain: Rettinger still having technical issues and was not able to respond. Absent: Iles. Motion carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Supervisor Sells and Noyes asked for clarification on a payroll journal entry amounts, staff gave explanation. Alternate Treasurer Sells presented the treasurer’s report to the board, subject to the auditor’s review.

OLD BUSINESS

- 2019 Financial Report & 2020 Work Plan: District Manager indicated that she received only a couple responses back so far and asked the supervisors to please read through the report and respond back with any edits or additions needed by the end of the week so a

final draft can be submitted for approval at the June board meeting so staff can submit to County for their budget preparation.

Chair Noyes requested introductions for new staff members: Alicia Gohmann and Peter Jacobson. Supervisor Rettinger was able to resolve his technology issues and has just rejoined the meeting.

- Review Tree Sale Distribution/Drop-off: Staff reported the disbursement went well and that staff will compile an itemized financial report for the 2020 tree sales and bring to the June meeting. There was a lot of discussion on how this year's process will affect our bottom line and what we might change if future has similar restrictions. Supervisor Goodrich requested staff to please include a detailed breakdown for costs/hours.

NEW BUSINESS

- LWMP Task Force Meeting: Staff did not have time to set up the annual meeting yet but will reach out to everyone for a possible meeting date by late June. Staff reported Supervisor Noyes is the LWMP alternate.
- Fair Booth & Nitrate Clinics: Staff reported that Akeley's Paul Bunyan Days has been canceled and that the fair board will be meeting on May 19th to discuss if the fair will be held or not. Staff requested direction on how to update as we go. Chair Noyes reported that the Laporte Independent Celebration Days has been postponed to the end of August at this time but may get cancelled. Supervisors suggest to note clinics be updated to TBD (to be determined) and check back closer to the event date for updates. The June in-house clinic could be handled as a drop off clinic with disposable containers and practice safe handling. Staff will update the website and Facebook pages appropriately. Staff will contact Grace Lake Assn. to see if they plan to have their meeting June 6, 2020.
- November Election: Staff reminded supervisors for Districts 1, 2 and 3 need to file between May 19th and June 2nd to get their name on the election ballot. The website information has already been forwarded on to the supervisors needing to file for this year's election – for their information.
- COVID-19 going forward: Discussion on how to handle workday schedules and office attendance if restrictions remain in place. USDA offices are still locked to public until further notice with 2 NRCS and FSA staff able to work daily. Supervisors recommend that SWCD staff continue to telework for the time being and if need to work in the office, to keep the recommended 6 feet distance, wear a mask as needed, sanitize as needed and work on acquiring a shield/barrier around the administrative assistant work area, depending on the governors recommendations. Staff will check with Bernie for a quote regarding plexiglass for the workstation.
- Approve Sunsetting Resolutions: Supervisors discussed resolutions they would like to continue or update: #1-Pollinator Habitat on Public Lands (Clay SWCD), #3-Communicate and Coordinate State Priorities for Stream Restoration Projects (Wilkin SWCD), #10-Watershed Block Grants for Implementation of one Watershed, One Plan (Fillmore SWCD), and #19-Increase CRP Payment Limit (Freeborn SWCD). Supervisors would like staff to reach out to the originating SWCD to see if they are acting on these resolutions themselves and report back.

- Approve New SGIA Resolution: Supervisors were notified that we did not receive a resolution on SGIA from Becker SWCD. Supervisor Goodrich will try to coordinate efforts with Crow Wing, Cass & Becker SWCD's to see if a resolution could still be drafted yet this year. If not, then one should be available for next year.

Alicia Gohmann needed to leave the meeting for another scheduled meeting.

- Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Grant Application: Supervisors were notified of the report covering Phase I and the funds covering easement work in the Leech Lake River and Pine River Watersheds from Melissa Barrick, Crow Wing SWCD. Staff is requesting Board approval on the letter of support drafted and presented for Phase II of this program. Crystal briefed everyone on the reason for our letter of support for Phase II funding to acquire favorable parcels for access purposes. **Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to ask staff send the letter of support for the 'Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Grant Application' as was drafted and presented at this meeting. Supervisor Sells seconded. Approved: Goodrich, Rettinger, Sells, Noyes. Opposed: None. Absent: Iles. Motion Passed.**
- Leech Lake River Comprehensive Watershed Management Cost Share Program Policy & Procedures: Supervisor Goodrich reported on the meeting recently held regarding policy and procedures for payment of expenditures and billable hours and is requesting Board approval on the document presented. Staff asked for clarification on items within the document. **Chair Noyes moved to approve the Leech Lake River CWMP Cost Share Program Policy & Procedures document as submitted and discussed. Supervisor Sells seconded. Approve: Goodrich, Rettinger, Sells, Noyes. Opposed: None. Absent: Iles. Motion Passed.**
- District Managers 6th Month Evaluation (hire date of October 15, 2019): Supervisor Goodrich asked to defer this item to a closed session at the end of the meeting.

Chair Noyes called for a 5-minute break at 10:15 am.

Meeting reconvened at 10:20 am.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger:

- Mr. Krueger reported that property taxes are due May 15th and that County has passed a resolution to delay penalty on property tax statements until July 15th to help the business and residents that have been affected with COVID-19 restrictions. *(Please, don't delay payment if possible, to help keep County books balanced.)* The County has put a freeze on new hires and have been cutting expenses where they can without furloughs or layoffs at this time. They will be looking at the 2021 budget soon.
- As part of the Census Committee he reported that self-response has been extended to October 31st and follow up workers will not start until August 31st. Park Rapids has a good return rate at 63%. *(Please respond to the 2020 Census soon if you have not already done so!)*
- Chair Noyes had a question regarding summer roadwork. The County is trying a new product on some of the county roads this summer. The new product they are testing is

Base One and is cheaper and better for the environment than the traditional calcium chloride.

- Supervisor Sells wanted to extend congratulations on a good job done handling recent issues regarding our Bill of Rights.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik reported on the following: Notes are available upon request. Other items covered included:

- Working Agreement with NRCS: Mr. Pazdernik reviewed the process needing to complete the agreement and asked for verbal approval before sending it on for required signatures. Both Chair Noyes and District Manager Mathisrud agreed to completing the required process.
- Local Work Group: Mr. Pazdernik requested time to have the meeting either remotely or, if restrictions are lifted, in a place where there would be sufficient room to practice proper social distancing. The Northwoods Bank would be a good place.

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Noyes: He visited with Commissioner Stacey while they both helped hand out 265 trees through the Laporte Lions Club activity. They were able to distribute all the trees within a half hour! He plans to start attending township meeting as soon as he can, as things start opening.

Supervisor Goodrich: He attended Zoom meetings or teleconferences for LLR1W1P Policy Committee and Personnel Committee to discuss the District Manager 6th month review. COLA will be trying a teleconference next month for their first meeting of the year. AIS training: the DNR developed an online class for Level 1 Inspections for the returning inspectors but unsure of the Level 2 inspection and if the decontamination station will be available.

Supervisor Rettinger: He attended the Personnel Committee 6th month review for District Manager. He offered “kudos” to staff as his daughter teaches in Mississippi and was able to use our website as a teaching tool for her students regarding fresh/healthy water.

Supervisor Sells: He has been the alternate treasurer in Supervisor Iles absence.

Supervisor Iles: Absent.

District Manager’s Report: Notes available upon request.

Administrative Assistant’s Report: Notes available upon request.

CORRESPONDENCE

Supervisor Sells noted that we should be watching for possible cuts (10-15% expected) for 2021 grant allocations due to COVID-19.

Chair Noyes called for closed session to address personnel at 11:04 am. {§13D.05 Subd3. (a)}

