

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM October 14, 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, Treasurer
Candy Malm, PR&I

Others present: Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager
Annette Olson, Administrative Assistant
Peter Jacobson, WQR&E Specialist
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist (attended for his report only)
Kim Berns-Melhus, State Director for Conservation Fund
Mark (Chip) Lohmeier, Hubbard County Natural Resource Management
Kent Wolff, DNR Forestry area supervisor for Park Rapids area

Chair Noyes opened the Zoom meeting at 8:30 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
Chair Noyes announced our speaker and asked for introductions.

Kim Berns-Melhus of the Conservation Fund attended the meeting and told us about the mission of her organization and plans for the acquisitions of all remaining Potlatch lands in Hubbard county.

Kim Berns-Melhus, Mark Lohmeier and Kent Wolff left the meeting.

AGENDA AND MINUTES

Items added to the agenda: Staff verified the addition of an item to New Business-Action: RCPP Proposal with other info. **A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to accept the agenda as amended, seconded by Supervisor Malm. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

Staff indicated that a correction was made to remove our office address and replace it with “via ZOOM” as the edit under the ‘Next Meeting’ section on page 4 of the September 9th minutes, after they were sent out to everyone. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to approve the minutes as amended. Supervisor Malm seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

TREASURER’S REPORT

Treasurer Sells asked for any questions. Supervisor Noyes asked about the staff training costs. Staff reported that 4 staff would be attending the U of M Water Conference remotely on October

20 and 21st. Supervisor Noyes also asked for an update on the estimated dollar amount for the buffer request in the Laporte area. Staff indicated that we had a chance to do a site visit and will be working on a buffer plan with temporary fencing to keep the cattle away from the plantings until they get established. BWSR will allow an extension of the grant if we have a project to help use these funds. Staff is also working on compliance checks for the first two-thirds of the county that will use up a good portion of the grant funds. Supervisor Noyes will follow up with another contact that showed interest in a possible buffer project and will report back to the group. With no other questions Treasurer Sells presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Newsletter w/Tree Order:** Staff reported the fall newsletter and tree order form was processed and mailed out last week. Supervisor Noyes indicated the Laporte Lions Club is interested in placing another tree order this year. Supervisor Malm indicated that she has been getting many questions about tree orders. Staff indicated that tamarack trees are not available for sale at this time, due to low stock through our nursery suppliers. Conifers normally ordered through Badoura Nursery will not be placed until early November due to slow inventory verification because of social distancing requirements. Staff ordered a start-up number of conifers through another nursery to cover early orders and will place the remaining trees needed as soon as available. Lake association members should contact HCCOLA to order smaller quantities of trees. Supervisor Rettinger indicated that he has many small white spruce trees on his property fence line that need to be moved and wanted to know how to go about it.
- **Revised Request for Assistance Form:** Staff presented the edited form to the board. The board discussed pros and cons regarding a non-refundable fee and how to handle special circumstances. Suggestion to change the non-refundable fee to \$50.00. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to adopt the Request for Assistance with the fee change from \$25 to \$50 fee. Supervisor Rettinger seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS

- **DNR Letter for State Owned Land w/Map:** Information for supervisors. Staff forwarded the notice on to the Northern Waters Land Trust. Staff indicated DNR should be made aware if notices are sent out to local government units/organizations in the future, more than 2 weeks' notice is needed in order to act on if interested.
- **DNR Private Forest Management Seed Money-Funds and Work Plan:** Hubbard SWCD has been awarded \$5,000 grant through the DNR available to use through June and staff will meet soon to discuss a work plan and in-kind matching funds.
- **Boat Storage for the winter:** The boat motor needs to be serviced for the winter and requested to store it at Supervisor Sells again. Staff will ask Bernie if we can store the boat in the lot here or may need to be brought over to Supervisor Sells again.
- **Notice in Newspaper for November Board Meeting:** Staff will send Shannon a request to post a notice in their calendar items about the November board meeting being held Thursday, November 12th at 8:30am via Zoom due to Veteran's Day.
- **District Manager Annual Review:** Due to a very busy schedule, this review was not able to be completed and will be moved to next board meeting.

- **Cost Share – Suggested Policy and Timelines:** Staff presented a draft policy to help the flow of staff workload. This policy will help clients understand the timelines and fees incorporated with a cost-share project. Suggestion to add the \$50.00 non-refundable fee to the ‘Application Process and Timeline’ section. Staff will update and make it available through our website along with the “Shoreline Guide”, “Shoreline Living” and the DNR “Shoreline Alterations-Riprap” flyer.
- **WCA – Suggested Policy and Timelines:** Staff presented a draft policy with timelines for requests and associated fees when requesting assistance. **Supervisor Malm moved to approve policy. Supervisor Rettinger seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Staff will edit the draft to our letterhead and make available through our website.
- **2019 Audit – Management Letter and Audit:** Staff presented the audit as received from Peterson, LTD. and indicated the Defined Benefit Pension Plan number was different than the one available to use at the beginning of the year, but the rest looks appropriate to the yearend calculations. **Supervisor Sells moved to approve the draft audit. Supervisor Goodrich seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Staff will contact Peterson’s office to verify the PERA Defined Benefit Pension Plan and let them know the SWCD Board of Supervisors approved the audit draft and can forward on to State.
- **RCPP Proposal Letter and Information:** Staff presented a letter of support for the Irrigation RCPP requested by Darren Newville from EOT SWCD, like the letter we sent last year. **Supervisor Goodrich recommended that Crystal sign the letter in support. Supervisor Noyes seconded the recommendation. Affirmative: Rettinger, Malm, Goodrich, Noyes. Opposed: None. Abstain: Sells. Motion carried.**
- **Resolution Voting:** Voting will take place at the end of today’s meeting.

Chair Noyes called for a break at 10:04 am.

Meeting reconvened at 10:14 am.

Staff updated supervisors of the two most recent bills that just came through for payment.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger: Mr. Krueger reported on the following:

- Recent timber sale went better than the last sale. Everything sold and prices were higher than the last sale.
- Mr. Krueger is on the County Parks Board and they are working on project implementation plans, setting priorities, how to improve existing parks and trails, develop scenic water trails and establishing county campgrounds.
- How the county will spend the CARES money: redesign the county board room to give the commissioners more space for the recommended 6-foot space/distance, and how to spend the 2.6 million in CARES funds by November 30th.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik stopped in our meeting for his report and then left the meeting again. Notes are available upon request. The office will be low staffed this Thursday and Friday so SWCD will forward individual extensions on to cell phone coverage.

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Noyes: The Mississippi Headwater Board did not meet last month. He was asked and participated in a NRCS Stack 2-day event, a Zoom meeting with all presenters remote. There were about 70 participants at the start of the event, and he briefed the information covered.

Supervisor Goodrich: He attended the TSA8 meeting for Don R. and they approved their 2021 Budget. The engineers expressed concern about clients walking away with proposed engineered plans without any compensation. Staff should not give plans to prospective clients until compensation is received. They discussed how to cover Beth's position after she retires. Supervisor Goodrich also attended a Zoom LLR 1W1P Policy Committee meeting where they worked on moving funds from areas of the 2020-2021 Work Plan Budget to cover Shoreland Protection Projects not originally set up in original budget. The committee didn't think they would be getting to actual projects the first two years. He has also been working on Crystal's evaluation in preparation for her annual review.

Supervisor Rettinger: Attended last month's board meeting.

Supervisor Sells: He attended a teleconference with the Forestry Association where they discussed several grants still standing.

Supervisor Malm: She read through the resolutions and how they are handled. Learned about the rain monitoring and will be looking for possible monitors in her townships that do not have volunteers already monitoring. She mentioned she has been receiving a lot of questions regarding tree orders.

District Manager's Report: Crystal's and other part-time staff reports are available upon request. Chair Noyes requested an update on the virtual lab and Crystal gave an updated report regarding the status of the lab. She also commented that we have not heard back from the Bernick's Foundation Grant or other sources she has reached out to for future help funding the lab, and our part time programmer, Jake Shaughnessy, will be using our lab project to do his thesis.

Administrative Assistant's Report: Annette's report is available upon request.

Peter Jacobson gave report on possible parcels around the Shingobee Lake, Steele Lake and Island Lake that could be included in the Leech Lake 1W1P easement project. Staff will complete reviewing information and send out letters to chosen landowners to see if they are interested in easements for their forested land.

- **Resolution Voting:** The Board of Supervisors then spent time on voting on the resolution ballot. This year we are only able to approve and disapprove the new and sunsetting resolutions. Staff recorded individual votes and will send results on to Sheila Vanney at MASWCD. *Supervisor Rettinger had technical issues and lost connection at 11:00am and was able to reconnect to the meeting at 11:07am. Supervisor Rettinger updated all missed items at the end of the meeting.*

CORRESPONDENCE

- Leech Lake River Watershed Project-Protecting Water Quality flyer was sent out to all supervisors.
- MPCA – Lakes and Streams Protection Workshop email forwarded on to everyone to attend if interested.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Thursday, November 12, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom. Items on the agenda: start of Annual Report, Cost Share Policy, District Manager Annual Review, Water Resource Technician and the Water Quality Resource Research & Easement Specialist 6-month reviews.

WORKING LIST OF PRIORITIES:

- **Leadership:** Supervisor Goodrich stepped in for the TSA8 meeting and Supervisor Noyes attended a two-day NRCS conference call.
- **Financial Management:** 2019 Audit completed, worked with LLR 1W1P Policy Committee to change budget and hold virtual meetings/reduce mileage expenses and received \$5,000 DNR Grant.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Supervisor Goodrich to adjourn the meeting; meeting adjourned at 11:53 am.

APPROVED: 11-12-2020
Date

SECRETARY:


Lynn Goodrich, Secretary