

# HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## MINUTES FROM January 13, 2021 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  
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.

### OATH OF OFFICE FOR NEWLY ELECTED SUPERVISORS

Supervisor's Malm, Noyes and Rettinger took the Oath of Office and the Board discussed their assignments. **Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to retain the existing positions and committees on the board, and revisit at the July 2021 meeting. Supervisor Rettinger seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Staff will update the contact list with recommended edits and forward a new copy on to everyone.

### AGENDA AND MINUTES

Items added to the agenda: Under New Business-Action: j) Mantrap Township Veliger Testing General Services Agreement and k) 2021 Staff Stipend. **Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

**Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to approve the December 9<sup>th</sup> minutes as presented. Supervisor Rettinger seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Sells announced that a Citizen's National Bank CD is maturing, and we will need to roll it into our checking while we wait for 2021 grant funds to show up, and then start a new CD once we receive the new grant funds. Staff reviewed the small amount of cost-share funds that need to be returned to BWSR. Staff also indicated that yearend reporting is behind schedule due to vacation time needed to be used by the end of the year and that there was a small error in the

credit card charges and will be corrected in January. With no questions Supervisor Sells presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review.

### OLD BUSINESS

- Strategic Board Meeting (January 21 from 9am-Noon): Reminder of scheduled meeting and asked for any additional topics to be added to agenda. Staff also noted there would be a Managers Meeting held that same day.
- 2019 Financial Statements Audit-Received: Staff noted an electronic file was forwarded to everyone the end of December and a paper copy could be picked up or mailed out to each supervisor. Staff will send an electronic file out to all the Hubbard County Commissioners also.
- New Technician Position update and interview schedule: Staff reported that we received 15 applications and 5 other interested parties through Facebook. Crystal did a short phone interview with all the applicants and narrowed it down to the 6 strongest applicants for a possible virtual interview. The Personnel Committee will review these 6 applicants and recommend which ones to interview before the next board meeting. This position will be a full-time technician with full benefits and starting rate of \$18-\$20 per hour. The committee plans to hold virtual interviews on January 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- Review HCLWMP Comprehensive Plan: Staff will schedule a meeting (TBD) with the LWMP representatives, Supervisors Noyes and Malm to review the plan.
- Supervisors Yearly Statement of Interest: Reminder to complete their statement before the January deadline. Supervisors Goodrich and Noyes have completed theirs and Supervisors Rettinger, Sells and Malm will do theirs soon.
- COVID Policy Update: Staff added a statement to the previously approved policy regarding employees returning to the office after having tested positive for COVID. Supervisors suggested to include 'in writing' to the statement. **Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to approve the COVID Policy as presented with suggested edit. Supervisor Malm seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- Vacation, Sick Leave & Compensation Carry Over Limit: Staff requested that we increase the maximum amount of vacation to carry forward into the new year, from 160 to 200 hours. Discussion to leave the max at 160 hours and keep the workweek at 40 hours. **Supervisor Sells made a motion to allow Annette's vacation time to accrue an additional 14 hours for the current year and that they be used in the 2021 calendar year. Supervisor Malm seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

Chair Noyes called for a break at 9:33am.

Meeting reconvened at 9:42am.

### NEW BUSINESS

- Awareness Article: Staff asked supervisors to bring ideas to our strategic meeting for topics to write up for the local newspaper. Suggestions for Supervisor Malm to be interviewed as our new supervisor to the team and prepare an article about our virtual lab going live for students and adults.

- eLINK Reporting: Staff reported that the year-end reporting is behind schedule and will be working on it after monthly meeting items are completed.
- Review Annual Work Plan: Staff discussed the work plan at our last staff meeting and asked supervisors to review last year's document and bring items to the strategic meeting that we completed, items we need to work on and if we need to change our priorities for 2021.
- Central Minnesota Irrigators Donation Request: Staff presented the donation request received. The Board declined to donate at this time.
- Giziibii Resource Conservation & Development Donation Request: Staff presented the donation request received. The Board declined to donate at this time.
- **Declare Banks: Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to continue to use the North View Bank as our primary (checking and money market account) the Citizens National Bank as our secondary bank (second checking account and 4 CD's) and continue our relationships as they have been this past year. Supervisor Sells seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- 2020 Financial Audit: Staff presented the Peterson & Company, LTD. bid proposal for our 2020 financial audit for \$2,900. BSWR has indicated that all SWCDs will be audited every year going forward. **Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to accept the bid and use Peterson & Company, LTD for our 2020 audit and authorize Crystal to sign the document. Supervisor Malm seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- Website Cleanup: Staff presented two estimates to work on updates to our website to make it more user friendly or to allow staff to try to do the updates. Discussion indicated that we should stick with Paul Bunyan Communications as they are the ones that built our website, are responsive to our needs, and it is working well. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to accept the bid from Paul Bunyan Communications (\$975.00) to update our website. Supervisor Sells seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- Approve 2021 Calendar of Events: Supervisors requested a few edits to the 2021 calendar presented. **Supervisor Malm moved to accept the 2021 calendar as modified. Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- 2022 Plat Book – Mapping Solutions Agreement: Staff presented an agreement from Mapping Solutions for the proposed 2022 Plat Book. This agreement will allow us to use \$2,000 of our remaining fund as a deposit to hold our place for printing 300 copies of our new plat book in January of 2022. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to accept and sign the agreement with Mapping Solutions for 300 books at \$18.50 per copy. Supervisor Sells seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- Citizen's National Bank CD Renewal: Discussion previous during the treasurer's report. **Supervisor Sells made a motion to allow the maturing CD to expire and transfer into checking. Seconded by Supervisor Malm. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Supervisor Goodrich added: it is with the intention to start a new CD when our grant funds become available. All agreed.
- 2021 Mileage Rate & Cost of Living Increase: Staff presented information and the supervisors acknowledged the new federal mileage rate of \$0.56 for 2021. The 2021 Cost of Living information is pending and will be brought to the Board when available.

- MN SWCD Forestry Association and Associate Dues: Supervisor Sells recommended that we pay our annual Forestry Association dues. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to rejoin the 2021 MN SWCD Forestry Association at the rate of \$60. Supervisor Malm seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** The associate dues can be done on an individual basis.
- MASWCD Dues for 2021: Staff presented the bill for the 2021 dues for \$3,599.80 and indicated that they were in line with the past years amounts. Crystal would like to learn more about these dues and what benefits come with the expense and suggestion was made to contact Tom Schultz (Wadena SWCD) for background information. **Supervisor Sells moved to pay the MASWCD dues for 2021. Seconded by Supervisor Malm. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- Mantrap Veliger Testing General Service Agreement for 2021: Staff presented the drafted request for services for Mantrap Township to do their veliger sampling again in 2021. Mantrap Township approved the General Service Agreement for \$1,796.16 and has submitted payment for their request; staff is requesting approval from the Board. **Supervisor Malm moved to accept the Mantrap Township veliger testing service agreement for 2021. Supervisor Rettinger seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- 2021 Staff Stipend: Chair Noyes indicated that the Cares Act funds covered the staff 2020 stipend and suggested a stipend for the staff working from home in 2021. Crystal presented more information regarding possible stipend amounts. Suggestion to continue discussion at our strategic meeting and bring back to the February board meeting.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

- Commissioner Krueger reported that their County Assessor, Ginger Buitenwerf resigned effective December 24th. The assessor's position will remain a department head and the posting for the position began on January 12.
- They have received 14 applications to date for the administrator position with a closing date of January 16. He is looking forward to the interviews and narrowing the candidates down to one. The County has contracted Kay Mack to fill in as Interim Administrator until this position is filled with a permanent hire.
- The Commissioners have updated their committee assignments. Ted VanKampen is replacing Char Christensen as the alternate for the LLR 1W1P committee and he (*Tom Krueger*) will replace Char Christensen as the alternate for the Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P committee. He also reported that our local economy has shown strength in the pandemic with a lower-than-expected delinquency rate in property tax payments.

## **DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST**

Dan Pazdernik report: Reminder to SWCD staff to complete the required Ag Learn. Notes are available upon request.

## **REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS**

Chair Noyes: He attended our monthly board meeting, the Zoom Mississippi River Headwaters Policy Meeting and indicated that they are looking for feedback from member boards on the draft plan. Noyes attended the Mississippi Headwaters board meeting. He also made a call to Commissioner Stacey and visited about the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P.

Supervisor Sells: He attended monthly board meeting and the December 24<sup>th</sup> staff meeting, worked with Jake and Candy on edits for the virtual lab text and edited a forestry flyer for Alicia.

Supervisor Malm: She attended the monthly board meeting and worked on edits in the virtual lab text with Jake and Don Sells and enjoyed learning about watersheds. She also started to look through the Mississippi River Headwaters plan and will visit with Shannon about getting an article in the paper soon.

Supervisor Rettinger: He attended the monthly board meeting and the TSA 8 Area Meeting. The officers are the same as last year and he reported that they reviewed what activities happened in 2020 and indicated that our Tails UP Dime project was part of the information presented at the meeting featuring the Hickenbottom Drain system, new to SWCD projects.

Supervisor Goodrich: He attended the monthly board meeting and attended the Itasca SWCD board meeting and gave highlights on items of interest.

District Manager's Report: Crystal reviewed the buffer projects staff is working on, the Grace Lake Bathub Study, a virtual lab outreach to teachers going out soon, will attend an LLR1W1P meeting this week to review what activities are being worked on, reviewed cost-share projects in the works and Alicia's notes about outreach to community groups. Notes are available upon request.

Administrative Assistant's Report: Annette indicated we will be looking for community requests for tree species and quantity at our strategic meeting. Notes are available upon request.

## **ADDITIONAL ITEMS COVERED**

- **Declare Newspaper: Supervisor Goodrich moved to continue to use the Park Rapids Enterprise as our official newspaper for required announcements. Supervisor Sells seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- **Supervisor Stipend: Chair Noyes moved to keep the supervisor stipend as in the past. Supervisor Malm seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Holiday greeting from Chris and Sue Brokl (forest plan writer)
- MASWCD Accomplishments with cover letter
- MCIT Certificate for no accidents in 2020
- Copy of Virtual Lab Consent Form – Supervisor Goodrich requested to add the parent/guardian contact information area to the form.

