

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM November 12, 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
Alicia Gohmann, WQR Technician
Brandon Spain-Brist, Summer Intern
Jody Peek, NRCS Team Lead
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

Staff emailed a revised agenda to everyone on Wednesday morning before Thursday's meeting. **A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to accept the revised agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

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

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Sells asked for updates for expiring Buffer Law and Cost-Share Grants. Staff highlighted possible projects in process and indicated that we will be reaching out to Chad Severt for extensions on grants that we will not complete by December 2020 with the intent to use in 2021. With no other questions Supervisor Sells presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review.

OLD BUSINESS

- **2020 Cost-Share Policy complete/approved:** Staff presented the final signed copy of our new Cost-Share Policy to the supervisors, that was approved at October's meeting.
- **HCSWCD WCA Policy Draft:** Staff presented the draft and asked for recommended edits. Suggestions for edits: 1) add "additional" in the second and third bullet under the Application section, 2) change the fee to \$50 under the Site Visit section to be consistent with our new Cost-Share Policy. **Supervisor Goodrich moved to accept the Wetland**

Conservation Act Policy document with the edits recommended. Supervisor Malm seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

- **District Annual Review:** review will be discussed in closed session at the end of the meeting. Any recommendations will then be introduced and voted upon in the open session to follow.
- **Cost-Share Amendment for Tails Up Dime Project:** Staff indicated this project is complete other than the recommended plantings on the back slope. The delays were caused by weather conditions and non-availability of a backhoe. The required plantings will take place in the spring of 2021 and not prior to the current cost-share contract expiration of October 31, 2020. Only about half of the allocated funds the Board approved have been used to date, therefore staff recommended we open an amended cost-share contract for up to \$1,000 to cover any additional expenses that might arise. **Supervisor Sells made a motion to amend the Tails Up Dime Cost-Share Contract to reduce the amount to \$2,000 outstanding (with a new expiration date of July 31, 2021). Supervisor Malm seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS

- **Board of Supervisors Election Results:** Congratulations to Candy Malm our newly elected supervisor, Don Rettinger and Marcel Noyes our re-elected supervisors. We will swear in all three at our January meeting.
- **MN Lakes & Rivers Advocates Annual Meeting & Voting:** Staff asked supervisors if they would like to submit the Ballot and Proxy. Supervisors requested to vote for Susan Henken-Thielen, John P. James and Mary Manns and to approve Mr. James as proxy at the Annual Meeting on December 2, 2020. Staff will complete the ballot and mail out yet this week.
- **MN Department of Ag – Nursery Stock Dealer Certificate Renewal:** Staff indicated our annual nursery stock dealer certificate is due to be paid. We need to pay a \$350 fee vs the \$250 fee as in the past several years due to raised pricing and items sold. Supervisor Goodrich would like to look into having this fee waived in the future. Staff will mail our certificate payment out by the end of the week.
- **COVID-19 Updates:** Staff updated the Board of their increasing concern of higher numbers in reported cases and that NRCS is now down to one staff per organization in the office at a time. Staff will look at our active COVID-19 Policy to see if any updates are needed. Staff will send everyone a copy to review and reply with suggested updates. Supervisor Noyes indicated that we should complete and submit a request for CARES funds. A draft is ready, and staff will complete with expenses incurred since March, and send on to Eric Nerness at Hubbard County by Friday, November 13, 2020. After discussion, **Supervisor Sells moved to authorize Crystal to write a request for CARES money, sign the request (on the Boards behalf) and submit to the County. Supervisor Goodrich seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- **North Region Forester Position Participant Refund:** Staff noted that we received a refund check for \$814.89 from Atkin SWCD for the North Region Forester position.

Suggestion to deposit into the general account now and assign it to forestry activity or staff training in our next budget.

- **Water Resource Technician 6-Month Review:** review will be discussed in closed session at the end of the meeting. Any recommendations will then be introduced and voted upon in the open session to follow.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger: Mr. Krueger announced that the County Coordinator, Eric Nerness will be leaving at the end of December. They are in the process of hiring his replacement as an administrator instead of a coordinator. He also reported that Kim Berns-Melhus, from the Conservation Foundation, did a presentation on the Potlatch forested lands at their meeting.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Team Lead, Jody Peek did the NRCS report in Dan Pazdernik's absence. Notes are available upon request.

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Noyes: Mr. Noyes attended last month's board meeting, the October Mississippi Headwaters Board meeting and met with Commissioner Stacey. He participated in the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P event and reported the 200-page draft proposal is ready to be reviewed by attorneys. Their group decided to have Zach prepare a 2-page overview for members to use for presentations to their boards.

Supervisor Rettinger: Mr. Rettinger attended last month's board meeting and participated in Crystal's annual review.

Supervisor Malm: Ms. Malm attended last month's board meeting and followed the elections closely. She noted that Brandon's presentation to the Laporte class was a great project to do and was well received and would like to see more. Other supervisors indicated the same.

Supervisor Sells: Mr. Sells attended last month's board meeting and has been doing treasurer duties. He also sent out the agenda for the November 19th conference call MN SWCD Forestry Association meeting. Supervisor's Goodrich and Malm mentioned interest in attending.

Supervisor Goodrich: Mr. Goodrich attended last month's board meeting, participated in Crystal's annual review and was informed of Alicia's 6-month review. He has been working on the CARES Act request.

Staff Presentations:

- Alicia Gohmann gave a 30-minute power point presentation on the SWAG Monitoring activities over the summer.
- Brandon Spain-Brist showed a 10-minute video on the Tails Up Dime cost-share project. Supervisors suggested adding names of people in the video, add our SWCD Logo and highlight the Geoweb as a new product to our area for erosion control. Another

suggestion was made to set up and film an interview with landowner to enhance the information for our website and Facebook pages.

District Manager's Report: Notes are available upon request and highlighted the following:

- WCA trainings are available online and she is checking them out
- Virtual Lab – staff and supervisors will look into other possible grants and other local organizations that might want to help fund this program with donations
- Staff planning – we are estimating the need for more staff hours to cover the Leech Lake River Watershed Comprehensive Management Plan (LLRWCMMP) grant funded activities including outreach

Administrative Assistant's Report: Notes are available upon request and highlighted the following:

- Staff will discuss if we should request a refund for the WCA fee for workshop or allow a credit for future workshops
- Suggestion was made to include an update with staff comp time earned noting which project(s) required the time
- Reminder to report ice-in dates for area lakes

CORRESPONDENCE

- Thank you note from Bob Iles
- Brandon's thank you note from the Laporte class for his presentation
- MN SWCD Forestry Association agenda for their next meeting

NEXT MEETING

The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Wednesday, December 9, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. via ZOOM. Items on the agenda include the following: review of State Convention, Annual Work Plan, approve WCA Policy, Review/Approve 2021 Calendar, and Water Quality Resource Research & Easement Specialist 6-month review.

WORKING LIST OF PRIORITIES:

- Leadership: election promotion for new candidate, supervisor visit with Commissioner Stacey and staff requested a notice to be printed in the local papers about the November change of day for our monthly board meeting.
- Financial Management: applying for CARES Act funds, discussing the need to look for outside organizations to help with our financial needs for our virtual lab and recognize and discuss staff needs while working remotely.

Chair Noyes called for a 5-minute break at 11:22 am.

Per Statute 13D.05 Subd 3.(a), Supervisor Noyes moved to go into closed session to discuss personnel reviews and any warranted changes in salary. Ended closed session at 12:20pm.

Supervisor Sells moved to reopen the regular business meeting. Supervisor Malm seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried. Hubbard SWCD business meeting reopened at 12:22 pm.

Supervisor Goodrich announced that they just completed discussing the evaluations of Alicia Gohmann's 6-month review and Crystal Mathisrud's annual review.

Supervisor Goodrich announced the Board agreed with the Personnel Committee's recommendation and made a motion to continue Alicia Gohmann's employment with an increase of \$1.00/hour effective the first full pay period following her 6-month anniversary date. Supervisor Rettinger seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Supervisor Goodrich moved to request staff to get a HCSWCD VISA credit card for Alicia Gohmann with an appropriate credit limit (of \$2,000). Supervisor Sell seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Supervisor Goodrich announced that the Board agreed with the Personnel Committee's recommendation and moved to continue Crystal Mathisrud's appointment and offer her an increase of \$2.50/hour (retro to the first full pay period following her anniversary date). Supervisor Rettinger seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Supervisor Sells to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Supervisor Malm. Chair Noyes closed the Hubbard SWCD business meeting 12:37 pm.

APPROVED: 12/9/2020

Date

SECRETARY 

Lynn Goodrich, Secretary