

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM December 9, 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 (part of meeting)
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner (part of meeting)

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: Staff mentioned that an updated agenda was sent out late Tuesday with the addition of Leech Lake River 1W1P-Cass SWCD Radio Spot for Forest Stewardship Plans added to New Business-Action Items. **A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to accept the agenda as amended, seconded by Supervisor Sells. 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 mentioned that receiving the CARES Act funds of \$23,615.69 greatly benefited our account. Staff reported that a deposit of \$883.00 was noticed when reconciling the books after the monthly reports were completed. Staff is investigating and will update the books when it is resolved. Treasurer Sells presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review. *(Staff forwarded a revised copy of the Treasurers report with notations on to Treasurer Sells.)*

OLD BUSINESS

- State Convention Review – Comments covered attending the annual meeting electronically is a much better way to meet for this meeting, other than the social networking is lost.

- Staff Workload Discussion – Crystal gave an overview of the many hours put in by staff this summer & fall due to client demands including ideas for handling the built-up comp hours and how we hope to handle the future workload. Supervisor’s suggested that hours needed to put in past an 8-hour day be pre-approved by the District Manager or Personnel Committee. To keep this year’s pay within the calendar year, the Board recommended that we pay out Crystal’s comp time before the end of the year. The Board also recommended we get a new cell phone for her to use for work related tasks. **Supervisor Noyes moved to have Crystal buy a cell phone to use for work and approve the payout of comp time in December. Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion Approved.**
- New Technician Position Description and Job Announcement – Chair Noyes recommended we move this item to after the break.
- HCSWCD WCA Policy Approval – **Supervisor Sells moved to approve the revised Wetland Conservation Act Policy. Seconded by Supervisor Goodrich. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion Approved.**
- COVID Policy – Staff asked for possible updates for our COVID Policy. Discussion covered the issues with the positive test within the office. Supervisors requested we add a statement to indicate that a negative test result needs to be obtained before being able to return to the office for work. Staff will present a draft upon updating.

NEW BUSINESS

- Review Annual Work Plan – Crystal gave a brief update on how staff will be handling the update and requested Supervisors be ready to provide input at our January Strategic Meeting. Staff and Supervisors plan to meet on January 21 between 9am and noon with a backup date of January 28, after checking the scheduled TSA 8 meeting date. *(the Strategic Meeting is scheduled for January 21st from 9am – noon via Zoom)*
- Review 2021 Calendar Events – staff reviewed the draft with the Board and asked for any updates needed. Staff will continue to make updates as they become available and bring back to the Board in January.
- Buffer Law/Cost-Share Project on Kabekona River – Crystal gave an update staff is working on for the buffer project on Kabekona indicating this project could be done as a training project. There is a possibility to expand this project with LLR 1W1P funds soon. Alicia Gohmann joined our meeting to explain the project she has been working on with JPB Engineer, Beth Hippert. They are expecting this project will take 5 to 10 years to fully establish as a good buffer. Phil Votruba suggested that we add a couple new testing sites to establish if the high e. Coli readings are of human or animal origination. Kabekona Lake Association might be a good source for matching funds. We hope to bring a project proposal to the Board soon. Alicia G. left the meeting after discussion.
- Employee Stipend for Home Office Expenses – Chair Noyes explained the formula for the stipend through the CARES Act funds. Staff verified the employees listed in the request. **Supervisor Sells made a motion to pay the stipend request to all 6 employees for work related expenses while working from home. Seconded by Supervisor Goodrich.** The presented amount covers mid-March – December 2020 and the Board suggested we should keep track of COVID expenses incurred through 2021 if more funds come available. **Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion Approved.**

- MACDE Dues for Staff – Supervisors directed we cover all staff, full-time and part-time, MACDE dues for 2021.
- 2021 Grazing Workshop Calendar – Crystal reported the plans for the calendar and possible costs. The Board agreed to order only the count needed for this year and if there is positive feedback, we could expand next year. **Supervisor Rettinger moved to make 100 calendars for this year. Seconded by Supervisor Malm. Affirmative: Noyes, Rettinger, Sells, Malm. Opposed: None. Abstained: Goodrich. Motion Passed.**
- LLR 1W1P – Cass SWCD Radio Spot for Forest Stewardship Plan – moved to after break.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger: reported on the following:

- The Parks & Rec Board is looking into acquiring some of the desirable Potlatch tracks of lands hoping to get special legislation to allow them to put funds from sales of undesirable forfeited land tracks into a special account to use for purchasing desirable Potlatch properties.
- The County Board is looking at their committees and dropping some that no longer are active. He inquired about two that might be an overlap. Supervisor Goodrich will review and advise back to Mr. Krueger on the ones in question. Commissioner Krueger excused himself from the meeting.

Chair Noyes called for a break at 10:53 am.

Meeting reconvened at 11:03 am.

New Business and Old Business continued:

- Radio Spot for LLR 1W1P Forest Stewardship Plans – Cass SWCD Board just approved to run some radio spots in January to bring more forest stewardship plans into the Leech Lake River Watershed area. Supervisors and staff discussed and felt it would be better to run in spring. Crystal will check with Cass SWCD to see if they would be okay to run the same ads in March when we would be better prepared. The Board will plan to discuss at our strategic meeting in January.
- New Technician Position Description/Job Announcement – Staff would like to have a new Technician on board the beginning of 2021 to be ready to work with the Watershed FSPs and start training with duties as Annette moves toward retirement. **Supervisor Sells made a motion to approve the Forest Resources District Technician Job position. Seconded by Supervisor Malm. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion Approved.** Discussion continued with thoughts for posting and an interviewing timeline. **Supervisor Malm moved to post the approved position from now through January 11, 2021 with interviews to be scheduled right after posting closes. Seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion Approved.** Staff will post the position to run from December 11, 2020 – January 11, 2021 as well as posting to our website and Facebook pages by Friday, December 11th. Crystal will sort through the applications and bring a list to the Personnel Committee and the January board meeting. The interviews will be scheduled before the Strategic Meeting so recommendations can be discussed before the February board meeting.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik report: notes are available upon request.

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

District Manager's Report: Crystal Mathisrud started with volunteering to start a virtual book club to get people together during these social distancing times. Most of her report was covered during the meeting and then fielded questions regarding the virtual lab. Notes are available upon request.

Supervisor Malm: She attended last month's board meeting and the MASWCD Annual Meeting. She also had a chance to talk with Commissioner De La Hunt since last month's meeting.

Supervisor Sells: He attended last month's board meeting, the November 19th Forestry Meeting via conference call, the MASWCD Annual Meeting and briefed us on submitting ice-in dates for lakes.

Supervisor Rettinger: He attended last month's board meeting.

Supervisor Goodrich: He attended last month's board meeting, helped with the CARES Act funding request and attended the MASWCD Annual Meeting.

Chair Noyes: He worked on the CARES Act funding request with staff, attended last month's board meeting, and the virtual MASWCD Annual Meeting. The Mississippi River Headwaters Board meeting was cancelled in November and might not meet in December due to limited activity. The Mississippi Headwaters LWIP committee is meeting next week and are anticipating having their one-page flyer ready for distribution.

Administrative Assistant's Report: Notes are available upon request.

CORRESPONDENCE

- MCIT Dividend Payment
- FAC COVID Action Matrix
- Enbridge Line 3 Replacement Permit Summary and Virtual Open House Announcement

NEXT MEETING

The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Wednesday, January 13, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. via ZOOM. Items on the agenda include: Supervisor Oath of Office for newly elected supervisors and instating of board positions, awareness article, JPB/TSA meeting, review LWMP, review/approve Annual Work Plan, declare a bank, Strategic Meeting reminder, Grazing Calendar, eLINK reporting.

WORKING LIST OF PRIORITIES:

- Leadership – Several supervisors and staff attended the MASWCD Annual Meeting. Supervisor Malm visit with Commissioner De La Hunt.

