

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM May 12, 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

Members absent: District 3 Supervisor

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 8:32 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
Supervisor Sells was not logged in at this time.

AGENDA AND MINUTES

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to accept the agenda as presented. Seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: Noyes, Rettinger, Goodrich. Opposed: None. Absent: Sells. Motion carried.

Supervisor Sells logged on.

Supervisor Goodrich moved to accept the minutes as presented. Supervisor Rettinger seconded the motion. Affirmative: Noyes, Rettinger, Goodrich, Sells. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Staff reported the tree transactions will show up in May financials. Staff gave update on the 2-stop payment of checks. Treasurer Sells presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Tree Sale Update:** Staff gave a brief report on how the 2021 tree sales went and the financial recap will be available at next month's meeting. (appx. cost of trees & supplies \$15,598 & appx. billable of \$11,000 so far and tree sale deposit received \$27,647)
- **Itasca Mantrap & Beltrami Grant Update:** Crystal reported 3 of the 4 RoundUp grants we applied for were awarded: Beltrami RoundUp - Kabekona River eColi (DNA) Testing \$2,000 and Urban Garden Plantings \$600 were received in April and Itasca-Mantrap - Friends of the Forest \$500 funds were received in May. The additional module

funding request was not awarded through the Beltrami RoundUp. A review/writeup should be drafted acknowledging grant funds received after projects are completed.

- **NACD Urban Ag Grant Update:** Crystal reported we received notice that our grant proposal was completely funded (\$22,250), and the funds should be coming to us soon. A group meeting is planned for next Thursday (5/20/2021) to start working on plans.
- **Hats w/Logo for Supervisor/Staff/Possible Sales:** Staff reported 10 tan youth hats and 20 adult tan hats have been ordered with our logo on them. Crystal and the 4 supervisors will get a hat when ready. Hat cost is \$16.00 each.
- **Summer Nitrate Schedule:** staff sent out a signup schedule for the summer nitrate clinics. We are planning to hold a clinic at the Akeley Paul Bunyan Days (June 25th 4:30-6:30pm), Laporte Independent Celebration Days (July 3rd 8am-noon), Hubbard County Fair Days (July 16th & 17th 11am-4pm both days) and a drop off clinic for the Lake George and Becida areas, to be determined.
- **Annual Report:** Crystal reported the Annual Report Draft is available for edits and corrections and would like everyone to read through and respond back soon, so edits can be completed and brought back to the Board for verification/approval by next month.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Letter of Support for MDH Ground Water Protection Grant Update-EOT SWCD:** Crystal reported she was able to compose a letter of support and forward to Darren Newville (EOT SWCD) for the Innovative Irrigation Practices Proposal. The proposal has been accepted and EOT will coordinate the MDH grant for the 20 area SWCDs.
- **MGLP Grant Proposal (Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership):** Beltrami SWCD requested Crystal's assistance to help compose a grant proposal, similar to the grant proposal that was submitted in 2020. We would be partnering with Beltrami SWCD, BSU and COLA, fund a BSU graduate student and BSU would provide funding for undergraduate students to help support the graduate student with their skills, and allow the use of some of the school's equipment. With this grant we will benefit from the graduate and undergraduate students as they compile measurables while they get on-the-ground experience. This grant will also allow us to do more shoreland work to improve fisheries in the Mantrap, Gull and Whitefish chains and the technical advice provided to those chains will be available to other areas around the counties. We look forward to working closer with our partners through this grant as well as through the 1W1P grants.
- **Endowment Funds with Beltrami SWCD Update:** Crystal reported that the Mississippi Headwaters River 1W1P had a large chunk of funds that still need to be used by July 31. We are in line for some of these funds, as an endowment, to work on outreach materials and connect with residents towards forest stewardship and easements. We are waiting for final approval, from the US Endowments Committee through the Beltrami SWCD.
- **Donation to Environmental Educational Bldg. for Fair Nitrate Clinic:** Staff is requesting the approval of a \$100 donation for use of the building for the fair nitrate clinic. **Supervisor Goodrich agreed to approve a \$100 donation for the use of the Environmental Educational Building for our nitrate clinic at the fair. Supervisor Sells seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

- **Resolutions – Any Sunsetting from 2020 or 2021 or New Resolutions:** No interest in going forward with any of the sunsetting resolutions or any of the 2020 resolutions that did not pass last December. We have no new resolutions to submit for this year.
- **Summer Intern for Project(s):** Crystal reported that she has scheduled 2 candidates for the summer intern position and has one more to schedule if needed. The Personnel Committee will interview, select and report back to the board their decision for the intern position at the June board meeting.
- **WQR Research & Easement Specialist Review:** Staff personnel, Peter Jacobson, was not able to attend the meeting because of another commitment. Crystal reported that she was able to conduct his annual review. He has been doing a great job at more than what we anticipated he would be doing and has great connections that benefit our district. She also commented that he has stepped up to our needs by putting in more hours than originally appointed with the understanding that he will be able to back down some this summer/fall to keep him at the appointed ¼ time appointment. She recommends we continue his appointment and award him a raise between \$2 - \$3/hour. Supervisor Goodrich agrees with Crystal's report and recommends giving him an appropriate raise. Supervisor Noyes and Sells also agree. **Supervisor Rettinger moved to (*continue his employment and*) increase his hourly rate to \$37.34/hour. Supervisor Goodrich seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Staff will prepare the necessary documents and his new rate will start on May 16, 2021.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger reported the County has been holding public meetings for ordinance revisions, SSTS and sign ordinance updates. There is a special public meeting scheduled for May 26 at 6:00pm on the new Shoreland Maintenance Ordinances (SMO). The commissioners took a highway tour to look at the upcoming road work to be done, including County 3, the bridge on County 40, and redo Central Avenue in Laporte. Mr. Krueger is on the County Park & Rec Board and indicated they will be working on improving a parking lot on a recently purchased parcel for the Heartland Tail Head. Helga Township is planning to put in an ice-skating rink and warming house with a concrete floor right next to their township hall that will allow it to be used as a pavilion during the spring, summer & fall months. They have already raised half of the \$300,000 funds needed to do their project.

Mr. Krueger fielded questions/concerns from Supervisor Goodrich, Supervisor Noyes and Crystal on the SMO, land clearing for new homes and specific details on the net loss/gain on new narrow plots around the lakes. Supervisors indicated that the Water Oriented Platform specifics need to be clearly written in the ordinance platforms for clear understanding of what can be done to avoid degradation to the lake ecology vs. what cannot be done. Commissioner Krueger also commented upcoming COVID recovery funding will help cover a better internet broadband in the areas of Hubbard County presently unserved.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik's report is available upon request.

The USDA required annual Local Workgroup Meeting is set for July 1, 2021 at 1:00pm

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Noyes: The Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P Policy Committee is moving forward and has a face-to-face public meeting scheduled for May 27 in Grand Rapids at 10am with Zoom call-in capability. If all goes well, copies of the policies will be provided to the county boards for their approval. The Laporte/Benedict Lions disbursed 300 trees in a drive-by/handout with student help this year and hope to increase that number next year (*sugar maple and lilacs were a hit!*). He gave a brief update on the funds expected for the Kabekona project and asked staff to verify. Supervisor Noyes indicated Beltrami Electric would like to be included in the project reports/updates. He started monitoring rain in April. He also reported there is a landowner by Laporte who will donate compost for the urban gardens when constructing the gardens, we need to connect with him for pick-up of what we would need.

Supervisor Goodrich: He has been busy with MN COLA and Hubbard COLA meetings. They will be distributing and posting the fish and forest brochures through the COLA and lake association websites. He requested staff to investigate a quote for bulk printing for the flyers through Dain or through Haas Printing. Supervisor Goodrich also reported that the wake and propeller wash study associated with Wakeboard boat use is ready for peer review and will be published soon.

Supervisor Sells: He joined the staff Zoom meeting to practice how the Zoom webinar will work for the Freshwater Festival event next Wednesday.

Supervisor Rettinger: He visited with the Becida Bar owner to see if there was an interest in having a nitrate clinic drop off this year. A request for several drop-offs is requested during the summer months for vacationers. He will report back next month.

District Manager's Report: Crystal indicated that it is extremely hard to work on an in-depth project with constant interruptions. She proposes to not take calls on the mornings when no meetings are scheduled. Crystal also would like to be available for supervisors and staff during time set aside each week for one-on-one visits to cover specific individual interests/questions. We need to think about where we can find funds to cover more outreach and billable hours. We need to work on finding a new District 3 supervisor. The Budget Committee has set Friday, May 21st from 9-11am for their first budget meeting. Crystal's report is available upon request.

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

Technician Reports: Peter Jacobson, Brandon Spain-Brist and Jack Shaughnessy's reports are available upon request.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Park Rapids Enterprise Article "Hubbard SWCD Promotes Soil, Water Stewardship"
- MASWCD Call for Resolutions & Process (included info on 2020 resolutions not approved)
- Twin Lakes-Menahga Newsletter
- Government Census – (verify current address, how funded, how long in existence)

WORKING LIST OF PRIORITIES

- Leadership: Tree program, planting trees with schools, plan to attend the Hubbard County township meeting on Monday, May 17th at 7pm.
- Financial Management: Apply for local grants, ask local organizations for donations towards the Kabekona project, tree program-using extra trees for school plantings, Freshwater Festival students, and urban garden plantings.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Wednesday, June 9, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. via ZOOM. Items on the agenda include: Virtual Live Freshwater Festival review, Fair Booth & Nitrate Clinics, Present 2022 Draft Budget to Board.

ADJOURNMENT

The business meeting closed at 10:54am, per 'Open Meeting Law' the meeting stayed open while we did a practice run of how to move around in a Zoom webinar with the District Supervisors acting as our attendees. Dan Pazdernik, Mr. Krueger, and Supervisor Rettinger left the meeting. Chair Noyes reopened the board meeting after completion of our practice session. Chair Noyes adjourned the meeting at 11:35 am.

APPROVED: June 9, 2021
Date

SECRETARY


Lynn Goodrich, Secretary