

HUBBARD COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES FROM October 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

Members absent: District 3 Supervisor

Others present: Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager
Annette Olson, Administrative Assistant
Jake Shaughnessy, Water Quality Technician (part of meeting)
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner
Jody Peek, NRCS Area Lead
Heidi Anderson-Thomas, Guest

Chair Noyes opened the Zoom meeting at 8:30 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA AND MINUTES

Staff verified Revised Agenda with group. **A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

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

Crystal introduced and welcomed Heidi Anderson-Thomas to the group indicating she has interest in serving as our District 3 Supervisor.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Sells and Chair Noyes questioned several items on the financial reports. Staff answered their questions and Chair Noyes requested the Kabekona Project donations be visible in our financial reports. Treasurer Sells presented the treasurer's report to the board, subject to the auditor's review.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Fall Newsletter** – Staff reported the newsletter is ready to go to the printers. Supervisors suggested that the Pollinator Conscious Fall Yard article be sent to the Enterprise and the Walker papers for publication.
- **2022 Plat Book** – Mapping Solutions is sending out the draft for editing and we need to edit and return it to them within the next 10 days. Crystal has asked staff to verify photos match up with townships they may have been taken in as much as possible.
- **Cost-Share Spot Checks** – Crystal reported staff had completed site visits to most of the recent cost-share projects around Park Rapids area during their staff meeting recently. She is hoping to do more group site visits to past projects in the Laporte area and other areas in the county soon so that everyone can see what our projects, firsthand. Supervisors asked to be given notice so that they could join in if they were available.
- **2022 Tree Order Form** – Staff presented the order form to the Board and gave a brief update on tree species availabilities. Chair Noyes requested lilacs for their Lions group to hand out in spring and other supervisors requested to add lilacs to the order form. Staff will check into the availability of lilacs and confirm with Crystal. It was also suggested that we remove the double line entries for the red pine, white pine, and white spruce to eliminate confusion with clients. Staff will update before sending on to printer and will also update the COLA forms before forwarding on to their coordinator.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Newspaper Articles** – Staff asked for ideas to submit to the paper. Suggestions included the fall article in our newsletter, an update on the NACD raised garden and the other gardens after the signs are posted, submit an update about our virtual lab and an update on the county brining truck for winter use in Hubbard County. The brining truck article can run in November. Crystal will take steps to make this happen. Staff will forward the fall article to the local newspapers.
- **2022 Grazing Workshop planning** – Crystal reported that she had a short visit with NRCS/Dan about trying to locate a place to hold a clinic so interested participants could attend either in person or via Zoom. Staff will schedule an all staff meeting soon to discuss further.
- **Minnesota Conservation Volunteer Annual Contribution – Supervisor Sells made a motion to renew our contribution to the Minnesota Conservation Volunteer for \$100. Supervisor Goodrich seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- **National Association of Conservation Districts** – Crystal gave a brief background on the NACD organization and the funds we are receiving. After discussion about our yearly contribution in past years, **Supervisor Sells moved to increase our level of support to NACD to the silver plan level in the amount of \$501. Supervisor Noyes seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**
- **Position Announcement** – Crystal reported that she is still gathering information and will bring a request to the November board meeting. Supervisors shared their thoughts on the matter.
- **District Managers Annual Review Reminder** – Crystal reminded the Board that her annual review needs to be done soon. The Personnel Committee will set a date and report at the November meeting.
- **Review/Vote on Resolutions** – This item will be acted on later in the meeting.

- **Audit Management Representation Letter** – Staff presented the letter received from our auditor with a request to approve the District Manager and Chair sign off on the letter. **Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to authorize Crystal and Marcel to sign and forward to the auditor. Supervisor Rettinger seconded. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.** Staff will copy the letter to our letterhead and have both sign and then forward to Petersons.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Krueger: Mr. Krueger reported that the 2020 census showed an increase of 916 in Hubbard County since our last census. The 2010 population was 20,428 and the 2020 population is now 21,344. Looking at each district's percentage of targeted average, Mr. Krueger's district rose 12% and Char Christenson's district fell 10%, they will be looking at a probable change in their district borders after the City of Park Rapids sets new precinct borders. Mr. Krueger reported the AMC Policy Committee met in September and reported that the Environmental Committee is working on improving the PILT payment rates for tax forfeited land in the county. They are hoping the State will adjust the tax rate to at least match the rate of inflation. There has not been a raise in the PILT payment for many years and is still about \$2/acre. We need the AMC to make this one of the top three items to lobby with our legislature and make our state senator and representatives aware of this need. The Parks Board Committee recently met with the ATV community to discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Our area has the best trails around. Supervisors and staff voiced their concerns about responsibilities, damage caused by ATV activity and safety practices. Mentioned was a witnessing of young kids flipping their ATV several times in one sighting. Recommendation was made to have a county ordinance regarding ATV use.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Dan Pazdernik gave his report. Jody added comments regarding area office policies with the present COVID situation and increasing cases in Hubbard, Beltrami and Clearwater Counties. Dan's notes are available upon request.

REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS

Chair Noyes: Mr. Noyes reported that he completed and submitted the survey BWSR requested regarding 1W1P activities. The Mississippi Headwaters Board met in August and again in September to complete unfinished business from the August meeting that didn't have a quorum. They are planning to hold their public biannual meeting on October 28/29th at the Chase on the Lake in Walker. Chair Noyes inquired about the Kabekona River sampling request from a private citizen. Staff did additional sampling, and the results were received in the office. Chair Noyes would like the information as well when it come available.

Supervisor Goodrich: Mr. Goodrich also completed and submitted the BWSR survey regarding 1W1P activities. He attended the Badoura, White Oak and Akeley township meetings, and got involved in the White Oak project.

Supervisor Rettinger: Mr. Rettinger attended a Beltrami Electric event. They had a fuel savings presentation about all-electric cars.

Jake joined the meeting and gave a brief report on the additional Kabekona sampling. Staff mentioned we still had funds available in the grant and we will plan to do one more sampling for nitrates and phosphorus with the remaining funds from the grant. Chair Noyes suggested we do a random summer sampling next summer in the same area as this year's concern.

Supervisor Sells: Mr. Sells attended the SWCD Forestry meeting virtually on September 16th. He also attended the (LFT) local forestry meeting on September 10th and mentioned that this is a very interesting group and asked if others would like to attend/rotate for future meetings.

Chair Noyes mentioned that the group picnic was an enjoyable event and recommended we plan to do again next year. He also mentioned that he will not be available for the November board meeting and Don Rettinger will be Board Chair while he is away.

District Manager's Report: Crystal Mathisrud reported on her meeting with the TSA engineers, the 1W1P FSP groups and the outreach materials being worked on in the LFT meetings, as well as the forestry and land protection activities being worked on in the PFM group. Crystal's notes are available upon request.

Supervisor Sells questioned if we should assign a board member to the LFT group meetings to be more informed and show support for the group and project. He mentioned the meeting has been and will be very beneficial to the 1W1Ps. The Board requested that Crystal prepare a presentation on the LFT activities for the November meeting, and a decision can be made at that time.

Chair Noyes questioned Brandon's note on additional WCA training. Crystal responded, although he has been learning a lot and has been handling his cases very well, he is interested in knowing what to do in cases that we rarely get. This will help him gain knowledge with the steps to be taken when additional forms are to be completed.

Chair Noyes questioned the Urban Ag Gardens activities. Crystal reported Brandon and Claire have been working with the Park Rapids 7th graders (5 classrooms) to create a project for their classes where they will work the maintenance into their curriculum. Claire and Brandon are also working with the Nevis school 7th, 11th, and 12th graders. They recently did a mason bee project with the 7th grade ag classes, and then did a woodland pollinator garden planting presentation where the forestry students will create a plan for the Nevis school forest. They will go back to review their plan and help with its implementation. The Nevis school is very interested in having us come back several times each year to help with similar activities. Brandon's and Claire's reports are available upon request. We are setting up a project the end of October with the Park Rapids 7th graders to create a pollinator garden at their school grounds.

Administrative Assistant's Report: Annette Olson updated the name of the water body missed in her Fall Tour review is Pine Mountain Lake, a high priority lake in the LLR watershed. Annette's notes are available upon request.

Jake Shaughnessy Report: Jake fielded questions from the Board. His report is available upon request.

Chair Noyes called for a break at 10:38 am.

Meeting reconvened at 10:45 am.

Commissioner Krueger left our meeting during break to attend another meeting.

Chair Noyes asked Heidi Anderson-Thomas to give a short synopsis of her background and why she is interested in joining the board as our District 3 supervisor. Further discussion below.

Chair Noyes brought the MASWCD resolution voting to the floor. There was discussion and voting on each resolution presented. Staff recorded the Supervisor's votes and will forward to MASWCD before the end of October 2021.

CORRESPONDENCE Staff presented the MCIT-coverage document changes received and the Cass SWCD fall tour notes with articles. The tree order form and newsletter were already covered.

WORKING LIST OF PRIORITIES

- **Leadership:** Supervisor Goodrich attended township meetings and Chair Noyes visited with his commissioner, two supervisors completed and submitted surveys BWSR requested about 1W1P activities and appointed an interested party to join our district.
- **Financial Management:** Transfer of funds to cover expenses and start up a new CD, District Manager completed a survey to request more buffer funds for Hubbard County.

The supervisors asked Heidi if she would be interested in serving and if she would accept the appointment as District 3 Supervisor. She indicated she is very interested in serving the rest of 2021 and 2022. **Supervisor Sells recommended that we appoint Heidi Anderson-Thomas to the open District 3 Supervisor position. Supervisor Goodrich seconded the recommendation. Approved: All. Opposed: None. Motion passed.** Welcome to our group Heidi, we are excited to have you join us!

NEXT MEETING

The next regular board meeting of the Hubbard County Board of Supervisors will be on Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. via ZOOM. Items on the agenda include: swear in new supervisor, work plan edits, Kabekona presentation by Jake, position announcement request, district manager review, LFT presentation by Crystal.

Crystal announced that she received word that we should start holding our monthly board meetings in person in the near future and have it open to the public. She is looking for possible spaces to use. Supervisor Goodrich stated that with the current pandemic levels in Hubbard County it would be irresponsible to meet in person. The public is encouraged, as always, to attend our meetings via Zoom (by computer or phone) until it is safe for all to meet in person. It is the Boards responsibility to conduct the business of the HCSWCD in a manner that does not jeopardize the health and safety of our staff and the public.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Supervisor Anderson-Thomas to adjourn the October 13, 2021 meeting. Meeting adjourned at 11:50am.

APPROVED: Nov. 10, 2021
Date

SECRETARY 
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary