

# Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District

Wednesday, August 10th, 2022, at 8:30 am

Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will meet at the office with a Zoom option available.

Office Address: 603 Central Avenue North, Suite 100, Park Rapids, MN 56470.

Members present: Marcel Noyes, Chair  
Don Rettinger, Vice-Chair  
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary  
Don Sells, Treasurer  
Heidi Anderson-Thomas, PR&I

Others present: Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager  
Brandon Spain-Brist, Forestry Resource Technician  
Jake Shaughnessy, Water Resource Technician  
Tom Krueger, County Commissioner  
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist  
Chris Pence, BWSR Board Conservationist

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

## AGENDA

**A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to accept the agenda with the addition of a review of board documents and postponement of the consent agenda until the September board meeting. Seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

## MINUTES

**A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to accept the minutes as presented. Seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The font on the profit and loss sheet needs to be reformatted to improve legibility for future meetings. Invoices need to be coupled with the bills so that those who need to be signing can see the information they need. This is a result of the switch to electronic signing and likely an access error. Supervisor Sells presented them to the board for filing.

## OLD BUSINESS

- **Consent Agenda for Monthly Recurring Bills:** Tabled for next month.
- **Cost Share Update:** The 5<sup>th</sup> Crow Wing project: Most of the implementation has been done. The homeowners are currently working on some of the DIY aspects like vegetation management and some of the planting. Will need to return in the spring to do some additional planting and some other minor modifications depending on water levels.  
2nd Crow Stormwater & Sediment Concern: The contract has been signed and they are hoping to have the bid out before the end of the year.  
Kabekona Cattle Exclusion: Currently working with contractors to finish the project this summer and early fall. It is appearing to be substantially under the estimate. They have the cattle watering system completed and it came in under the estimate.  
Kabekona Lake Project: We have been contacted by two neighboring properties relating to a bluff erosion caused by stormwater runoff. The project needs to be surveyed and designed. A second visit has been conducted and the current concept plan is being amended. We are looking into a 3<sup>rd</sup> party engineer as with reduced staff at TSA 8 it would have to wait until next season.
- **Nitrate Update:** Nitrate data has been entered and compiled into an online database that can be updated in real-time as clinics are held. This means there will be no staff time following the clinics for data entry

and maintenance. A dashboard will show all the data in real-time and once it is polished it can be posted to our website and shared with users and board members. Supervisor Goodrich suggested moving the nitrate clinic from Fridays to Mondays.

- **Annual Report and Workplan:** Annual Report and Workplan are printed and to be distributed. District manager Crystal will be passing out the Annual Report and Workplan to the community, county, and state members who would need or like one.

**Action:**

- **Cost-Share Project Reimbursement Authorization:** 5th Crow Wing Project, total so far is less than \$2,000 and within the project contract. Anything within the scope of the project and below \$2,000 will not need approval, but board members will be updated with plan changes as needed. No action is needed at this time.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Update Cost Share Process:** Requested authority for Jake to have local design authority for practices where there is not an NRCS / JAA equivalent, or process established. We can use the Crow Wing, Beltrami, and Becker SWCDs as a model. Jake presented the background and the implementation benefits of specific practices and explain his training. For shoreline practices, there is not a comparable NRCS equivalent, so some boards allow approval of experienced staff to carry out ecological shoreline practices. The conditions will be written out in a formal documented and presented to the board in September. Feedback will be needed from MCIT to look at changes in insurance due to liability.
- **Cost Share Policy Review:** The current design authority policy is included in board packet-please provide any comment/discussion needed for Jake to begin revising our policy to bring to Sept meeting. There is leeway in the cost share policy, but there needs to be more information for practice maintenance and fees.
- **Claire's Wetland Delineator In-Training Status:** Claire received her wetland plan to update our WCA policies and FFS delineation options for landowners. Her name will be published on the BWSR list of delineators.
- **Forestry Updates - Expanding Forest Plan Writers List:** Brandon has added new plan writers to the list. Hubbard SWCD is the only organization left in the county with cost share for plan writing.
- **Board Document Changes:** Documents are individualized in emails and can be easily printed individually. They can be printed in bulk using the compressed file for meetings as needed. Expect changes in the future.

**Action:**

- **Authorize Jake Authority for Practices:** This authority is for Vegetative Stabilization, Coir Log Placement, and Shoreline Buffers; based on training/experience and model set by neighboring SWCDs. This will be tabled for the next meeting.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner: Tom explained the budget packet for 2023. The SWCD request was about \$36,000. The current overall request is \$21,800,000 which is a 36% increase and will need to be trimmed to keep taxes low. The budget balance will take a lot of negotiation for sorting out before approval. Much of the increases come from COLA, proposed new positions, upgrading the 911 dispatch, eventual closing the south landfill, and more (check your notes on this one). The Library Board put in a request for only a 3% increase. There is a 10% increase in income. The County Board meeting will look at changing the easement process. They approved 320 acres of former Potlatch land from the conservation fund. The Annual AMC Policy Conference will be September 14th-16, Tom will still be able to attend the next board meeting.

## **DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST**

District Conservationist Pazdernik's report is available upon request.

## **REPORTS ON PROJECTS AND MEETINGS**

**Chair Noyes:** Chair Noyes attended the last board meeting.

**Supervisor Sells:** Supervisor Sells attended the MASWCD Forestry Association meeting in Marcell where Lynn’s Resolution was presented, and it was very favorably received. He assisted with nitrate testing at the Hubbard County Fair and assisted with Nitrate Clinic. He also assisted with efficiency and access for banking.

**Supervisor Goodrich:** Supervisor Goodrich attended the last board meeting as well as assisted with the Nitrate Clinic at the Hubbard County Fair.

**Supervisor Rettinger:** Supervisor Rettinger attended the last board meeting.

**Supervisor Anderson-Thomas:** Supervisor Anderson attended the Hubbard County Fair nitrate clinic and attended the SWCD forestry meeting. She watched the video from the family forestry carbon program.

**District Managers’ Report:** Supervisor Mathisrud’s notes are available upon request.

**BWSR Board Conservationist, Chris Pence:** The BWSR Academy will be Oct 25-27 at Cragun’s Resort on Gull Lake near Brainerd. The competitive Clean Water Grant RFP submittal date is August 22, 2022, 4:00 pm. Expect a decision by the full BWSR Board on October 26 to decide if the Crow Wing River Watershed is approved to participate in the 1W1P Program.

### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

- MCIT Refund and Cybersecurity Coverage future changes
- Irrigation RCPP update
- Quantifying the resilience of cold water lake habitat to climate and land use change–new paper, Pete Jacobson relevant to the 26 Priority Lakes project/Resolution
- Clean Water Funds budget request docs 24-25 draft and 22-23 to 24-25 comparison notes from MASWCD
- U of M study: Without protections, many Midwest lakes will lose cold water habitat | MPR News –Thank you Don Sells

### **WORKING LIST OF PRIORITIES**

- Leadership: July 21 Presentation to Legislative Subcommittee on Water Policy. Completed contract with MPCA for Crow Wing River Watershed PTMAAP, Hydro-conditioning, and phosphorus analysis to prepare for 1w1p planning and implementation. Continued building strong partnerships and team for carbon sequestration white paper project and collaborative program development–applied for additional foundation support for the project partners and submitted mid-term progress report. Submitted election ballot information to the county. Worked on SWCD capacity, services, and program analysis to better prepare for 2023 planning and proposal writing: We have grown nearly 3X in services staff and budget in 2 years. We have significantly diversified our funding sources with federal, local, and foundation support in addition to the state program and grant funds. Our team is gaining experience and new skills as we also work on workflows to increase efficiency, improve our document control, audit readiness, and systems for reporting project narrative and measurables. The presentation that Don and Brandon did on the forestry resolution.
- Financial Management: Implemented payments and invoicing via bill.com with audit ready 2-person approval process. Began integrating grant tracking, time tracking, and contract records with QuickBooks online system which simplifies our process and utilizes tools that can help us recognize opportunities, risks, and potential errors more quickly. Will take several months to complete and refine the transition. Submitted the 2023 projected budget to the county by July 22 deadline. Crystal and Don working with banking on-line access and efficiency.


### **NEXT MEETING**

**September 14, 2022, Agenda Items:** Consent Agenda, and Authorization of Jake’s Job Approval

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Supervisor Sells made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:57am.

APPROVED: September 14, 2022 SECRETARY  
Date

  
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary