

# Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District

Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 9:00 am

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

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

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

Others Present: Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager  
Brandon Spain-Brist, Forest Resource Specialist  
Claire Hansen, Community Conservationist  
Jake Shaughnessy, Water Resource Technician  
Rachel Rudquist, Administrative and Bookkeeping Assistant  
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner – via Zoom  
Daniel Pazdernick, District Conservationist  
Jody Peek, NRCS Team Lead  
Darren Mayers, Board Conservationist  
Jannette Austin, BWSR Grants Compliance Specialist – via Zoom  
Ryan Hughes, BWSR Northern Region Manager – via Zoom  
Michael Peterson, CPA Peterson Co. Ltd – via Zoom  
Samantha Hoskins, CPA Peterson Co. Ltd. – via Zoom  
Josie Myhre, SWCD Bookkeeper – via Zoom

Chair Anderson-Thomas opened the meeting at 9 am and led the pledge of allegiance.

## AGENDA

**A motion was made by Supervisor Heidi Anderson-Thomas to accept the agenda as presented. Seconded by Supervisor Don Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

## MINUTES

**A motion was made by Supervisor Don Sells to approve last month's minutes. Seconded by Supervisor Don Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

### **Treasurer's Report / Financial Services Action Items:**

Audit Update and Report from Michael Peterson

#### **DOCUMENTS INCLUDED:**

- 2022 Draft Financial Statement
- 2022 Adjusting Entries
- 2023 Balance Sheet – as printed from QuickBooks
- 01-08-24 Accounts Receivable Aging Summary

Items that need to be addressed:

Steps required to possibly issue an audit report for 12/31/22:

- Additional testing needed for 2022
- Bank statements needed for all of 2023

- Testing of unearned revenue for 2023
- Testing of expenses for 2023
- Preliminary grant balances as of 12/31/23:
  - Possible ramifications of not providing timely audit report to the State of MN
  - Implications of not being able to issue a clean audit or issue an audit report

There has been significant time spent on the 2022 audit and there is a concern for the district's finances. Peterson Co. Ltd does not feel they can issue a clean audit at this time and will be coming in house January 23rd-25th to do a more in-depth audit using July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 financials to make sure things have been done correctly. They will also do a 2023 consulting audit at the same time so there can be a clean audit going forward and Hubbard SWCD be in a good position to start the 2024 financials.

**A motion was made by Supervisor Don Sells to approve a contract with Michael Peterson, Peterson Co. Ltd. to do a consulting audit as soon as possible. There will be an amount, not to exceed, included in Petersons Letter of Engagement. Seconded by Supervisor Marcel Noyes. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

**Bill Consensus:** No objections to the bill consensus approved to pay.

### PUBLIC INPUT

**Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner:** Hubbard County is still looking for someone to fill the County Engineering position. In the interim Hubbard County is contracting with Beltrami County for use of their Engineer. The Board Organizational Meeting for 2024 was held and Char Christenson was elected to Chair and Steve Keranen was elected to Vice Chair. EAW Petition was reviewed for the Pickerel lake campground proposal, and we voted to deny it. AMC Legislative Conference coming up Feb 21 & 22. Crow Wing 1W1P Policy meeting coming in January. Tom will be gone and not able to attend that meeting but will see if Ted Vankempen is available and can attend that meeting.

### DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

District Conservationist Dan Pazdernik's report is available upon request

### BOARD CONSERVATIONIST

District Conservationist Darren Mayer's report is available upon request

### OLD BUSINESS

#### **Action:**

**Bookkeeping Contract Updates:** After the Hubbard SWCD Board reviewed the contract, there were some things that needed to be changed and clarified such as, Bookkeeper not being allowed to withdraw funds. The Board discussed what changes should take place. After the Board and Josic all agree on these changes the contract will be signed.

**A motion was made by Supervisor Marcel Noyes to approve the Hubbard County SWCD agreement for a Bookkeeping Contractor effective January 1, 2024 with the changes identified at the meeting today. Seconded by Supervisor Don Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

### NEW BUSINESS

**CPL Update:** Claire worked with two classes from BSU- The first class at BSU was a science communications class and they did a class project that included 20 service-learning hours each. The BSU students helped collect and remove all the garbage at the Laporte School forest site and conducted a mock school board presentation to outdoor classroom components including the budget and priced out all the materials needed. The second class was Jerry's Cartography (map making) Class. The students helped to work on Nevis School Forest signs located all along the trails. The pollinator garden had signs using QR codes, which when scanned get pertinent interactive information. Park Rapids School staff will be meeting with Brandon to finish up a proposal for enhancements to their School Forest Site to take to the School Board and hopefully implement in the spring of 2024. This CPL grant will expire in October 2024.

**Grazing Workshop (GW) Date:** Discussion with NRCS on some possible locations for the 2024 GW. Under consideration are: The Woodshed in Laporte, Laporte Town Hall, or Guthrie Town Hall. Tentative date of Wednesday, March 6, 2024 with a backup date of March 7, 2024.

**Soil Health Capacity Grant Proposal Plan:** (Feb 8 Deadline) Hubbard SWCD and Becker SWCD would partner for this grant to share a Soil Health Specialist. They would divide their time equally between the partners. Becker SWCD would be the fiscal agent. February 8th is the deadline to submit the application grant. Our Board would like the Staff to proceed.

**MDA Private Well Grant Opportunity:** (Feb 16 Deadline) Crystal has interest in making a joint proposal with White Earth and other organizations that are within the Straight River Area. Crystal doesn't have a lot of details yet but is considering writing a letter of support with them to help resolve contamination and Nitrate issues in private wells. There is financial available help for mitigations of these water issues. Claire will work on drafting a proposal.

**WCA Special Circumstances:** Staff asked for guidance with a wetland violation on No Name Lake, south of Laporte. The Hubbard SWCD Board supports following the law.

## **ACTION**

**2024 Strategic Planning Date Selection:** February 8, 2024, at 9 am

**PRAP Proposal Direction:** Decision was made to wait until after the Audit is over and then write up a proposal to bring to the February 8th at the Strategic Planning Meeting or February Board Meeting for discussion.

**Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P Work Plan/Budget Updates:** A Policy committee meeting was held on Monday, January 8th. They need to approve and update the 2022/2023 workplan and budget and the 2024/2025 workplan and budget. Changes were discussed and proposed and need to be approved by Hubbard SWCD Board. Beltrami SWCD will be using Enbridge dollars from an outside grant source for stormwater projects, the Mississippi River restoration project, and a stream crossing project currently in the 2022/2023 work plan. They are proposing to remove 1W1P implementation funds from those projects and add three other stormwater projects: one in Beltrami (\$35,000), one in Cass (\$26,000), and one in Itasca (\$66,000). In doing so, we will need to reallocate \$55,000 from the Water Course to the Urban issue. Hubbard SWCD requested that funds be moved from agriculture funds to easement funds. Our Board will need to approve the \$55,000 as well as the \$12,000 changes.

**A motion was made by Supervisor Noyes to approve the adjusted current budget for the Mississippi 1W1P as proposed. Seconded by Supervisor Heidi Anderson-Thomas Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

**Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P 2024/2025 Work Plan Budget:**

**A motion was made by Supervisor Noyes to approve the 2024/2025 Work Plan adjusted budget for the Mississippi 1W1P as proposed. . Seconded by Supervisor Rettenger Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

## **REPORTS ON MEETING AND PROJECTS**

**Board Chair's Report:** Received a membership renewal for the National Association of Conservation District. Inquire if the MCIT Open Meeting Law webinar will be available to View later.

**Supervisor Sells:** Attended a Forestry Association meeting on January 16. Had a conference call with Supervisor Anderson-Thomas and Crystal.

**Supervisor Noyes:** Attended a Headwaters Board Meeting via zoom in December. Attended 1W1P meeting on January 8th.

**Supervisor Rettinger:** Had a discussion with Supervisor Goodrich regarding Crystal's review.

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**District Manager's Report:** District Manager Mathisrud's report is available upon request.

**District Staff Reports:** District staff reports are available upon request.

**District Manager's Annual Review - closed meeting**

**Supervisor Don Rettinger made a motion to close the open meeting and go into closed session at 12:13 pm to discuss the District Manager's Annual Review, per Statute 13D.05 Subd 3.(a). Seconded by Supervisor Don Sells Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.**

A motion was made by Supervisor Heidi Anderson-Thomas to end the closed session and reopen the Board meeting at 12:30 pm. Seconded by Supervisor Marcel Noyes Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

**District Manager's Annual Review:**

Supervisor Goodrich made a motion to have Crystal continue as the Hubbard County SWCD District Manager with an increase to \$45.00 an hour, retroactive to the anniversary of her start date, which was October 15, 2023, and authorization to extend to June 1, 2024, to use the 180 hours of accrued vacation time. This is over the allowed 100 hours carry over policy. Second by Supervisor Don Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- MN Campaign Finance Board Letter
- MCIT award
- Earth Scout Card
- BWSR RIM Master Contract Updates Coming Feb 2024
- MASWCD Letter 2023 Summary

**NEXT MEETING**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024:**

**Agenda Items: Technician Jake Shaughnessy annual review, Technician Brandon Spain-Brist annual review, Budget, Strategic Planning, Audit Consulting Project, PRAP Proposal**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Supervisor Don Sells to adjourn the meeting; meeting adjourned at 12:40 pm.**

**Upcoming Meetings and Dates**

**Office Closed for January 15 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

**Next Board Meeting February 14, 2024**

APPROVED: 2-14-2024  
Date

SECRETARY

  
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary