

Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District

Wednesday, February 14th, 2023, 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
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
Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner
Darren Mayers, Board Conservationist

Chair Anderson-Thomas opened the meeting at 9 am and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to accept the agenda as amended Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Supervisor Anderson-Thomas to accept the minutes as presented Seconded by Supervisor Noyes. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT/FINANCIAL SERVICES ACTION ITEMS:

Audit Update and Report from Michael Peterson: When the board approves the draft audit and the management letter is signed, Michael will be able to submit the 2022 audit and begin work on the 2023 audit. Michael has been provided the 2023 documents.

A motion was made by Supervisor Anderson-Thomas to accept and implement the 2022 audit done by Michael Peterson LTD. Motion seconded by Supervisor Noyes.

Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Supervisor Thomas-Anderson to approve Michael Peterson LTD. management letter to produce the audit for 2023. Second by Supervisor Goodrich. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Open savings and or a checking account with TruStar Federal Credit Union: It has been recommended to open a separate bank account for large grants. The Board recommended opening a checking and savings account with TruStar Federal Credit Union in Park Rapids and transferring the remaining Crow Wing 1W1P Planning funds, as necessary, to open the account.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to approve the process to establish a checking and savings account with TruStar Federal Credit Union . Seconded by Supervisor Goodrich.

Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Bill Consensus:

Treasurer's Report: After discussion, Supervisor Sells recommended submitting the financials for filing.

PUBLIC INPUT

Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner: Hubbard County hired a New Engineer, Andrea Weleski, from Kittson County start date will be April 1, 2024. Hubbard County is still contracting with Beltrami County for engineering services. Hubbard County has formed a ten-year timber management committee consisting of County Commissioners, Industry Experts, Community Members, and Retired Forestry Professionals. There were some flooding issues in the old courthouse building after sewer backup due to tree roots; the issues will be rectified. There was a meeting held to review the 11-million-dollar bonding of the jail remodel and expansion plan and to approve a letter to City of Park Rapids to vacate and improve Front Street. A management plan was approved for bonding funds. Heard a presentation on establishing an economic development authority (EDA) to acquire property (ie: tax forfeited land). Commissioner Krueger commented on the tax error made by the county assessor and the process of reimbursing those who requested review. Supervisor Goodrich noted that automatic corrections will be made in 2025.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

District Conservationist Dan Pazdernik's report is available upon request.

BOARD CONSERVATIONIST

Darren Mayer's presentation is available upon request.

NEW BUSINESS

Grazing Workshop Catering: The board discussed Grazing Workshop catering options. Minnesota Nice will be the caterers for the Grazing Workshop on March 6th.

Shoreline Buffer Program: The Water Quality Technician is asking to reframe the existing Buffer program. A lot of the shoreline projects have been relatively large with major erosion and reshaping required, These place a big impact on staff time and increase costs. He would like to focus more on a shoreline buffer emphasis, which will be easier to manage. Our technicians and interns would be able to implement this in house. This should be a very popular project. The focus is to keep it relatively simple with a 50% cost share. A design fee and an installation fee would be changed if the landowner needed a technician to come onsite.

BWSR for check-in partner: Janette advised to use the P RAP program to implement this. Darren is thinking that BWSR will not be able to be that partner. He recommends we use an outside agent for this. Darren will investigate the possibility of allowing us to purchase the software that Houston Engineer, Inc. offers and is being successfully used by other SWCDs. Crystal will work on submitting the proposal before the next Board meeting.

RCPP Pooling Agreement: Hubbard SWCD was able to do some outreach with funds that were available for NRCS; this revealed 3 landowners are interested in partnering on precision irrigation projects. The projects were ranked low by NRCS because they were outside their priority areas. East Otter Tail SWCD is going to provide State Cost Share Funding that they have available for the projects. Staff is looking for approval from our Board, to do a cost share project with up to 75% funding and a cap of \$62,077.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to approve the RCPP Pooling Agreement subject to approval by the County Attorney. Second by Supervisor Noyes. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Shoreline Cost-Share Contract: Jake attended an East Crooked Lake Association meeting last year and a couple projects came up. One is located on the South Shore of East Crooked Lake. The landowner has only been there 12 years and the lot is fairly neat. The landowner's shoreline was falling off in chunks and they did some work, but the shoreline is so steep there is more that needs to be done. Coir logs and plantings will be used to help reshape

and stabilize the shoreline. The landowner will be responsible for all permitting. The quote that came in was \$17,200 and the landowner applied for 66% of the cost- share.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to approve the Cost Share Contract # 20240214CWRECS non structure shoreline restoration at 66% reimbursed of up to the quoted \$17,200. Seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Internship Postings: Hubbard SWCD is wanting to hire a water quality/district intern to focus on the 2024 water quality monitoring and Buffer Law with a major focus on the MPCA SWAG program. This intern will be hired to help with a large buffer outreach/project load under the supervision of the District Manager and the Technical staff. Our policy requires a second person for this work. This intern would be paid using SWAG and Buffer funds. The Intern would begin in May through possibly September.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to approve the hiring of an intern for the summer as described. Seconded by Supervisor Goodrich . Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Annette's Admin. Assistant Training Contract: Hubbard SWCD is wanting to contract with Annette Olsen to come into the office to provide training for our Administrative Assistant, as directed by the District Manager. Supervisor Marcel reviewed and recommended specific changes made to Annette's Contract. Example: the language needs to be changed under the pay amount range to pay Annette. The contract will also be reviewed by the County Attorney.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to approve the training contract for Annette contingent upon implementing the changes discussed today and reviewed by the County Attorney. Seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Supervisor Goodrich made a motion at 11:15 am to suspend this open meeting and go into a closed session for employee reviews and cost of living increase. per Statute 13D.05 Sub 3.(a) Supervisor Noyes seconded the motion. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion Carried.

Supervisor Goodrich made a motion at 12:20 pm to end the closed session and move back into the open meeting. Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Annual Review, Forest Resources Technician:

The Board would like to thank Brandon for his outstanding work this past year and continue his employment as a Forest Resource Technician with a wage increase to \$30.50 an hour and 3.2% COLA increase for a total of \$31.48 an hour.

A motion was made by Supervisor Noyes to increase Brandon's salary including COLA to \$31.48 retroactively effective to the pay period following his employment anniversary date. Second by Supervisor Goodrich. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Annual Review, Water Quality Resources Technician:

The Board would like to thank Jake for his outstanding work this past year and continue his employment as a Water Quality Resource Technician with a wage increase to \$31.50 an hour and 3.2% cola increase for a total of \$32.51 an hour.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to increase Jake's salary including COLA to \$32.51 retroactively effective to the pay period following his employment anniversary date. Second by Supervisor Goodrich. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

2024 Cost of Living Increases:

Cost of Living Increase (COLA) of 3.2% was agreed upon for three other Hubbard SWCD staff: Crystal, Rachel, and Claire.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to award the increase of 3.2%, effective 2/14/2024 for Crystal, Rachel, and Claire. Second by Supervisor Noyes. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

REPORTS ON MEETINGS AND PROJECTS:

Board Chair's Report: not reported

Supervisor Rettinger: not reported

Supervisor Sells: not reported

Supervisor Goodrich: not reported
Supervisor Noyes: not reported
District Manager's Reports: not reported
District Staff Reports: Staff's reports are available upon request.

CORRESPONDENCE

60 for 60 donation letter

NEXT MEETING

March 13th, 2024; Agenda Items: Q2 strategic planning meeting on Tuesday May 7, 2024 @ 9 am, Area 8 meeting on March 15, 2024 @ TBA


Upcoming Meetings and Dates

Grazing Workshop March 6, 2024 @ the Guthrie Community Center

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Supervisor Goodrich to adjourn at 12:35 pm

APPROVED: March 13 2024 SECRETARY
Date



Lynn Goodrich, Secretary