

Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District

Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 9:00 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: Lynn Goodrich, Secretary
Don Sells, Treasurer
Marcel Noyes, PR&I - Interactive Technology
Don Rettinger, Vice-Chair

Members absent: Heidi Anderson-Thomas, Chair

Others Present: Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager
Brandon Spain-Brist, Forest Resource Specialist
Claire Hansen, Community Conservationist
Rachel Rudquist, Administrative and Bookkeeping Assistant
Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner
Daniel Pazdernik, District Conservationist

AGENDA:

Call to order and pledge of allegiance: 9:00 am

Due to remote attendance by Supervisor Noyes, all voting recorded by rollcall.

AGENDA

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

MINTUTES

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

TREASURER'S REPORT/ FINANCIAL SERVICES

Bill Consensus - No questions or objections. Adopted

Treasurer's Report - Still working on getting things updated and completed.

PUBLIC IMPUT

Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner – Derek from the Chamber of Commerce will be presenting to the Board at the April work session the idea of presenting a 3% county wide lodging tax to raise funds for marketing in the area. If the board passes it, it would be mandatory to tax all lodging facilities. It is a common fee in other counties. This tax would apply to VRBO's, Lodges, and Hotels. The land sale for 25 tracts of tax forfeited property was approved which includes a couple higher value tracts. Those tracts can be found on Boulder Lake, Shallow Lake, and Deer Lake. The funds will go into a trust account for now. Hubbard County is wanting to get these properties back on tax roll. There is a new member of the Board of Adjustment / Planning Commission. His name is Larry Bumgardner. There is an opening in the HRA (Housing Redeveloping Authority) board for District 4. There will be an AMC Leadership summit the last week of March and Krueger will attend. Summit theme is "Courage". Hubbard

County had a work session to discuss several tracts of TFL land in Hubbard County to develop for housing on Midge Lake and the possibility of developing an industrial park.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

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

BOARD CONSERVATIONIST

Darren Meyers - not in attendance

OLD BUSINESS

The Grazing Workshop update - The workshop went well with between 40 and 45 people in attendance. About 20 of those were producers; there were 16 evaluations, and 13 surveys returned. Speakers all showed up and everyone really enjoyed the different sessions. There was talk about possibly changing the date to a Tuesday or Thursday next year to allow more producers to attend.

NEW BUSINESS

MN Tax Identification Number – Hubbard SWCD had two Minnesota tax numbers. We spoke with the state, and they took care of permanently archiving the old tax numbers, and we are now working under a single new tax ID.

Freshwater Festival May 15th - Hubbard SWCD will be ordering T-shirts from Unknown Legends for all the Volunteers. We will send out donation requests at the end of the month and secure all the speakers for the Freshwater Festival.

Grants Awarded - Landscape Scale Restoration Proposal that was submitted was funded and we have received the contract. Once signed/accepted we can start working on it. Sunsets in October 2028. The Grant is for \$285,000 administered by the HCSWCD, as fiscal agent, to work with lakes listed as "Priority Lakes" by a combination of DNR and IWIP priorities and that lie within the priority area. Looking to write lake plans with those identified communities whether as Lakes Associations or the community at large. We would then use the grant funds do a scaled forestry land management and land protection activities. These funds can be used for both our staff time and for hiring contractors in writing the plans across the Priority lakes and Upper Mississippi Basin and sharing them with neighboring SWCD's as appropriate. We have committed to doing much work within Hubbard County and then writing subcontracts to other partners in the basin that show an interest.

LCCMR Grant that we applied for and is going through the legislative process right now and we understand everything is going well. It will have some funding for easements that can be used on any of the lakes that are considered priority lakes. It also has about \$360,000, in earmarked funds, for us to work directly with Steamboat Lakes Association and Kabekona Lake Association to develop a model of how we write and implement a lake plan for long term management with similar groups of landowners. We do not have the funds yet but expect to by October.

PCA Grant request for proposal through MPCA to help prepare and plan for Climate resilience. This would be used to fund "plan modeling" to identify interest, potential problems, location, and potential partners. Local governments, nonprofits, and tribal governments are eligible. The deadline is April 30th. Should this be presented as a single (wide) or multiple (narrow) proposals? Funding is limited to \$50,000 per applicant. A virtual session coming up on March 21 for anyone interested in attending.

NEW BUSINESS ACTION

Employee Reviews and compensation

Annual Review, Community Conservationist- Claire

Probationary Review, Administration Assistant and Bookkeeper - Rachel

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells that we move into a closed session per Statute 13D.05 Sub 3. (a) to evaluate employee reviews and compensation. Seconded by Supervisor Goodrich.

Affirmative: All (Goodrich, Sells, Noyes, Rettinger). Opposed: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Supervisor Rettinger that we suspend the closed session per Statute 13D.05 Sub 3. (a) and resume the open session of the Board meeting. Seconded by Supervisor Noyes. Affirmative: All (Goodrich, Sells, Noyes, Rettinger). Opposed: None. Motion carried. We are again in open session.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to thank Claire for her ongoing superior work and continue her employment at HCSWCD with a pay increase to \$29.50 per hour effective her first full pay period after her hire anniversary date. Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All (Goodrich, Sells, Noyes, Rettinger). Opposed: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to thank Rachel for her ongoing superior work and continue with her employment at HCSWCD with a pay increase to \$24.50 per hour retroactive to the first full pay period after her six-month anniversary hire date. Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All (Goodrich, Sells, Noyes, Rettinger). Opposed: None. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to allow the District Manager the authority to initiate a contract with Clausen and Schiessl CPAs Ltd. as our accounting partner, or another third party if Josie does not work out with our situation. Seconded by Supervisor Noyes. Affirmative: All (Goodrich, Sells, Noyes, Rettinger). Opposed: None. Motion carried.

REPORTS ON MEETINGS AND PROJECTS

Board Chair's Report: Supervisor Anderson-Thomas - absent.

Supervisor Rettinger: Supervisor Rettinger attended the Grazing Workshop March 6.

Supervisor Goodrich: Supervisor Goodrich

Supervisor Sells: Supervisor Sells made a phone call to the District Manager about financial matters. Attended a foresters meeting. SFIA legislation has been introduced that would be less restrictive and allow conversion into longer (5, 10, 50 years) landowner commitment. Upcoming Forestry meeting in March.

Supervisor Noyes: Supervisor Noyes attended the board meeting via interactive Technology @ 502 East 2nd St, Duluth, MN. 55805. He was at the hospital with spouse. He also attended the Grazing Workshop March 6 in Guthrie.

District Manager's Reports: District Manager report is available upon request.

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Newspaper Article

MN Lakes & Rivers Donation – Yes - contribute \$125

NACD Thank You

Next Meeting Wednesday, April 10th; Agenda Items: MN Lakes and Rivers Donation, Intern hiring recommendations, Proposal PCA climate resilience, accounting help, under (New Business)

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Supervisor Goodrich

Vice Chairperson Rettinger adjourned the meeting at 12:23 pm

APPROVED: 4-10-2024 SECRETARY 
DATE Lynn Goodrich, Secretary

Mission Statement: The purpose of the Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District is to conserve, protect, and enhance the soil and water resources of Hubbard County by providing leadership, education, and assistance.