

Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District

Tuesday, July 23, 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
Don Sells, Treasurer
Marcel Noyes, PR&I
Don Rettinger, Vice-Chair

Others present: Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager
Jake Shaughnessy, Water Resource Technician
Rachel Rudquist, Administrative and Bookkeeping Assistant
Darren Meyers, Board Conservationist
Charlene Christenson, Hubbard County Commissioner

AGENDA

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

Agenda

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

Last Month's Board Minutes

A motion was made by Supervisor Anderson-Thomas to accept last month's Board minutes as presented. Seconded by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report / Financial Services Action Items

Bill Consensus – Reviewed and discussed

Hearing no objections, Chairperson Heidi Anderson-Thomas, accepted the Bill Consensus (consent agenda) as presented.

Treasurer's Report - Transaction List by Date, Bank Account Balances Sheet, and Balance Sheet were passed out and discussed. The SWCD Aid was received and deposited in the Northview Bank account.

Public Input

County Commissioner Char Christenson -- At their next Board meeting the commissioners will be voting on whether to adopt a resolution to form an Economic Development Authority (EDA) for Hubbard County. For the first 2 years, it will be made up of the 5 County Commissioners. If it passed, they will be writing the bylaws. This will allow the county to get tax forfeited land back on the tax roll which will benefit the taxpayers and the local economy. Deep Lake Park (DLP) will be getting a fishing pier from the MNDNR. DLP development is currently under pause for archeology exploration. Northern Dental Access Center on Pleasant Avenue is now accepting Medicaid patients. They are trying to expand. They are hoping to service 6,000 people in our area and eventually be able to service 10,000 at full capacity. This is a needed service in our area and a great asset to have this non-profit in the community.

District Conservationist

District Conservationist Dan Pazdernik's report is available upon request. Dan was not present at the meeting.

Board Conservationist

Board Conservationist Darren Meyers - Thank you all for attending the Supervisor and Staff Training given by BWSR. It went well. BWSR has a couple of grants open. The Clean Water Competitive Grant is open now through August 22 and there is the Multipurpose Drainage Management Grant.

Old Business

Upcoming Event - Water Tour for Legislative Committee on Water Policy Updates (Crystal) – The dates have been confirmed (August 19-20), the Heartland Inn, and a motor coach (bus) have been secured. The tour will start in Rice, MN and end in the Park Rapids area. The tour will consist of Prairie Farms in Rice, RDO Farms, and the Straight River. They will also visit sites in the local area and presentations will be given by local partners. The Priority Lakes Project will be the focus. Registration will be sent out shortly. Participants will be able to attend part or all of the tour. LCCMR and OHF Committees will be invited. This is related to our Priority Lakes Projects, which are funded by the Landscape Scale Restoration - US Forest Service Grant and the LCCMR Grant. The goal is to protect the quality of the high priority lakes in the Mississippi Basin and land management and planning to protect the water quality.

Old Business Action

Position Update - Watershed Coordinator/Planner (Jake/Crystal) – Crystal spoke to promoting Jake up to Coordinator/Planner as he has completed his required training. He is successful in getting a lot of projects on the ground, as well as still maintaining the meeting planning/hosting/leading.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to promote Jake Shaughnessy to the position of Water Planner and Coordinator for the HC SWCD and with that give him a salary increase of \$1.00 an hour effective for the next full pay period. Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Authorization to return \$800 to BWSR for Cost-Share Grant

A motion was made by Supervisor Noyes to return the \$800 to BWSR for the State Cost Share Grant. Seconded by Supervisor Anderson – Thomas Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

New Business

Crow Wing River 1W1P Update (Jake) – Jake gave a presentation - Introduction to the Watershed. There is a required 60-day public review period. Emails will be sent out to involved parties, and we are hoping to get thoughtful comments back. This October there will be the public meeting in Staples at the Sourcewell Building. There will need to be a Quorum at that meeting. The CWR1W1P incorporates very large area of very diverse land. It starts south of Itasca State Park and goes almost down to Baxter, MN and a little bit in Todd County as well. The Goal is to keep our waters healthy and improve them where we can. The watershed is split up into 4 planning regions. The two that we will be working with are Headwater Lakes, The Crow Wing Chains, and the Northwest Tributary. There are 6 counties, and 12 partners involved in the planning partnership. The goal is to get everything submitted and approved by BWSR by this December.

EPA ENV ED Grant Update - contracts and sub-awards expected (Crystal) - 2-year grant to do Education with k-12 on environmental systems. There are going to be 3 modules and then hands-on work learning about tree cone collecting in the school forests. We can start working on this grant now. We are required to have 5 sub-awards with this grant. We will be working with a couple of other SWCD's and an Education Assistant. Included are a couple of group meetings. The sub-awardee must either be a nonprofit or LGU. Participating schools can be a sub-contractor.

New Business Action

Contracts for Mitch Brinks and Dain Erickson - LCCMR & LSR Priority Lakes (Crystal) – Contracts are included in the board packet. Mitch offers a mapping service. Dain provides graphic design services. The amount in the contracts are amounts that are allocated. These rates are the standard rates they charge to other contracts. They may not exceed the allotted amount. The County Attorney did look over the contracts. We do not have any obligations with any sub-contractors that Dain or Mitch may choose to work with.

A motion was made by Supervisor Noyes to approve going forth with both General Service Agreements for Dain Erickson and Mitch Brinks with modification made to number 17. Seconded by Supervisor Goodrich. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Hiring Recommendation for the Community Engagement and Grant Reporting Coordinator position (Lynn and Don R) – This would be a position to help lighten the load for the District Manager. The position includes Grant reporting skills, and good at planning and coordinating outreach.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to hire Megan Fitzgerald as our new Community and Engagement Coordinator. This is a full-time position, with an hourly wage of \$34.00 an hour and the standard 6 months Probationary Period. Seconded by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Reports on Meetings and Projects

Board Chair's Report: Supervisor Anderson-Thomas - Attended June Board Meeting, Nitrate Testing at the Hubbard County Fair, BWSR supervisor training, Forestry Association Meeting virtually, set the date for the next Q3 strategic planning meeting for September 10th 9 am-12 pm.

Supervisor Rettinger: Interview for Community and Engagement Coordinator, BWSR supervisor training.

Supervisor Goodrich: Interviewing for Community and Engagement Coordinator, Nitrate testing at Hubbard County Fair, discussion with Crystal about the boat, BWSR supervisor training.

Supervisor Sells: Attended nitrate testing at the Hubbard County Fair, CWR1W1P meeting 24th July, BWSR supervisor training, visited 5 lakes with Jake testing water in boat, Forestry Association Meeting virtually

Supervisor Noyes: Attended Laporte Days nitrate testing, Nitrate testing at the Hubbard County fair, Steamboat Lake Association pollinator garden, BWSR supervisor training, Lake harvesting presentation.

District Manager's Report: is available upon request.

District Staff Reports: are available upon request.

Correspondence

MCIT - 2023 Auto Audit, 2023 Workers Comp Audit

Next Meeting Tuesday August 27; Agenda Items:

Adjourn.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no objections Chairperson Heidi Anderson-Thomas adjourned the meeting at 11: 09 am.



Signature

8-27-2024

Date

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.

Upcoming Meetings and Dates: August 19 & 20 Water Tour for MN Legislative Committee on Water Policy.