

Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District

Tuesday, January 28th, 2025, 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
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 Sells to approve the agenda. Second by Supervisor Anderson-Thomas. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

MINUTES

A motion was made by Supervisor Noyes to approve December's Board Minutes as presented. Second by Supervisor Anderson Thomas. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

TREASURERS REPORT

Bill Consensus It was mentioned to put 2-3 supervisors on the stipend request for the Grazing Workshop. There are no objections to the consent agenda. It is adopted as presented.

Treasurer's Report – We are keeping bill.com until the 2024 audit is completed. Crystal went over the Balance Sheet and P & L both as of December 31, 2024. She talked about how we are still in the process of cleaning up our QBO accounts. What was presented in this meeting was just to show the work in progress. The amounts are not 100% accurate but we are getting there. Crystal and Rachel will continue to work with Keith. Submitted for filing per Don Sells.

Preview of New Program Log Tool (Crystal/Gerry Maciej)

Gerry from Benton SWCD joined via zoom to go over and present the new Program Summary and Budget Sheets that were just created for 2025. We want to use the new Program Summary going forward for each Board meeting.

PUBLIC INPUT

Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner: Tom Krueger, Hubbard County Commissioner – Steve Keranen is the new chair for the County Board. John Olson is the new Hubbard County Attorney. He is finishing out Jonathan's term. There will be re-election in 2 years. The MN DOT land in Laporte was approved for purchase and Hubbard County is currently leasing the land for recycling bins, but now they will own the land. The MOA for the CW1W1P was approved. Held a public meeting for the Walker Ambulance District and approved of its creation after the meeting. In February, there will be an organization meeting made up of 3 county commissioners from Walker and 2 from Hubbard. This

summer there will be a request for bid, and we will decide how much to assess property owners. It will show up as a line item on the tax statement only for those in the WAD. The advertisements were open for bids for the 2025 Highway work which will include County Road 1 for 1 mile. Hubbard County had their 1st of 4 timber auctions for the year and it went very well. The bids for the jail expansion were accepted and contracts awarded. First and second floor remodel at the Government Center will begin in March.

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

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

BOARD CONSERVATIONIST

Darren Mayers, Board Conservationist – The grant reporting deadline on Feb 1, 2025. Agroforestry Institute will be in Baxter, MN, September 23-25, 2025. Darren set up a new technical mentoring program last month, and held its first meeting. Ryan Carlson with Cass Co SWCD will be discussing “Successes and Failures” and the details that go into holding events. He held a Woodland Workshop for Landowners and will use that for his example at the February meeting. BWSR approved both the Upper Mississippi Grand Rapids, and the CWR1W1P. Implementation funding will be coming soon, they are working on the work plan for both. Upper Mississippi Grand Rapids had some planning money left, and it was asked of them if they would want to use that money to go to Houston Engineering for the development of a pollution reduction calculator for forestry. Hopefully this calculator will be available in the coming months, and it will be shared statewide.

OLD BUSINESS

Back-Up/Tech Plan – Hubbard SWCD employees met over zoom with Fred from the Hubbard County IT department. They are using Microsoft SharePoint, and we already have that on our Microsoft 365 account. Fred talked about backing up specific files and how to implement that so we will not need to have an external drive for backing up files. Every employee should select to have their laptop backed up every day. Fred also discussed implementing 20 characters or more passwords and 2 authenticators. It was suggested that we possibly purchase laptops when they are needed through Hubbard County to take advantage of their discounts

OLD BUSINESS ACTION

HCSWCD Credit Card Policy – It was recommended that Rachel make a handwritten explanation on the VISA statement next to each transaction of what the item was purchased. Edit the proposed policy to include the appropriate Statutes be added at the bottom and edit to start with: Soil and Water Conservation Districts....as well as replace the word “must” with “has” in the last sentence.

A motion was made by Supervisor Anderson-Thomas to Hubbard CO SWCD adopt the credit policy with the changes as noted. Second by Supervisor Noyes. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

Update Fixed Asset Policy from \$2500 to \$5000

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to approve the increase of the fixed asset policy threshold from \$2500 to \$5000. Second, by Supervisor Anderson-Thomas. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

District Manager's Review - After reviewing the pay scale at similar SWCDs we feel that her compensation has been appropriate. Personnel Committee and Crystal met via Zoom. We had extended a conversation on her performance, challenges during the past year(s), plans for 2025 and beyond, the Boards participation to assist her. The Committee would like to commend her for her dedication to the district and all the hours she has put in to help resolve any problems we have had in the district and her efforts, thinking outside the box, to bring additional funding to the District Thanks to you, Crystal, the HCSWCD is more able to fulfil its mission in serving Hubbard County and its citizens. We would like to continue her employment and propose an increase in the amount of \$1.00 per hour. Retroactive to the first full payroll after first payroll of her anniversary date.

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to give a \$1.00/hr. raise after the first full payroll after Crystal's Anniversary date. Second by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

NEW BUSINESS

Oath of Office and Role Appointment – Heidi Anderson Thomas, Don Rettinger, Marcel Noyes each took the Oath of Office. The certificates were notarized and brought to the county for filing.

NEW BUSINESS ACTION

Hubbard County Hwy Dept. ACH Payment Return - This was a check in the amount of \$7641.91 that was wrongly sent from ACH to Hubbard SWCD bank account. It was supposed to go to Hubbard Co Highway Dept. We are asking for approval to send the money directly to the Hubbard County Treasurer's office instead of back to the State of Minnesota.

A motion was made by Supervisor Noyes to forward the overpayment we received from the state to Hubbard County Hwy Dept in the amount of \$7641.91. Seconded by Sells Supervisor. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

Non-Structural Shoreline Enhancement Contract – This project is in the southwestern shore of Belle Taine Lake. The current owner put in a retaining wall and that wall is starting to fail. They are looking to put in something that will be more of a natural shoreline, more stable and lower maintenance as well as lower cost. We got a quote from a contractor to remove the existing rip rap and retaining wall and replace it with a coir log system with natural vegetation and get that established. Another contractor will come and salvage the retaining wall and the rip rap. The funds will come from the CWR1W1P with a cost share at 75%. All work will be done in 2025. The contractor is ready to begin after thaw.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to approve the cost share for Katherine Beck in the amount of \$20,497.50 for the shoreline restoration. Second by Supervisor Goodrich. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

2024 Audit Agreement – Request to approve and sign the agreement to proceed for the 2024 Audit from Michael Peterson's Office.

A motion was made by Supervisor Sells to approve the audit engagement contract with Peterson. Second by Supervisor Noyes. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

MACDE 2025 Membership

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to approve MACDE 2025 annual membership in the amount of \$25.00 for each employee for a total of \$150.00. Second, by Supervisor Rettinger. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

MASWCD 2025 Dues

A motion was made by Supervisor Goodrich to approve the annual membership in the amount of \$7,431.37. Second, by Supervisor Sells. Affirmative: All. Opposed: None. Motion carried

REPORTS ON MEETINGS AND PROJECTS:

Board Chair's Report: Supervisor Anderson-Thomas attended last month's Board meeting, went to Bemidji for the CWR1W1P meeting

Supervisor Rettinger: attended last month's Board meeting, zoom meeting for District Manager's evaluation

Supervisor Goodrich: attended last month's Board meeting, zoom meeting for District Manager's evaluation

Supervisor Sells: attended last month's Board meeting, attended the forestry association meeting virtually and came to the office a couple of times throughout the month to sign checks and open bank statements.

Supervisor Noyes: attended last month's Board Meeting and was engaged with the County & Hart Lake Township regarding Garfield Lake (both the Beach Project and the township road repair needed on the north side of the lake).

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

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

CORRESPONDENCE

MCIT Renewal Letter

MASWCD Dues Letter

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, February 25, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.

APPROVED 2-25-2025
Date

SECRETARY 
Lynn Goodrich, Secretary