



MEETING MINUTES

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thursday, February 1, 2018

9:00 a.m.

4100 220th Street, Suite 102
Farmington, Minnesota

Board Members Present:

Laura Zanmiller, Chair
Chelsea Skog, Secretary
Jayne Hager Dee, Treasurer
Bruce Johnson, Public Relations

SWCD Staff Present:

Brian Watson
Lana Rotty
Curt Coudron

Others Present:

Alan Kraus, CRWP

1. Call to Order

Chair Zanmiller called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Zanmiller led the Board of Supervisors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Audience

Chair Zanmiller asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to address the board on an item that is not on the agenda. No one appeared.

4. Approval of Agenda

18.021 Motion by Skog, second by Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

5. Presentation – Cannon River Watershed Partnership

Alan Kraus, Conservation Program Manager with Cannon River Watershed Partnership provided an overview of the conservation programs they are currently working with. He specifically mentioned the cover crop program and recent farm field days. He also stated that they have provided cost-share funding to each of the six SWCDs in their watershed. He then spoke about initiatives and outreach planned for 2018.

6. Secretary's Report – January 4, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes

18.022 Motion by Skog, second by Johnson to approve the January 4, 2017 Meeting Minutes. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

7. Treasurer's Report – February 1 Accounts Payable

18.023 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to approve the February 1, 2018 Accounts Payable. Members voting in favor: Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee. Motion carried.

8. Committee of the Whole

8.1 Report on 2017 Compliance Inspections of Existing Landowner Contacts

Coudron explained that as part of our cost share program requirements, the District is responsible for periodically inspecting funded projects to ensure that the projects are functional and effective for the duration of each cost share contract. The typical contract length is 10 years, and an inspection schedule has been established to routinely inspect and coordinate any needed maintenance. Most projects are inspected at years 1, 3, 6, and 9. For projects that have a value over \$20,000, annual inspections are completed. Inspected projects are given a rating of Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor. Any Fair or Poor practice required some form of repair or maintenance. Needed maintenance is coordinated with the landowner so that the project can function as designed. All compliance inspections are followed up with a letter to the landowner.

Under the established schedule, 115 projects were inspected in 2017. Practice types included water & sediment control basins, grassed waterways, filter strips, streambank restorations, feedlot improvements, bioretention basins, raingardens, hydrodynamic separators, slope stabilizations, and permeable pavers. Thirty-one projects were in excellent condition, 66 projects were in good condition, 16 projects were in fair condition, and 1 project was in poor condition.

The most common maintenance activity needed for practices was vegetation management. Mowing to control weeds, removal of woody vegetation, and control of invasive species were most commonly recommended. Removal of accumulated sediment deposited was also frequently needed in both urban and agricultural practices. Staff worked with the landowners that required repairs or maintenance to restore the practices back to their fully functioning condition to increase their expected life expectancy. Inspections were documented with photos, notes, and follow up with each landowner, including those in excellent or good condition to recognize landowner efforts.

Coudron added that beside the requirement of inspecting, it is also important to become aware of any issues, identify those as soon as possible and learn from that. We can also gauge policy to ensure working as we move forward.

8.2 Review Draft 2018 Cost Share Policy

Coudron stated that staff are reviewing and updating cost share policies for the upcoming construction season (2018). Coudron began by reviewing the cost-share program process from beginning to end. The current cost-share programs offered are recommended to remain. There are five cost share programs currently available to residents and landowners of Dakota County; Landscaping for Clean Water (LCW), Citizen Conservation Stewards (CCS), Conservation Initiative Funding (CIF), Community Conservation Partnership (CCP), Incentive Payment Practices (IPP).

Coudron stated that several changes are proposed to current cost share policies. Highlights of the proposed changes include:

- Making cover crops eligible for funding under the Incentive Payment Practices (IPP) program
- Updating application and completion deadlines for the Landscaping for Clean Water (LCW) program

- Clarifying language for cost share requests for seal wells
- Designating staff authority for compliance inspections
- Clarifying language for cost share requests in order to meet regulatory requirements
- Updating language for when Board and committee reviews cost share applications

Coudron further detailed the proposed change.

Supervisor Dee questioned a required project compared to a voluntary project. Coudron stated that one example is if a 50' buffer is required, the SWCD would only cost-share anything after 50'.

8.3 Authorization to Exercise FY 18 State Cost Share Program Technical Assistance Option

Watson stated that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) allow soil and water conservation districts to use the Conservation Cost Share Grant for technical assistance rather than for cost share to landowners. The option became available as project implementation turned to Clean Water Fund appropriations from the State legislature and there remains a lack of funding for staff to engineer and design practices. This allocation is \$22,054 and has a termination date of December 31, 2020.

Staff is recommending that up to \$22,054 be allowed for technical assistance. This also allows some of the funds be used for the installation of projects if the need arises.

18.024 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to approve allocating up to \$22,054 of Fiscal Year 2018 Conservation Cost Share Base Grant for technical assistance. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

8.4 Update on Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Watershed-Based Funding Pilot Program

Watson stated that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) recently adopted policy for distributing legislative funding under a Watershed Based Funding Pilot Program. The adopted policy included allocations for both the 7-County Metro area and areas in greater Minnesota who have completed watershed based plans. Watson provided an update on this new program for the Seven County Metro Area. He noted that by June 20, 2018 the counties can create a collaborative PTM implementation plan, submit a budget request and work plan. Or they can opt out of the collaborative approach and be part of the competitive grant cycle. He added that a meeting for Dakota County is scheduled for Wednesday, February 7.

9. Interagency Reports and Announcements

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) agency report was provided in the meeting packet. Watson noted that the report indicated that an award has been let for the USDA Office Space.

Dakota County

There was no Dakota County report provided.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Watson stated that the Day at the Capitol is scheduled for Monday, March 12 and Tuesday March, 13. The next Area IV meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 4 and will be held at the Ramsey Public Works Facility in Arden Hills.

Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board

There were no Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board updates, as the next meeting is scheduled for February 28.

Cannon River One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee

Watson stated the last meeting was January 10. It was a productive meeting. The Policy Committee requested staff bring forward additional information on two structure options for implementing the plan to include a Joint Powers Entity and Joint Powers Collaboration.

10. Upcoming Meetings and Events

The upcoming events were reviewed. Watson added that the next Board meeting will be Thursday, March 1 at 9:00 a.m.

11. District Managers Report

Watson distributed the 2018 Pay Equity Report. He stated that local government jurisdictions are required to submit a pay equity report to the State of Minnesota every three years. Watson provided a review of the general information from the pay equity report data and the test results section. The Board acknowledged the pay equity report.

Watson explained that the Auditor suggested the capital asset threshold be increased from \$1,000 to \$2,500. The Board of Supervisors acknowledged increasing the capital asset threshold.

Watson stated that interviews are complete for the Outreach and Education Coordinator position and anticipates the hiring process to be complete soon.

Watson also stated that interviews for the Program Specialist are scheduled for the week of February 12.

He noted that the NRCS Local Work Group meeting will be held immediately following the March 1 Board meeting.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was scheduled for Tuesday, February 20 at 9:00 a.m.

Dee added that the Cannon River Watershed Partnership is advertising for an Executive Director.

18. Adjourn

18.025 Motion by Skog, second by Dee to adjourn the meeting. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Skog, Secretary