



## MEETING MINUTES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thursday, March 2, 2017

8:30 a.m.

4100 220<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 102  
Farmington, Minnesota

### **Board Members Present:**

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

### **SWCD Staff Present:**

Brian Watson  
Lana Rotty  
Curt Coudron  
Todd Matzke  
John Stelzner  
Ashley Gallagher  
Dave Holmen  
Joe Barten

### **Others Present:**

Brad Becker, Dakota County  
Helen Brosnahan, Dakota County  
Michelle Wohlers, NRCS

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Zanmiller called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. A quorum was present.

#### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

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

#### **3. Presentation**

Watson presented an overview of the Minnesota Buffer Law and Soil Loss Program. He stated that this law was established to protect surface water resources. He presented on the Boards responsibilities, current timelines for implementation and the enforcement process identified under the State law.

#### **4. 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.

#### **5. Approval of Agenda**

**17.021 Motion** by Chamberlain, second by Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

#### **6. Secretary's Report – February 2, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes**

**17.022 Motion** by Skog, second by Chamberlain to approve the February 2, 2017 Meeting Minutes. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

### **7.1 March 2, 2017 Accounts Payable**

**17.023** Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to accept the March 2, 2017 Accounts Payable. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

### **7.2 Audit Report for 2015**

Dee reviewed the independent auditor's report for Year Ended December 31, 2015 as conducted by Peterson Company Ltd. She further stated there were no significant findings with the audit and no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported to the Government Auditing Standards.

### **7.3 December 31, 2016 Financial Report**

Dee referenced the 2016 Revenue Sources chart and noted that county levy was 23% of the total District revenue, while 77% was from other sources. Watson then reviewed the December 2016 balance sheet and focused on the accounts receivable and unearned revenue sections.

**17.024** Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to accept the Year Ended December 31, 2016 Financial Report, subject to audit. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

### **7.4 January 31, 2017 Financial Report**

**17.025** Motion by Dee, second by Chamberlain to accept the January 31, 2017 Financial Report, subject to audit. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

### **7.5 February 28, 2017 Financial Report**

**17.026** Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to accept the February 28, 2017 Financial Report, subject to audit. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

## **8. Committee of the Whole**

### **8.1 Authorization to Execute Joint Powers Agreement with the Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board for Engineering and Technical Assistance Program Services**

Watson stated that the Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board (MCD) consists of 11 members including Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Isanti, Ramsey, Sherburne, Scott, Washington and Wright soil and water conservation districts, and Hennepin County.

The MCD implements a number of special programs including an Engineering and Technical Assistance (ETA) Program. In 2016 the Dakota SWCD served as the Host district for the ETA program to coordinate State grant funds among the Members, gather and generate reporting documents required by the State and providing information at MCD Joint Powers Board meetings.

The MCD Joint Powers Board took action on November 16, 2016 to approve Dakota SWCD as the ETA Program Host. A new joint powers agreement has been developed and it includes a time period of January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2019 with a reimbursement amount not to exceed \$34,500 for services.

**17.027** Motion by Chamberlain, second by Dee to execute the Joint Powers Agreement (01/01/2017-12/31/2019) with the Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board for Engineering and Technical Assistance Program Services at a total not to exceed \$34,500. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

## **8.2 Authorization to Amend Joint Powers Agreement with the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization for Services Related to Implementing Clean Water Fund Grants**

Barten stated that the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO) was awarded two Clean Water Fund grants in 2015. The SWCD assisted the LMRWMO Board with developing the grant applications, obtaining work plan approvals, and executing the grant agreement with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

The two grants include:

1. Alum treatments in Lake Augusta located in Mendota Heights and Sunfish Lake located in Sunfish Lake.
2. Stormwater improvements to Thompson Lake located in West St. Paul.

In June of 2016, execution of a joint powers agreement with the LMRWMO occurred for services related to implementation of these grants. This agreement identified grant administration and project development tasks to be performed by the Dakota SWCD at a cost not to exceed \$42,900.

The LMRWMO has recently requested additional services related to education and outreach, stakeholder participation, and assistance with a rain barrel program. This would amend the existing joint powers agreement by providing services during the grant period in an amount not to exceed \$74,850. No other changes to the original agreement are proposed.

Staff has drafted and presented a revised grant work plan and budget to the LMRWMO Board of Managers. The LMRWMO Board approved the amended work plan and budget at their February 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**17.028** Motion by Chamberlain, second by Johnson to amend the Joint Powers Agreement with the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization related to implementing clean water fund grants at an amount not to exceed \$74,850. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

## **8.3 Approve 2017 Cost Share Policies**

Coudron stated that draft 2017 Cost Share Policies were presented at the February Board meeting for Board review. He added that some changes have been made and staff is now seeking adoption of the Cost Share Policies.

He noted that the District offers the following five cost-share programs:

- Landscaping for Clean Water (LCW)
- Citizen Conservation Stewards (CCS)
- Conservation Initiative Funding (CIF)
- Community Conservation Partnership (CCP)
- Incentive Payment Practices (IPP)

Coudron highlighted the proposed changes from last year's Cost Share Policy to include:

- Staff credentials have been updated as they apply to current individual expertise.
- Clarification of funding restrictions for drain tile installation that are not part of a conservation practice is provided.
- Land Value is no longer eligible as match.
- Application and completion dates for the Landscaping for Clean Water Grants have been updated.
- A special designation of "Priority Locations" is proposed for projects that have been identified through a formal prioritization process. The priority locations would need to be designated by the District Board. The priority locations would be eligible for increased cost share funding; up to 90% of the total documented project cost.
- Removed requirement to keep the tract of land where a practice is installed to remain in an agricultural land use for a minimum period of 10 years.

- Increase conventional filter strip payments to \$300 per acre.
- Increase harvestable filter strips to \$150 per acre with a contract limit of \$7,500.

**17.029** Motion by Dee, second by Chamberlain to approve the 2017 Cost Share Policies as presented. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

#### **8.4 Designate Priority Locations for 2017 Cost Share Programs**

Coudron stated that in 2016, a sub-watershed analysis (SWA) was completed to identify locations for implementing conservation practices within the Trout Brook watershed. The goal of the SWA was to determine the most cost-effective projects within the watershed and prioritize projects for implementation. The SWA considered project feasibility, estimated construction costs, and pollutant reduction potential for each identified project. For each location that a conservation practice was identified, a cost-benefit ratio was calculated and projects were ranked with the most cost-effective sites receiving the highest priority.

Based on the results of the SWA, a Clean Water Fund grant was applied for and received to install the most cost effective projects specifically targeting those with an annualized sediment reduction cost of less than \$10 per ton.

The 2017 Cost Share Policy, allows the District Board to designate "Priority Locations" that would provide up to 90% cost share. This increased cost share allocation would create better incentives for the most beneficial projects.

Based on the prioritization completed through the SWA and available funding for projects, staff is recommending that sites identified in the Trout Brook SWA with an annualized sediment reduction cost of less than \$10 per ton be identified as Priority Locations for 2017 Cost Share Programs. Based on preliminary estimates within the SWA, this would include the top 59 of the 346 identified projects.

Projects that exceed \$10/ton/year of sediment reduction would still be eligible for cost share allocations of up to 75% of the project cost.

**17.030** Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to designate Priority Locations for 2017 Cost Share Programs as areas in the Trout Brook Sub-watershed with an annualized sediment reduction cost of less than \$10 per ton. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

## **9. Interagency Reports and Announcements**

### **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Michelle Wohler's provided the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) agency report. She stated that they have 32 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) applications and they are half-way through with quality assurance reviews. She indicated that potentially one-half will be funded. Funding will be awarded at end of the month and then the contracting process will begin. Wohlers added that they referred a dozen or so landowners to the SWCD to pursue the Minnesota Ag. Water Quality Certification.

She stated that they received 8 applications for the Conservation Stewardship Program. The statewide goal was a minimum of one application per office.

They received 25 re-enrollments for the Conservation Reserve Program and a few new applications. CRP has available over 33,000 acres for wetland restoration; 1,200 acres for tree plantings; 13,000 acre for duck habitat; 42,000 acres for SAFEs; and there is also 4,500 acres of Highly Erodible Land options for Minnesota.

Wohlers was recently informed that the Xerces Society, NRCS and General Mills are coordinating a \$4 million dollar investment for pollinator habitat and one staff member for that program will be housed in their office.

Lastly, she reported that the NRCS is looking for new space. The county has indicated that the lease will not be renewed and they would like to see them vacate the building by August 1. However, it will take approximately 18 months for the move to be completed. It has been decided that the location of their office will remain within the City of Farmington.

#### **Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts**

Watson stated the MASWCD Legislative briefing and Day at the Capitol is scheduled for March 20 and 21, Watson, Zanmiller, and Dee will plan to attend. The next area meeting is Wednesday, March 29.

#### **Metro Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board**

Zanmiller stated that MCD met on February 22, and Officers were elected. Mark Zabel (Carver) will serve as Chair, Mary Wetter (Wright) as Vice-Chair and Doug Schoenecker (Scott) as Secretary-Treasurer.

Anoka provided an update on the campus groundwater initiative grant. He stated that in 2016, the MCD received a CWF grant to review groundwater use and re-use on larger campuses. Anoka is serving as the host with expertise and leading the development of the program.

#### **Dakota County**

Brad Becker, Water Resources Supervisor provided the Dakota County report. He stated that the County and Soil and Water are partnering on a wetland restoration inventory. The plan is to create an inventory of restorable wetlands and prioritize them as the largest wetlands that would take the least amount of property owners and time to restore. Becker referenced the Trout Brook Sub-watershed Analysis previously discussed and how opportunities exist when a priority location has been identified.

Dee requested an update on the City of Randolph waste water treatment facility. Becker recapped, that an Engineer found two potential fixes. One option would be to pipe all of the waste water to City of Cannon Falls to their facility. The other option is that the City could build a new facility. The Cannon River Watershed Partnership (CRWP) is taking on the role of getting the City of Randolph on a state priority list for funding. If they were on this list and approved for funding, they could potentially receive significant cost share of a new system.

#### **Cannon River One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee**

Chamberlain reported on the first Cannon River One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee meeting. He stated that both he and Dee were in attendance. It began with an overview of the plan and process for the committee. They elected officers to include Steve Rohlfing (Le Sueur County Commissioner) as Chair, Brad Anderson (Goodhue County Commissioner) as Vice Chair, and Galen Malecha (Rice County Commissioner) as Secretary. The Bylaws were adopted and the Committee approved staff to proceed with selecting a consultant to assist with developing the comprehensive watershed plan. There was also discussion regarding an information meeting or "kick-off event" to be held in May.

Watson stated that the Committee will next meet on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. He added that the meeting was very positive and group was eager to move forward.

### **10. Upcoming Meetings and Events**

The upcoming events were reviewed. Watson noted that the Dakota County Crops Day is scheduled for March 15 at Dakota Electric and the Township Officers meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 18 at the Empire Public Works Building. The next SWCD Meeting is April 6.

**11. District Managers Report**

Watson stated that there will be a spring tour after the April Board meeting, lasting approximately two hours.

**12. Adjourn**

**17.030** Motion by Chamberlain, second by Johnson to adjourn the meeting. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Skog, Secretary