



MEETING MINUTES

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Wednesday, May 2, 2018

9:00 a.m.

4100 220th Street, Suite 102
Farmington, Minnesota

Board Members Present:

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

SWCD Staff Present:

Brian Watson
Lana Rotty
Curt Coudron
Joe Barten
Liz Dengate

Others Present:

Mark Zabel, Vermillion River Watershed JPO

1. Call to Order

Chair Zanmiller called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. A quorum was present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

3. Presentation – *Soil Health and Soil Quality, Ashley Gallagher, Resource Conservationist*

In the absence of Gallagher, the Soil Health and Soil Quality presentation will be postponed until the next Board meeting.

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

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

6. Secretary's Report – April 5, 2018 Board Meeting Minutes

18.051 Motion by Skog, second by Johnson to approve the April 5, 2018 Meeting Minutes. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

7. Treasurer's Report

6.1 May 2, 2018 Accounts Payable

18.052 Motion by Dee, second by Chamberlain to approve the May 2, 2018 Accounts Payable. Members voting in favor: Chamberlain, Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee. Motion carried.

6.2 April 30, 2018 Financial Report

18.053 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to accept the April 30, 2018 Financial Report, subject to audit. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

8. Rural Lands Committee

8.1 Dakota County Wetland Bank Projects

Watson stated that staff have been assisting with the development of two wetland bank projects over the past several months. Watson explained that wetland banking is a term used under the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) whereas drained wetland soils are restored back to a natural condition and then used to offset future wetland impacts. This compensatory mitigation method is the preferred standard of regulatory agencies as it creates larger wetland complexes at a watershed scale rather than creating smaller and less significant wetlands near the impacted wetland.

In partnership with Dakota County and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, the SWCD is currently working on the development of two additional wetland banks. A presentation of the wetland bank sites was provided.

Watson stated the Jordan wetland bank is in the construction phase. The site is located in Section 5 of Waterford Township, Cannon River Watershed. A required State easement document was executed in 2017 and involved approximately 68 acres. Total wetland credits that will be received are largely dependent on vegetation performance but 40 to 45 acres of wetland credit is anticipated.

Chamberlain questioned why so many of the trees in the upland are being cut down. Watson and Coudron explained that most of the trees being cut are boxelder, buckthorn, and other undesirable species. This will make for better for management of the area.

Watson then stated that the Braun wetland bank is in preliminary design and approval stage. The site is located in Section 12 of Castle Rock Township, South Branch Vermillion River Watershed. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization is a partner in this project as well. The site will involve an easement of approximately 120 acres with between 100 and 110 acres of wetland credit anticipated.

Watson added that staff time to assist with the development of wetland banks is accounted for under a Natural Resource Block grant from the State to carry out provisions of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act or from charges for services under our joint powers agreement with Dakota County.

9. Community Development Committee

9.1 Authorization to Execute Agreement with the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization for Services Related to Implementing the Cherokee Heights Stormwater Management and Ravine Stabilization Project

Barten stated that the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO) was awarded, and has executed, a FY18 Clean Water Fund grant with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. As Administrator to the LMRWMO, the SWCD assisted with developing the grant application, obtaining work plan approval, and executing the grant agreement. The grant award was \$700,000 and the total project cost is estimated at \$1,080,000.

The grant work plan includes the installation of two underground hydrodynamic separator stormwater treatment devices as well as the stabilization of a severely eroded “Cherokee Heights” ravine located in Lilydale Park. The project area includes the City of West St. Paul and Mendota Heights in Dakota County and the City of St. Paul in Ramsey County. The project area drains to Pickerel Lake and the Mississippi River.

The SWCD role would be grant management, project development including coordination with project stakeholders, and implementation of education activities identified in the grant work plan. Staff has drafted a work plan and budget and will present it to the LMRWMO Board of Managers at their May 9 meeting for approval. The agreement would include a total cost not to exceed \$24,960.

Barten then provided a presentation on the Cherokee Heights Stormwater Management and Ravine Stabilization Project including the erosion in the Cherokee Heights ravine, and the erosion and scour at the Cherokee Heights culvert; as well as an overview of the best management practices proposed with the grant funding received.

18.054 Motion by Zanmiller, second by Johnson to execute agreement with Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization Agreement for Services, retroactive to the grant agreement execution date, related to implementing the Cherokee Heights Stormwater Management and Ravine Stabilization Project at a total not to exceed \$24,960. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

9.2 Landscaping for Clean Water Application Update

Barten and Dengate provided an overview of the Landscaping for Clean Water Program. They stated that with the added marketing and outreach of the partners the attendance is exceeding previous years by 40%. Dengate added that the District just began using Facebook and Twitter for outreach also. An evaluation is being emailed to all introductory workshop attendees and the results are favorable. To date, approximately 62% of the introductory workshop attendees have registered for design courses and this is well exceeding past years. Barten added that they need to ensure they have volunteers on hand to provide assistance to the landowners.

Barten stated that the first deadline for landowners to submit applications for Landscaping for Clean Water Program funding was yesterday, May 1. He added that there are two more applications rounds this year and indicated that there is a total of 41 grant awards available this year. There were 27 grant applications received this round, and all were awarded funding. Barten noted the types of projects and the locations as listed on the handout. He further stated that three applications were received in the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District and staff is working with them to seek approval for funding these grants.

Dee questioned if any Cities were providing incentives also. Barten responded that the City of Burnsville is offering \$1,000 grants if you go through the SWCD and Apple Valley is offering \$500. Lakeville has mentioned incentives, but none are available at this time.

10. Committee of the Whole

10.1 Call for Resolutions from Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Watson stated that The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) have issued a call for resolutions and provided guidelines to the process. The resolution process is the means by which local soil and water conservation Boards can identify needs and issues and bring them before the State membership for review and action at the MASWCD annual convention in December.

If there are policy actions the Board would like to pursue, staff can draft language into the requested format and have available for consideration at our June Board meeting. We need to adopt any resolutions locally prior to advancing them to the Metro Area meeting which will be held June 20.

Resolutions that pass in each of the eight MASWCD areas are then forwarded to the MASWCD Board of Directors for review. The deadline for Area resolutions to be into the MASWCD office is July 21.

There was discussion regarding how the SWCDs were left out of the prioritization process within the 7-County Metro Area under the Watershed Based funding pilot program; however, BWSR staff has indicated that they would be making modifications to future watershed based funding policies to correct the issue. Zannmiller indicated that she favored a resolution to address the concern and place it in writing rather than wait. She added there is no intention to create animosity since it was a pilot program, however, feels SWCD are being overlooked.

11. Interagency Reports and Announcements

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) agency report was provided by Michelle Wohlers. At this time they are finishing up contracting, 22 applications were approved for funding for a total of \$775,772. Of those approved, 20 are in Dakota County for a total of \$754,988. EQIP payments are approximately 50% of the project cost, with landowners paying an average of \$8,000 of their own funding; Wohlers encouraged the Board of Supervisors to consider policies that include "piggybacking" federal funding. She added that the position management plan will help them determine if they can provide engineering assistance requests for Trout Brook projects. She also stated that they are working with SWCD staff to review ecological sciences job approval authority. A request from the District Manager will need to be sent to the area office for further assistance as per their request procedure.

Dakota County

There was no Dakota County report provided. However, Mark Zabel stated that on behalf of the County, they are appreciative for the work task completed on the wetland banking projects.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

There was no Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts report provided. The Metro Area meeting and summer tour has been scheduled for June 20, 2018.

Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board

Watson stated that the next meeting is scheduled for May 30, 2018.

Cannon River One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee

There were no updates with the Cannon River One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee. The next meeting is scheduled for June 27, 2018.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Zannmiller noted upcoming events.

Zabel addressed the Board regarding the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (JPO). He stated that he is appreciative of SWCD attendance at their Board meetings. They are working on many activities, such as Alimagnet Lake stormwater improvement project, Lakeville South Creek temperature reduction (Golden Pond) project, coordinating a drone flyover of Alimagnet Lake, and projects at the Minnesota Zoo.

District Managers Report

Watson stated that Board of Supervisor signatures are needed for the Vermillion Bank Resolution that he routed. He requested the Finance Committee consider a meeting date to review first quarter finances. Watson reminded the Supervisors that election filing opens May 22 and closes June 5. Watson also stated that name tags will be ordered for the Board of Supervisors.

Watson asked if Board members wish to take a tour after the June meeting. There was consensus to provide a short tour.

14. Adjourn

18.055 Motion by Dee, 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