



MEETING MINUTES

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thursday, June 2, 2016

4100 220th Street, Suite 102
Farmington, Minnesota

Board Members Present:

Laura Zanmiller, Chair
Joe Meyers, Vice Chair
Chris Nielsen, Secretary
Kevin Chamberlain, Treasurer
Marian Brown, Public Relations

SWCD Staff Present:

Brian Watson
Lana Rotty
Curt Coudron
Joe Barten
Todd Matzke
Ashley Gallagher
Lindsey Albright

Others Present:

Georg Fischer, Dakota County
Ben Datres, MN Conservation Corps
Michelle Wohlers, NRCS*

*Denotes Partial Meeting Attendance

1. Call to Order

Chair Zanmiller called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. A quorum was present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

3. Introduction of Minnesota Conservation Corps Summer Apprentice

Watson introduced Ben Datres, Minnesota Conservation Corps Summer Apprentice. He stated that Ben will be working in our office until the middle of August. Ben indicated that he is from Burnsville and received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Natural Resource Management and Water Resources from the University of Minnesota Crookston this past December. His recent employment included working at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and MN Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) as well as two summers with the Dakota County Parks Department.

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

16.062 Motion by Nielsen, second by Meyers to approve the agenda as presented. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

6. Secretary's Report – May 5, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes

16.063 Motion by Nielsen, Second by Chamberlain to approve the May 5, 2016 Meeting Minutes. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

7. Treasurer's Report

7.1 June 2, 2016 Accounts Payable

16.064 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Meyers to approve the June 2, 2016 Accounts Payable. Members voting yes: Zanmiller, Brown, Chamberlain, Nielsen, Meyers. Motion carried.

7.2 May 31, 2016 Financial Report

16.065 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Nielsen to accept the May 31, 2016 Financial Report, subject to audit. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

8. Rural Lands Committee

8.1 Authorization to Provide Final Payment to Nick Stein for Installation of Terraces (15-IPP-10)

Meyers stated that Nick Stein has completed installation of two terraces. The project was approved for funding at the August 6, 2015 board meeting at 75% cost share not to exceed \$17,172.38 based on an estimated project cost of \$22,896.50. Final project cost was \$23,354.48.

16.066 Motion by Meyers, second by Chamberlain to approve final payment to Nick Stein for installation of two terraces in Section 16, Hampton Township, Vermillion River Watershed at \$17,172.38 (74%). Members voting yes: Brown, Chamberlain, Nielsen, Meyers, Zanmiller. Motion carried.

8.2 Authorization to Provide Final Payment to Wollmering Family LLP for Installation of Water and Sediment Control Basins and Critical Area Planting (15-IPP-14)

Meyers stated that Wollmering Family LLP has completed the installation of two water and sediment control basins and 26,250 square feet of critical area planting. The project was approved for funding at the October 1, 2015 board meeting at 75% cost share not to exceed \$8,775 and based on an estimated project cost of \$11,700. The final project cost was \$8,472.

16.067 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to approve final payment to Wollmering Family LLP for installation of two water and sediment control basins and a critical area planting in Section 22, Vermillion Township, Vermillion River Watershed at \$6,354 (75%). Members voting yes: Chamberlain, Nielsen, Meyers, Zanmiller. Member abstaining: Brown. Motion carried.

8.3 Authorization to Provide Final Payment to Hmong American Farmers Association for the Repair of Grassed Waterway (15-IPP-15)

Meyers stated that the Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA) completed repairs on a grassed waterway. The project was approved for funding at the October 29, 2015 board meeting at 75% cost share not to exceed \$2,037.93 and based on an estimated project cost of \$2,717.24. The final project cost was \$1,635.92.

16.068 Motion by Meyers, second by Chamberlain to approve final payment to HAFA for repair on a grassed waterway in Section 29, Vermillion Township, Vermillion River Watershed at \$1,226.94 (75%). Members voting yes: Nielsen, Meyers, Zanmiller, Brown, Chamberlain. Motion carried.

8.4 Authorization to Provide Final Payment to GTJ Company LLC for Installation of a Water and Sediment Control Basin (16-IPP-04)

Meyers stated that GTJ Company LLC has completed installation of a water and sediment control basin with tile outlet. The project was approved for funding at the April 7, 2016 Board meeting at 75% cost share not to exceed \$5,025 and based on an estimated project cost of \$6,700. The final project cost was \$6,755.40

16.069 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to approve final payment to GTJ Company LLC for installation of water and sediment control basin with tile outlet in Section 5, Eureka Township, Vermillion River Watershed at \$5,025 (74%). Members voting yes: Meyers, Zanmiller, Brown, Chamberlain, Nielsen. Motion carried.

Watson stated that applications for the second round of Incentive Payment Practice (IPP) funding were to be received by May 15. Three new applications were received and four were resubmitted from the previous application period. The applications were ranked by staff and the Rural Lands Committee based on various water resource protection criteria and their pollution reduction cost to benefit ratio. A signed application, ranking form, project map and location map was provided for each cost-share request. For the seven applications ranked, there is a total of \$31,265.12 requested in the Cannon River Watershed, and \$34,650 requested in the Vermillion River Watershed.

The Rural Lands Committee is recommending three projects move forward with contract approvals; Mike Serres, David Cook, and Lois Peterson.

8.5 Authorization to Execute Contract with Mike Serres for Installation of a Grassed Waterway and Terraces (16-IPP-05)

Mike Serres is requesting project funds for the installation of two terraces and a grassed waterway. The estimated project cost is \$11,156.82.

16.070 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to execute contract with Mike Serres for installation of grassed waterway and two terraces in Section 7, Douglas Township, Cannon River Watershed at 75% cost share, not to exceed \$8,367.62. Members voting yes: Zanmiller, Brown, Chamberlain, Nielsen, Meyers. Motion carried.

8.6 Authorization to Execute Contract with David Cook for Installation of a Grassed Waterway and Water and Sediment Control Basin (16-IPP-06)

David Cook is requesting project funds for the installation of two grassed waterways and a water and sediment control basin. The estimated project cost is \$9,200.

16.071 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to execute contract with David Cook for installation of two grassed waterways and a water and sediment control basin in Section 14, Hampton Township, Vermillion River Watershed at 75% cost share, not to exceed \$6,900. Members voting yes: Zanmiller, Brown, Chamberlain, Nielsen, Meyers. Motion carried.

8.7 Authorization to Execute Contract with Lois Peterson for Installation of a Grassed Waterway and Water and Sediment Control Basin (16-IPP-07)

Lois Peterson is requesting cost share funds for the installation of two water and sediment control basins. The estimated project cost is \$14,000.

16.072 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to execute contract with Lois Peterson for installation of two water and sediment control basins in Eureka Township, Vermillion River Watershed at 75% cost-share, not to exceed \$10,500. Members voting yes: Brown, Chamberlain, Nielsen, Meyers, Zanmiller. Motion carried.

9. Community Development Committee

9.1 Authorization to Execute Contract with the Minnesota Zoo for Installation of Stormwater Retrofits (16-CCP-01)

Curt Coudron stated that the Minnesota Zoo is requesting Community Conservation Partnership funds to retrofit several stormwater best management practices within the Zoo property. The practices will capture runoff from approximately 13.2 acres which previously discharged untreated into a DNR designated wetland and ultimately to the Vermillion River depending on water levels. A campus-wide review of the zoo stormwater system occurred and 8 projects were identified. Four of the projects are inside the zoo visitor area and four projects are on external ring of the property such as parking areas. An estimated 1.3 million visitors pass through the zoo annually. Coudron also spoke about a potential education demonstration project that would involve water re-use from the roof of the Tropics building on the zoo

property. Native vegetation and pollinator plantings will be installed within the stormwater practices identified. Construction is slated for late August and early September as zoo visitor numbers drop during the State fair. This project is collaboration between the Minnesota Zoo, Vermillion River Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization, Metropolitan Council, and the Dakota County SWCD. The estimated project cost is \$193,621.

16.073 Motion by Nielsen, second by Meyers to execute contract with the Minnesota Zoo for installation of eight stormwater best management practices within the City of Apple Valley, Vermillion River Watershed at 75% cost share not to exceed \$50,000. Members voting yes: Chamberlain, Nielsen, Meyers, Zanmiller, Brown. Motion carried.

10. Committee of the Whole

10.1 Consideration to Adopt Resolution Supporting One Watershed One Plan within the Cannon River Watershed

Watson stated that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has announced a grant opportunity to pay for costs associated with developing local water plans based on major watershed boundaries. The one watershed one plan concept was initiated by the local government water roundtable made up of the Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Association of Watershed Districts and Association of Counties. Further, legislation was passed in 2015 defining purpose and outlining structure to include all local water plans be based on major watersheds by the year 2025. The seven-county metro area, including the North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization, is currently exempt from the legislation due to the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act.

The Cannon River Watershed drainage involves portions of six counties and soil and water conservation districts to include: Dakota, Goodhue, LeSueur, Rice, Steele and Waseca. A meeting among staff from counties, SWCDs, BWSR and others was held and the decision to pursue the BWSR grant is being requested through each elected local governing board. Rice SWCD has agreed to be the fiscal and administrative agent for the grant if awarded.

Since the development of a new watershed based comprehensive water plan would not eliminate the need for the Dakota SWCD to have a comprehensive plan, the direct benefit is limited. In addition, it is unknown at this time how funding will be distributed among the 7-county metro area for this one watershed one plan initiative.

Even though the seven-county metro area is currently exempt from the one watershed one plan process, participating in the plan development if a grant is awarded and providing support to the other local unit of governments is being requested. The goal would be that at the end of the planning process, there may be implementation goals that align with the North Cannon River Watershed Management Plan and our recently approved Comprehensive Plan.

Watson provided a resolution for the SWCD Board consideration.

16.074 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Nielsen to adopt the resolution that supports an application to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources for a planning grant to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan but does not anticipate entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the counties, soil and water conservation districts, and watershed districts within the Cannon River Watershed until such time more details on how the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act and associated funding is incorporated into the process. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

11. Personnel Committee

11.1 Adoption of new Organizational Chart and Authorization to Fill Vacancies

Watson presented a new organizational chart to address the current vacancy. The organizational chart includes a new Project Management Supervisor position and a Resource Conservationist position to be hired.

The Project Management Supervisor position would be advertised as an internal posting only with the intent of providing promotional opportunity to existing staff. If there are no candidates or the hire is not

finalized, the vacancy will be reconsidered in coordination with the Board. The position will be responsible for coordinating and supervising cost share programs.

The Resource Conservationist vacancy would involve advertising statewide and nationally. The position would involve tasks associated with ecological services such as wetland restorations, prairie plantings, operation and maintenance plans and vegetated buffer establishments. This position would primarily be a field staff position.

Watson stated that upon approval of the organizational chart and authorization to fill vacancies, coordination with Dakota County Employee Relations will occur to begin the hiring process.

16.075 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to approve the organizational chart and to authorize the hire of a Project Management Supervisor and the Resource Conservationist. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

12. Interagency Reports and Announcements

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Michelle Wohlers provided the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) agency report. She stated that they have six Conservation Stewardship Program contracts. The landowners have selected their enhancements, and they are currently performing field checks with all contracts being finalized by July 1.

Wohlers stated that she will be providing the County and the SWCD with the FNAP easement monitoring inspections list soon.

Regarding the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the MAWQCP funding pool, all ranking, scoring and QAR must be complete by mid-June and funding will be announced soon after. There are 51 applications state-wide. Wohlers stated that yesterday, they were informed that the deadline for landowners seeking 2017 EQIP funding is August 19, 2016. To date, there are 30 applications state-wide.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

There was no BWSR report. However, Watson stated that he was informed by BWSR staff that the competitive Clean Water Fund grant application period will be moved up with information being released late June or early July. Watson further noted that counties and watershed districts will have the option to receive buffer funds for enforcement ranging from \$45,000 to \$180,000 from the State's general fund. If they decline the funding and enforcement responsibilities, BWSR will receive the funds and provide enforcement.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Watson provided the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) report. He distributed the agenda for the Area 4 Summer Tour and Meeting scheduled for July 27. He also distributed the 2016 Legislative Outcomes from the End of the Regular Session.

Metro Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board

Zanmiller provided the Metro Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board (MCD) report. She noted that the Children's Water Festival is scheduled for September 18th at the State Fairgrounds. The Minnesota Agriculture Water Quality Certification Program has been continued through December 31, 2016. She added that there was a financial update provided on the Clean Water Fund Grants received by the MCD.

Dakota County

Georg Fischer provided the Dakota County report. He stated that they will receive \$60,000 of buffer funding as previously mentioned. The two wetland bank projects continue to move along slowly but the hope is to execute an agreement with BWSR soon.

There will be discussion regarding the 2017 work plan and collaboration with the SWCD and there are no intentions to make any significant changes to the work plan. He stated that former SWCD employee Brad

Becker was hired as the Dakota County Water Resources Supervisor. He added that the Vermillion River Watershed JPO is in the process of hiring an Engineer.

Fischer noted that Dakota County has not recently applied for land conservation grants as staff is catching up with current workload. This may have some impact on SWCD involvement as well.

Meyers questioned construction activities at the Byllesby Dam. Fischer summarized that they have lowered the level of Lake Byllesby by 8 feet in order to accomplish some of the work on face of the dam. The water level is back up and the new crest gates are operational. There is a plan to install some walkways in the future. They are seeking State bond funds to upgrade the turbines. It is a 100-year old facility and maintenance has been necessary.

Watershed Management Organizations

There were no other Watershed Management Organization reports provided.

13. Upcoming Meetings and Events

The upcoming events were reviewed. Watson noted that the USDA NRCS Local Work Group Meeting will be held today. He reminded those present of the July 27 Area Meeting, and stated that the next SWCD Board Meeting is July 7.

14. District Managers Report

Joe Barten provided an update on the Landscaping for Clean Water program.

Watson stated that the SWCD has been contacted by the City of South St. Paul to administer certain Wetland Conservation Activities and anticipates that to move forward for consideration at the July Board meeting.

15. Adjourn

16.076 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to adjourn the meeting. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Nielsen, Secretary