



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

Thursday, August 3, 2017

8:30 a.m.

4100 220th 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
Ashley Gallagher
Dave Holmen

Others Present:

Michelle Wohlers, NRCS

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. Presentation

Dave Holmen, GIS Specialist/Resource Conservationist, provided a presentation on the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) and Land Cover Data.

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

17.074 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

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

17.075 Motion by Skog, second by Chamberlain to approve the July 6, 2017 Meeting Minutes. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

7. Treasurer's Report

7.1 August 3, 2017 Accounts Payable

17.076 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to approve the August 3, 2017 Accounts Payable. Members voting yes: Chamberlain, Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee. Motion carried.

7.2 July 31, 2017 Financial Report

17.077 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to accept the July 31, 2017 Financial Report, subject to audit. All members voting in yes. Motion carried.

8. Finance Committee

8.1 Approve 2nd Quarter Finance Committee Report

Dee stated that the Finance Committee met on July 26th to review revenues and expenditures through June 30th. Recommended revenue and expense changes after 2nd quarter review are reflected in red under the working budget column. Watson added that we are anticipating a positive fund balance at year end.

17.078 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to accept the Finance Committee 2nd Quarter Report. All members voting in yes. Motion carried.

9. Rural Lands Committee

9.1 Authorization to Execute Contract with Ralph Wagner for Installation of Water and Sediment Control Basin (17-IPP-05)

Coudron stated that Ralph Wagner is proposing to install one new water and sediment control basin. Mr. Wagner installed 5 basins in 2016 to address field erosion but soil loss continues between two of the basins. An additional basin is being proposed to split the distance between the two existing basins. This practice will reduce erosion, further the lifespan of the existing downstream basin, and reduce sediment loading within the Vermillion River Watershed. The total project cost is estimated at \$2,020.

17.079 Motion by Dee, second by Chamberlain to execute contract with Ralph Wagner for Installation of Water and Sediment Control Basin in Section 36, Nininger Township, Vermillion River Watershed at 75% cost share, not to exceed \$1,515. Members voting yes: Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain. Motion carried.

9.2 Authorization to Execute Contract with Randy Weatherly on behalf of Lawrence Weatherly Trust for Installation of Water and Sediment Control Basin (17-IPP-06)

Coudron stated that Randy Weatherly is proposing to install a grassed waterway. A 450-foot long gully forms annually at the project location. The project will involve grading the area to direct runoff into a new grassed waterway and installing seed and erosion control blanket in the new waterway. The project will reduce erosion and sediment loading within the Vermillion River Watershed. The total project cost is estimated at \$3,500.

17.080 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Johnson to execute contract with Randy Weatherly of Lawrence Weatherly Trust for Installation of Grassed Waterway in Section 5, Vermillion Township, Vermillion River

Watershed at 75% cost share, not to exceed \$2,625. Members voting yes: Skog, Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain, Zanmiller. Motion carried

10. Committee of the Whole

10.1 Authorization to Submit FY18 Clean Water Fund Grant Application to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources and Execute Grant Agreement if Awarded

Watson stated that FY18 Clean Water Fund Grant applications are due August 9. Staff are proposing to submit one application during this competitive process. The application would request \$200,000 in grant funds to implement additional conservation projects within the Trout Brook Watershed of the Cannon River. In 2016, we applied for and received a \$200,000 Clean Water Fund Grant for projects that were identified through the sub-watershed analysis of Trout Brook. The 2016 application focused on the top ranking projects (approximately the top 50 out of 350 projects) that were identified as having the best pollutant reduction benefits in relation to overall project cost. The FY18 application would focus on the next 50 projects, up to 100, identified. Grant funds would be used to provide landowner incentives to install the identified projects. The 25% match requirement of \$50,000 would come from partnering organizations, such as the WMOs, Dakota County, NRCS and landowners.

17.081 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Johnson authorizing staff to submit to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources FY18 Clean Water Fund Grant application and execute the grant agreement if awarded. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

Supervisor Dee asked how we are informing the landowners about the project funding available with our current Trout Brook grant. Watson stated that staff have been calling and meeting with landowners individually to discuss potential projects.

10.2 Authorization to Execute Grant Agreement with Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources for Buffer Cost Share

Watson stated that the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) recently approved a new buffer cost share program allocating almost \$5 million dollars statewide to support landowners in meeting the buffer law requirements. The new law requires a buffer on public waters by November 1, 2017 and a buffer on public drainage ditches by November 1, 2018. The November 1, 2017 deadline can be moved to June 30, 2018 with SWCD approval.

Of the total funding, \$25,000 was allocated for use in Dakota County for cost-share contracts with landowners to implement riparian buffers or alternative practices on public waters and public drainage ditches. Funding eligibility is limited to the installation of new buffers and practices to meet the new state buffer law requirements. Landowners that are already compliant with the buffer law are not eligible for funding through this program.

BWSR is asking SWCDs to accept or deny these funds by September 29, 2017. If SWCDs accept the funds, there is a requirement to maintain a list of landowner applications under the Buffer Cost Share (BCS) program. The record of landowner applications is being requested to provide BWSR with knowledge on the demand for the cost share funding and to calculate the amount of cost share funds needed per SWCD.

If no buffer cost share applications are received by March 1, 2018, or the total cost share requested is less than the grant agreement of \$25,000, unrequested funds need to be returned to BWSR. If more funding requests are made, BWSR will use this information to redistribute program funding to areas of need to the extent possible.

Supervisor Dee asked what outreach would be planned to inform landowners of the cost share funding. Watson added the main area of focus will be in the Cities of Farmington and Lakeville where County Ordinance for buffers does not apply. Letter and direct calls will be used to inform landowners. Dee also asked what the consequences will be for non-compliant landowners. Watson added that Dakota County has accepted authority and will be the enforcing agency.

17.082 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to execute Grant Agreement with Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources for Buffer Cost Share. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

10.3 Amendments to 2017 Cost Share Policy

Coudron stated that with acceptance of the new buffer cost share program funds, revisions to Cost Share Program Policy are needed to deliver the cost share to individual landowners. Policy revisions would establish a Buffer Cost Share program that is dedicated to installing practices that meet the requirements of the Minnesota Buffer Law.

17.083 Motion by Dee, second by Chamberlain to amend the 2017 Cost Share Policy to establish a Buffer Cost Share program. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

10.4 Adopt Cooperative Working Agreement with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Watson stated that the NRCS has been working with the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to update both Cooperative Working Agreements and develop new Operational Agreements. Operational agreements are meant for co-located field offices that expand on the general administrative functions found in Item X – Records, Facilities and Equipment of the Cooperative Agreement. The Operational Agreement would not apply to our situation since we partner with Dakota County for computer network services and building facility use.

The Cooperative Working Agreement is meant to provide a commitment to working in partnership for increased efficiency of conservation delivery. The Agreement indicates that each party will work together to maximize available resources and actively seek funding to accomplish natural resource priorities and programs.

The last Cooperative Working Agreement that was signed with the NRCS was in 2003.

17.084 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Johnson to adopt the Cooperative Working Agreement with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

Supervisor Dee asked if this will provide clarity for the sharing of information regarding the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Watson indicated that CRP is a Farm Service Agency (FSA) program and no longer a NRCS program.

11. Interagency Reports and Announcements

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Michelle Wohlers provided the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) agency report. She stated that the State Office sent a post card mailing to all USDA owners and operators informing them of the August 18 signup deadline for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). They received several calls from recipients, some that didn't know of the program or what they would apply for. The office is striving to first do conservation planning with clients then use programs to provide funding to meet their conservation goals, rather than first signing an application.

They are working with one Washington County landowner for funding with the Conservation Stewardship Program and that must be finalized by next week. NRCS staff worked with Tom and Andrew Endres on a Cover Crop Day with 20 people in attendance.

Wohlers stated that Tim Wilson has taken a new position as the State Conservationist in Utah. With that, Gary Watson will be the Assistant State Conservationist for Field operations for Dakota County. His is managing areas 4, 5 and 6, which is the southern half of the state.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

There was no Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts report provided.

Metro Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board

The Metro Conservation District Joint Powers Boards next meeting is August 30. Watson stated that the Minnesota Governance 101 is on September 14 and 15 with registration due by August 28. Supervisor Zanmiller will be attending.

Dakota County

There was no Dakota County report provided.

Cannon River One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee

Chamberlain stated that the Policy Committee met yesterday. He added that EOR staff reported to be on schedule with plan writing. Two "Water Conversations" public meetings were held where stakeholders had the opportunity for input and to address priority concerns. Expenses of just under \$38,000 were approved. Chamberlain also stated that each policy committee member completed a survey and those results will be shared at a later date. Their next meeting is scheduled for November 8.

12. Upcoming Meetings and Events

Zanmiller reviewed the upcoming meetings and events.

13. District Managers Report

Watson asked if the Supervisors wanted to move forward with a Legislative Tour, and Thursday, September 28 was selected. Watson stated that he will send invitations next week. Chamberlain asked that the County Board of Commissioners be invited as well.

14. Adjourn

17.085 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Johnson to adjourn the meeting. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Skog, Secretary