



## MEETING MINUTES

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

#### DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thursday, September 1, 2016

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

Farmington, Minnesota

**Board Members Present:**

Laura Zanmiller, Chair

Joe Meyers, Vice Chair

Chris Nielsen, Secretary

Kevin Chamberlain, Treasurer

**SWCD Staff Present:**

Brian Watson

Lana Rotty

Curt Coudron

Todd Matzke

**Others Present:**

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. 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**

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

**5. Secretary's Report – August 2, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes**

**16.101** Motion by Nielsen, Second by Chamberlain to approve the August 2, 2016 Meeting Minutes. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

### **6.1 September 1, 2016 Accounts Payable**

**16.102** Motion by Chamberlain, second by Meyers to approve the September 1, 2016 Accounts Payable. Members voting yes: Zammiller, Chamberlain, Nielsen, Meyers. Members Absent: Brown. Motion carried.

### **6.2 August 31, 2016 Financial Report**

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

## **7. Committee of the Whole**

### **7.1 Adopt 2017 Fee Schedule**

Watson provided an overview of the draft fee schedule for 2017. He stated that the equipment rental items have now been included on fee schedule. Watson noted that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) grants will be expensed under their billable rate policy. Also noted were changes to the Wetland Conservation Act Services; including the addition of charge for after-the-fact applications and the removal of the request for local appeal hearing to an SWCD generated decision as it would not be a requested service.

**16.104** Motion by Chamberlain, second by Meyers to approve the 2017 Fee Schedule as presented. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

Michelle Wohlers joined the meeting at 8:49.

### **7.2 Update on Minnesota Buffer Law as Amended in 2016**

Watson provided an overview of the Buffer Law that was signed by Governor Dayton in June of 2015 and amended by the legislature and signed into law again on April 25, 2016. The amendments provided clarification to several provisions of the law including that the buffer requirement only applies to public waters and public ditches and not connecting watercourses. It also provided more clarity and process to compliance and enforcement responsibilities.

He stated that Dakota County Environmental Resources Department has been enforcing existing State Shoreland Rules through their adopted Shoreland Zoning and Floodplain Management Ordinance. This ordinance applies to the 13 townships and has been enforced since 2011. Many of the same watercourses that Dakota County has been requiring a 50-foot vegetated on buffer overlap with the new Minnesota Buffer Law.

A map produced by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was distributed showing locations where the Minnesota Buffer law would apply to both public waters and public ditches. The law requires buffers be installed on public waters by November 2017 and on public ditches by November 2018. Watson stated that the County and SWCD have reviewed and submitted joint comments on this DNR map.

Also distributed was the most recent Buffer Program update from the BWSR. Guidance is rapidly being developed by BWSR on what is required of SWCDs and how program specifics will be implemented.

Watson stated that the SWCD will be conducting an inspection on the two county ditches in coordination with Dakota County Environmental Resources and Transportation Departments. The ditch inspections will include assessing existing buffer conditions, erosion or sediment issues, flow obstructions from vegetation or debris and the condition of existing culverts. The inspections are planned to begin this fall with report being generated by spring of 2017.

### **7.3 Review 2017 Health and Dental Benefits Options**

Watson explained that staff met with Dakota County Employee Relations to consider potential cost savings and efficiencies of joining Dakota County's Benefit Plan. Several other items were discussed including having Dakota County conduct employee payroll but the primary focus was medical insurance benefits.

The County's self-funded medical plan has been administered by PreferredOne since January 2013. The County's transition to the self-funded-model has been positive. The Dakota County Board of Commissioners recently adopted their 2017 medical plans and premium rates. Dakota County offers three different medical plans to choose from including a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) Health Saving Account (HSA), and Dakota Plus.

Currently the SWCD offers two different medical plans as a small employer. We offer medical insurance through PreferredOne with the employee choosing either an HSA plan or 100% co-pay plan. PreferredOne has recently informed the SWCD that the 100% co-pay plan option will no longer be available during the upcoming benefit year which begins December 1. Dental insurance is provided through Health Partners and coverage begins January 1.

We have been presented with a Medical Insurance Plan option from PreferredOne referenced as the PIC 500.80.25 that would replace the 100% co-pay plan. We have also been presented with a PIC 2000.100. Health Saving Account option.

As a small employer, premium rates are based on the age of the individuals covered. Therefore, annually the SWCD Board adopts employee health and dental benefits based on corresponding age categories as well. In contrast, Dakota County as a large employer has a flat rate for single, one plus one, and family coverage, regardless of age.

After comparing plans offered, it was determined that the plans offered by Dakota County would cost both the SWCD and the employee more than the plans presented to the SWCD for 2017.

The consensus was that staff should continue working with Briggs Consulting Group to develop a medical plan enrollment period based on the calendar year and for staff to bring a recommendation to the October meeting on insurance provider, insurance plan options and employee benefits.

## **8. Interagency Reports and Announcements**

### **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Wohlers provided the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) agency report. She stated that the Farmington Office received 43 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) applications for 2017 and 36 are landowners in Dakota County. She added that there was one EQIP application period that ended on August 19. Funding pools or initiatives have not yet been announced. The planning and scoring of the applications must be completed by the end of November. Wohlers indicated that 4 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) contracts need to be completed by September 26. The 2017 CSP program is being modified and they anticipate a slight learning curve. The Strategic Work Force Plan is being rolled out in mid-November. Lucas is working ½ time in Goodhue county as they are busy with construction. The Administrative Contract Services with Ultima will end on September 30 and they will then find out what company receives the new bid.

### **Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources**

There was no BWSR report.

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

There was no Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) report. Watson stated that the next Area Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 2.

**Metro Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board**

Zanmiller provided that the Metro Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board (MCD) report. She stated that they met yesterday. The main agenda item was amending the 2016 work plan and budget to include the FY17 BWSR grants.

**Dakota County**

There was no Dakota County report.

**Watershed Management Organizations**

There were no Watershed Management Organization reports. Watson stated that many of the 2017 work plans have been submitted. No major changes from 2016 are anticipated.

**9. Upcoming Meetings and Events**

The upcoming events were reviewed. Watson stated that the next Board meeting is Thursday, October 6, 2016. The VRW JPO Annual Tour is scheduled for Friday, September 23.

**10. District Managers Report**

Watson stated that new BWSR policy will allow cost-share funds be provided at a flat-rate payment. Funding for seed costs to establish buffers also is now an acceptable cost share practice provided native seed is used.

Watson also indicated that interviews for the Resource Conservationist position have been completed and it is anticipated that a new employee will begin later in September.

**14. Adjourn**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Nielsen, Secretary