



FREEBORN COUNTY
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
 MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
 Thursday, May 9th, 2024, at 8:30 am

1. Call to Order

- The regular meeting of the Freeborn County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) was called to order by Chairman Christopher Dahl at the district office located at 1400 West Main Street, Albert Lea, MN on Thursday, May 9th, 2024, at 8:30 am.

Attendees

- In attendance: Christopher Dahl (Chairman), David Ausen (Treasurer), Curt Helland (Board Secretary), Vickie Heers (Supervisor), Brenda Lageson (District Manager), Chad Billat (Private Lands Biologist), Lindsey Zeitler (Resource Conservationist), Mark Trnka (Conservation Technician), Senja Viktora (District Technician).
- Absent: Donald Kropp (Vice-Chairman)

2. Approval of Minutes

- A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on April 11th, 2024, was made by Ausen and seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. Treasurer’s Report

- Balance in checking account was \$6,885.54, savings \$1,126,110.04, and CD (10 month) \$250,000.00 as of April 30th, 2024. A motion to approve treasurer’s report and payment of bills was made by Helland and seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. Cost Share & Grant Items

- Lageson informed the board that there will be funds available for a FY-25 Conservation Reserve Incentive Grant in the Shell Rock/Winnebago watersheds. She asked if the board would like our SWCD to be the fiscal agent for this grant. A motion was made by Helland for the SWCD to be the fiscal agent and authorize Manager Lageson to apply once it becomes available, seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

b. NEW COST SHARE

- Zeitler presented to the board a request for cost share for a well sealing.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-SW-FREE-23-13	WELL SEALING	\$3,000.00	\$1,500.00	WBIF#C23-2187

A motion was made by Helland to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- Zeitler presented to the board a request for cost share for a well sealing.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-SW-FREE-23-14	WELL SEALING	\$3,000.00	\$1,500.00	WBIF#C23-2187

A motion was made by Ausen to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- Zeitler presented to the board a request for cost share for a well sealing.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-SW-FREE-24-01	WELL SEALING	\$3,000.00	\$1,500.00	WBIF#C24-0197

A motion was made by Helland to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- Billat presented to the board a request for cost share for a prairie strip.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
FY-24-SW-CRP-03	PRAIRIE STRIPS	\$4,905.00	\$4,905.00	P24-0021

A motion was made by Heers to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.** Helland abstained.

c. Partial/Final Payments

- Zeitler presented to the board a request for final payment on a well sealing cost share contract.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Cost	Final Payment	Fund Source
WBIF-CW-FREE-22-07	WELL SEALING	\$3,300.00	\$1,500.00	WBIF#22-5721

A motion was made by Ausen to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- ii. Zeitler presented to the board a request for partial payment on a cover crop cost share contract.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Cost	Final Payment	Fund Source
WBIF-CW-FREE-22-02	COVER CROPS	\$6,343.50	\$6,343.50	WBIF#22-5721

A motion was made by Heers to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- iii. Zeitler presented to the board a request for final payment on a well sealing cost share contract.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Cost	Final Payment	Fund Source
WBIF-SW-FREE-23-09	WELL SEALING	\$1,465.00	\$732.50	WBIF#23-2187

A motion was made by Helland to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- iv. Zeitler presented to the board a request for final payment on a well sealing cost share contract.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Cost	Final Payment	Fund Source
WBIF-SW-FREE-23-10	WELL SEALING	\$1,465.00	\$732.50	WBIF#23-2187

A motion was made by Ausen to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- v. Billat presented to the board a request for final payment on a prairie strip cost share contract.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Cost	Final Payment	Fund Source
FY-24-SW-CRP-02	PRAIRIE STRIP	\$2,452.50	\$2,452.50	P24-0021

A motion was made by Heers to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- vi. Billat presented to the board a request for final payment on a prairie strip cost share contract.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Cost	Final Payment	Fund Source
FY-24-SW-CRP-01	PRAIRIE STRIP	\$4,747.50	\$4,747.50	P24-0021

A motion was made by Heers to approve this contract for funding, motion seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. NRCS Report

- Kurer provided a written report for the board, highlighting current staffing changes/news, and the status of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), & Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

6. Supervisor Reports

- Heers attended the Cedar/Wapsipinicon Policy meeting on May 1st, 2024, she reported there was discussion regarding changes to policy, grant updates and a possible tour for policy members later this summer.
- Helland virtually attended a Southeast Minnesota Joint Powers Board (JPB) meeting. Reported that discussion was had regarding a manure storage project.

7. Manager Report

- Manager report was emailed prior to meeting.
- Manager informed the board that she renewed the districts Certificate of Deposit (CD) at 5% for 10 months on May 8, 2024.
- Manager would like to start preparing the 2025 Budget. The county typically asks for this information in May – June. Board gave the okay to prepare the 2025 budget. No formal vote was taken.
- Manager would like authorization to purchase an electronic document signing subscription to assist customers signing up for cost share. She also requested purchasing a time keeping subscription to streamline grant tracking. A motion was made by Helland to approve the purchase of electronic signature software and timekeeping software, seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

8. Staff Reports

- Staff reports were emailed prior to meeting.
- Zeitler gave an update regarding the Albert Lea Schools Tree Program. Sugar Maple, Red Oak & Paper Birch seedlings were given to 240 third grade students in honor of Arbor Day. The district coordinated with the City of Albert Lea-Parks Department & the local Lions Club to provide the trees. The program was well received and will continue in the future, hopefully expanding to other school districts within Freeborn County.

9. Trainings

- a. Lageson informed the board on an upcoming training for newly elected supervisors and/or staff. Governance 101 training on July 16-17th, 2024 in Alexandria. A motion was made by Ausen authorizing Heers and Helland to attend the governance training if they so choose, seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- b. Lageson is recommending that we send Billat to the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) Leadership Institute that starts in August 2024 and goes until August 2025. After some discussion a motion was made by Ausen and seconded by Helland authorizing Billat to attend the MASWCD Leadership Institute. **MOTION CARRIED.**

10. Call for Resolutions

- Manager asked the board if they had any ideas for resolutions; discussed a few options. Staff will work on development.

11. NRCS Team 19 Local Working Group Meeting

- Manager informed the board that NRCS Team 19 Local Working Group meeting would be held this year on Wednesday, June 12th at 9 am at the Blooming Prairie, MN City Hall.

12. Adjournment

- There being no further business, adjournment was made by Ausen and seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

These are preliminary minutes subject to board approval at the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors on June 13th, 2024, at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Curt Helland, Board Secretary

Date