



FREEBORN COUNTY
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
 MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
 Thursday, April 13th, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

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, April 13th at 1:30pm.

Attendees

- In attendance:** Christopher Dahl (Chairman), Donald Kropp (Vice-Chairman), David Ausen (Treasurer), Paul Heers Jr. (Board Secretary), Curt Helland (Supervisor), Brenda Lageson (District Manager), Lindsey Zeitler (Resource Conservationist), Chad Billat (Private Lands Biologist), Mark Trnka (Conservation Technician), Senja Viktora (District Technician), and Dave Copeland (BWSR Board Conservationist)
- Absent:** Gary Kurer (NRCS-Team Lead 19)

Approval of Minutes

- A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting of March 9th, 2023, was made by Ausen and seconded by Heers Jr. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Treasurer’s Report

- Balance in checking account was \$23,605.83 and savings \$1,317,033.01 as of March 31st, 2023. A motion to approve treasurer’s report and payment of bills was made by Heers Jr. and seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Grant Programs actions and/or information

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

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-CW-FREE-21-10	351 well sealing	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	WBIF#C20-2412

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

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

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-CW-FREE-21-11	327 prairie strips	\$4,380.00	\$4,380.00	WBIF#C20-2412

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

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

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-CW-FREE-21-12	327 prairie strips	\$1,065.00	\$1,065.00	WBIF#C20-2412

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

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

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-CW-FREE-21-14	327 prairie strips	\$655.00	\$655.00	WBIF#C20-2412

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

NRCS Report

- No report, a NRCS representative was unable to attend meeting.

Supervisor Reports

- Helland

- Attended a Supervisor Orientation/Training on April 4th in Rochester, MN. Reported that it was helpful to learn how everything works. Would attend another to continue learning more about his role as supervisor.
- Kropp
 - Attended a Le Sueur One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) Public Hearing on Friday, March 24th in Pemberton, MN. Noted there were several residents from New Richland that were concerned with flooding in their town and were very interested in the 1W1P. Following the public meeting was a regular board meeting.
 - Virtually attended a Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA) Meeting on March 17th, reported normal business was addressed.
- Ausen
 - Attended a Shell Rock River Watershed/Winnebago One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) Policy Meeting on March 20th, reported that there was an election of officers and review of budget, cost share policy, etc.

Manager Report

- Manager previously emailed her report to the board.
- Lageson also brought to the board a training request from Billat to attend a Prescribed Burn Planning training at Fort Ripley on May 23 – 25th. A motion was made by Ausen to send Billat to the training and reimburse any allowable expenses incurred, the motion was seconded by Heers, Jr. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Staff Reports

- Zeitler:
 - Notified the board of a request from Albert Lea Parks Dept. regarding Arbor Day activities for local 4th & 5th grade students.
 - A motion was made by Heers Jr. to provide trees to the Albert Lea Parks for their Arbor Day activities for approximately \$100 value or less, the motion was seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**
 - Reported she sent out buffer letters to landowners on April 11th, 2023, for upcoming compliance checks. She then reported about the Buffer Law Grant dollars. Staff has been talking about new ways to spend those grant dollars with BWSR staff and other SWCDs. She asked if the board would like to update our policy for buffer law grants to include new allowable expenses. Staff will work on the changes and bring to the Board for review and approval later.
- Remaining staff reports were emailed prior to the meeting with nothing new to add.

BWSR Report

- Copeland attended the Supervisor Training/Orientation on April 4th in Rochester, MN. Noted there was good attendance of 15 supervisors.
- Updated the board on the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) funding of \$650,000 that will be used for state incentive funds for Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP)/CCRP reenrollments. Grants will be offered to 18 watersheds that currently have comprehensive plans in place, this will include Cedar/ Wapsipicon River Watershed & Shell Rock River Watershed.
- On March 22nd Copeland preformed C-S contract review for the Freeborn SWCD office.
 - Commended staff for their good work with file organization, cost-share rates, and payment, tracking grants, and providing correspondence with contract holder that includes cost-share contracts.
 - Suggested improvements including contractors needing to document dates of work on invoice, funding source for contracts included in minutes and issue of projects that need the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) technical assistance and their inability to sign non-federal forms.

Computer Purchase

- Lageson made a request to the board to replace three computers with the option of a fourth computer if needed. Ausen made a motion to purchase three (3) new computers with the option of a fourth (4th) over the next few months, a second was made by Kropp. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Industrial Storage Cabinet Purchase

- Viktora requested the purchase of two (2) industrial storage cabinets to ensure safe keeping of valuable equipment and organization of office area. A motion was made by Heers Jr. to purchase two (2) industrial storage cabinets, seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Additional Office Space

- Lageson brought before the board the possibility of needing additional office space due to a potential increase of NRCS staff and the SWCD being fully staffed. If the need arises, would the board be interested in renting out the east office for additional SWCD staff space. A motion was made by Heers Jr. to approve rental of east office if space is needed, seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

No-Till Drill Purchase

- Trnka requested quotes/options from Great Plains, Truax, and John Deere for the board to review. John Deere didn't provide one. After review, a motion was made by Ausen to move forward with a purchase of a Great Plains No-Till Drill and exchange the districts old drill to dealership or sell out-right depending on if this changed the price of the drill from the dealership, motion seconded by Kropp. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Trnka Job Approval Authority

- Trnka recently had his job approval authority (JAA) updated by NRCS. Lageson presented to the board for review and concurrence. A motion was made by Ausen to concur and authorize Chairman Dahl to sign Trnka's JAA form, seconded by Kropp. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Inventory List

- Lageson reviewed the SWCDs inventory list with the board and asked for authorization to remove unused equipment. A motion was made by Helland for staff to remove those inventory items, seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

75th Anniversary Planning

- Lageson discussed current progress of anniversary planning. A motion was made by Kropp to authorize Manager to sign contracts or agreements with venue/vendors, seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Advanced Phosphorus Treatment & Rehab Treatment Facility for the City of Albert Lea

- Board was given opportunity to comment. No Comments were offered.

Le Sueur One Watershed One Plan (1W1P)

- Ausen made a motion to support the submittal of the final draft of the Le Sueur River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to BWSR, seconded by Heers, Jr. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Resolution

- A resolution was brought before the board to support a Blue Earth River Watershed Planning Area One Watershed, One Plan project. Heers Jr made a motion to support this resolution, motion seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED. (Resolution # 23-01).**

Adjournment

- There being no further business, a motion to adjourn 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 Thursday, May 11th at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Board Secretary

Date