



**FREEBORN COUNTY**  
**SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
Thursday, March 9th, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

### Call to Order

- A regular meeting of the Freeborn County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) was called to order by Vice-Chairman Donald Kropp at the district office located at 1400 West Main Street, Albert Lea, MN on Thursday, March 9th, 2023, at 1:30 PM.

### Attendees

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

### Approval of Minutes

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

### Treasurer Report

- Balance in checking account was \$25,725.39 and savings \$1,351,306.38 as of February 28th, 2023. A motion to approve treasurer's report and pay bills was made by Heers Jr. and seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

### Grant Program

- A sub-agreement from the Shell Rock River Watershed District for the Shell Rock and Winnebago One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) was presented to the board for review. A motion to accept and sign the sub-agreement for the Shell Rock and Winnebago 1W1P was made by Heers Jr. and seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

### NRCS Report

- Kurer informed the board of personnel changes, EQIP and CRP updates.

### BWSR Report

- Notified the board of up-coming events:
  - March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023-Southeast Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SW MASWCD) Spring Employee meeting in Winona, MN.
  - March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023- Spring Training- Session 1: 8:30-10; Session 2: 10:30-12pm. (Virtual training)
  - April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023- Supervisor Training; Virtual option available
- Copeland complemented the Freeborn Area Soil Health Team on the February 21<sup>st</sup> Soil Health Winter Workshop that took place in Owatonna, MN.
- Notified the board that while his counterpart is on parental leave, he will be covering more counties.

### Supervisor Reports

- Heers Jr.
  - Attended the Freeborn Area Soil Health Winter Workshop in Owatonna, MN on Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>. Noted how he enjoyed the Customer Operators Panel.
  - Attended the Joint Powers Board (JPB/TSA) Executive Committee Meeting on Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Kropp
  - Attended a Le Sueur 1W1P meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Noted progress was made. Stated there is a public meeting planned for comments on the Le Sueur 1W1P content on Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 5 pm in Pemberton at the community center.
- Ausen & Helland
  - Attended the MASWCD Legislative Briefing & Reception on March 7<sup>th</sup> and the SWCD Day at the Capitol the following day on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Reported that they advocated for stable funding for SWCDs.

## Manager Report

- Manager reported that she attended three (3) Le Sueur 1W1P meetings.
- Notified the board that Nate Carr, County Program Administrator of the Faribault County SWCD, contacted her to schedule a meeting regarding the Blue Earth 1W1P.
- Notified the board that the new Area Certification Specialist (ACS) for the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP), Greg Klinger, contacted her requesting a meeting with our office to introduce himself and become familiar with current MAWQCP certifications in our county.
- Notified the board that the CD-68 Grant is officially closed.

## Staff Reports

- Billat presented a written report on his activities this past month to the board.
- Zeitler presented a written report on her activities this past month to the board. She updated them on the annual tree sale; over 1,000 trees have been sold so far. Reported on the Soil Health Winter Workshop, summer Soil Health events, and planning for next years I-90/Hwy 14 soil health tour.
- Viktora reported her activities for this past month which mainly consisted of getting the Annual Report, Annual Plan, and Accomplishment Report ready.

## 2022 Annual Report & 2023 Annual Plan

- The board was presented with the 2022 Annual Report and the 2023 Annual Plan for review. Ausen made a motion to accept the 2022 Annual Report and the 2023 Annual Plan, Heers Jr seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.**

## Catalytic Converter Protection

- Due to increased theft of catalytic converters in our office parking lot, Trnka presented the board with his research on two types of catalytic converter protection.
  - Catalytic Converter Marking Kit: This system etches an ID onto a catalytic converter to deter theft and provides a way to ID catalytic converter if it is ever stolen. Cost approximately \$33 per kit.
  - Catalytic Converter Cage: This system is a physical guard placed over the catalytic converter to prevent accesses to thieves. Costs approximately \$200 per guard, not including installation cost.
- A motion was made by Ausen for the SWCD to purchase the catalytic converter marking kits for the SWCD vehicles, a second was made by Heers Jr. **MOTION CARRIED**

## No-Till Drill Discussion

- Trnka brought before the board additional information regarding new no-till drills. Board discussed the pros and cons of two types of no-till drills, no action taken.

## SE MASWCD Spring Employee Meeting

- Board was presented with information on the SE MASWCD Spring Employee Meeting that will take place on Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> in Winona, MN. Ausen made a motion to approve staff attend the SE MASWCD Spring Employee meeting in Winona, seconded by Heers Jr. **MOTION CARRIED.**

## 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, April 13th at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paul Heers, Jr., Board Secretary

Date