

**FREEBORN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
DRAFT MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**January 14, 2021**

**The meeting was called to order** at 1:30 PM by Chairman Christopher Dahl via a Zoom call due to the worldwide pandemic Coronavirus (COVID 19). This meeting is being held in accordance with Section 13D.021, Subdivision 1 of MN Open Meeting Law which permits public bodies to hold meetings via telephone or other electronic means if specific conditions are met.

**Those present were as follows:** Christopher Dahl, Chairman, Donald Kropp, Vice-Chair, Paul Heers Jr., Board Secretary, David Ausen, Treasurer, Colin Wittmer, Board Supervisor, Brenda Lageson, District Manager, Lindsey Zeitler, Resource Conservationist, Chad Billat, Private Lands Biologist, Brittany Dawson, District Technician, Dave Copeland, BWSR, Gary Kurer, NRCS-Team Lead 19, and Rick Berscheid, NRCS ASTC-FO **Absent:** None

**2021 Board Positions and Committees:**

A motion was made by Kropp and seconded by Heers Jr to approve board offers and committee members to be the same as 2020. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Heers Jr., Ausen, and Wittmer Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

<u>Board Officer Positions are as follow:</u>	<u>Committee Assignments are as follows:</u>
District Chairman: Christopher Dahl	Budget: Ausen, Dahl, Heers Jr., Kropp, and Wittmer
District Vice-Chairman: Donald Kropp	Legislative: Ausen and Dahl
District Treasurer: David Ausen	Education: Kropp
District Board Secretary: Paul Heers Jr.	Personnel Committee: Dahl and Wittmer
District Supervisor: Colin Wittmer	State Cost Share Policy: Ausen, Dahl, Heers Jr., Kropp, and Wittmer
	SE Joint Powers Board: Heers Jr.
	Soil Health: Heers Jr.
	GBERBA Policy Board: Kropp
	Cedar River 1W1P Policy Board: Heers Jr.
	Shell Rock-Winnebago 1W1P Policy Board: Ausen
	Le Sueur 1W1P Policy Board: Kropp

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

Minutes of the December 10, 2020 regular meeting were approved as presented on a motion made by Kropp and seconded by Wittmer. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Heers Jr., Ausen, and Wittmer Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

**Treasurer’s Report:**

The treasurer’s balance as of December 31, 2020 was \$102,304.59. in checking and \$1,165,558.15 in savings. A motion to approve the treasurer’s report as presented and pay bills was made by Heers Jr. and seconded by Wittmer. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Heers Jr., Ausen, and Wittmer Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

**Consent Agenda:**

A motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Ausen to approve the consent agenda. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Heers Jr., Ausen, and Wittmer Opposed – None. **The motion carried. See listed below:**

Official bank depository as Security Bank Minnesota and signatories to include the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, & Manager.  
Approval 2021 budget as presented to the County Board.

Payment of MCIT insurance for 2021 of \$7,399.00.

Payment of MASWCD dues for 2021 of \$4,022.70.

Payment of NACD dues for 2021 of \$775.00.

Payment of Area 7 Southeast Employee dues for 2021 of \$40.00.

Payment of Envirothon donation for 2021 of \$175.00.

Authorize Chairman, Vice Chairman, or Manager to sign grant agreements and other documents as needed  
Authorize Manager to sign eLINK interim and final financial reports  
Authorize Manager to make electronic payments as needed  
Authorize IRS mileage rate of \$0.56/mile and Supervisor per diem rates of \$75.00  
Authorize ads for 2021 tree sale.

**Grant Actions and Information:**

2021 Capacity and Buffer Law workplans were provided to the Board of Supervisors via email. Lageson briefly explained the uses of the funding and requested authorization to submit the 2021 Capacity and Buffer workplans to BWSR. A motion was made by Ausen and seconded by Heers Jr to authorize Lageson to submit the workplans to BWSR. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Heers Jr., Ausen, and Wittmer Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

**2020 Audit Proposal:**

An audit proposal was presented to have Peterson Company LTD complete the 2020 audit for \$2,775.00. A motion was made by Kropp and seconded by Heers Jr to authorize Lageson to sign the signature of the engagement letter to obtain Peterson Company LTD for the 2020 audit. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Heers Jr., Ausen, and Wittmer Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

**NRCS Agency Report:**

Kurer provided a report for the NRCS Customer Service Team 19 discussing the employment of a Pheasants Forever Biologist, position openings and direct hire authority, EQIP and CSP screening updates, and CRP site visits for 2022.

Berscheid provided an update on the status of the NRCS Annual Report, the transition to team level funding pools, open positions for Customer Service Team 19 in Dodge Center and Albert Lea, and the potential for a visit from NRCS staff in March to visit project sites.

**Supervisor Reports:**

Re-elected Board Supervisors were sworn in at the county courthouse for their new four-year terms.

**Manager Report:**

Lageson provided a report to the Board of Supervisors via email and asked the Board for any questions. A brief discussion was had regarding the Le Sueur 1W1P and GBERBA.

Lageson asked the Board of Supervisors for authorization to utilize sick leave to assist with a family matter. After a discussion the Board agreed that Lageson could utilize leave as she sees fit.

**Staff Reports:**

Staff provided a report of their activities for the past months to the Board of Supervisors via email and briefly discussed the reports. Zeitler discussed projects, tree, newsletter, and conservation planner certification updates. Billat discussed the completion of paperwork for closing out CREP projects and meetings attended. Dawson discussed MAWQCP including a new endorsement, an RCCP sign up, and changes to ranking points for CSP.

**COVID Policy:**

After a brief discussion the Board agreed to extend the COVID policy until the February 11 Board Meeting.

**Annual Plan and Report:**

Staff will be working on the Annual Plan and Report in the coming weeks and asked for any ideas or requests for those reports. A draft of the reports are being worked on for board review. They are due March 15, 2021.

**Review Correspondences:**

A reminder was provided to the Board of Supervisors to complete their Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure.

**Personnel Considerations:**

The Board of Supervisors discussed staff evaluations and wage considerations. A motion made by Kropp and seconded by Wittmer moved Lageson to step 6, Zeitler to step 5, Billat to step 1, and Dawson to step 3 on the SWCD wage scale. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Heers Jr., Ausen, and Wittmer Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Kropp and seconded by Wittmer. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Heers Jr., Ausen, and Wittmer Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

These are preliminary minutes subject to board approval at the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors.  
Respectfully submitted,

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Paul Heers, Jr., Board Secretary

Date