

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

April 8, 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, 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 John Forman, District 3 Freeborn County Commissioner **Absent:** Colin Wittmer, Supervisor

Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Minutes of the March 11, 2021 regular meeting were approved as presented on a motion made by Kropp and seconded by Heers Jr. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Ausen, and Heers Jr. Opposed – none. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

The treasurer's balance as of March 31, 2021 was \$8,682.95 in checking and \$1,428,808.82 in savings. A motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented and pay bills was made by Kropp. and seconded by Heers Jr. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Ausen, and Heers Jr. Opposed – none. The motion carried. **The motion carried.** Commissioner Forman requested a breakdown of SWCD funds, Lageson will email him a report.

Grant Actions and Information:

No new grant or cost share activities to report.

Manager Report:

Lageson provided a report to the Board of Supervisors via email which included meetings attended and workload.

- ✓ Lageson then asked the board if there was interest in establishing a cost-share program with available SWCD funds. Ausen asked what types of projects could be funded and staff provided some examples. After some discussion Ausen and Dahl agreed that a pilot program would be a good idea and asked staff to draft some policy to be presented at the May 13 board meeting.
- ✓ Lageson discussed staffing needs associated with workload and the desire to start looking for a general conservation technician. After some discussion Kropp voiced his approval for hiring a new technician. A motion was made by Ausen and seconded by Kropp to authorize Lageson to start the process of looking for a new conservation technician. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Ausen, and Heers Jr. Opposed – none. The motion carried. **The motion carried.**
- ✓ Lageson expressed interest in purchasing another vehicle and it to be an SUV to utilize for traveling to meetings and if need be to take for field work. She will work on getting estimates for the next month's meeting.
- ✓ After a brief discussion the Board agreed to extend the COVID policy until the May 13 Board Meeting.

NRCS Agency Report:

Kurer started his report by introducing himself and his position to Commissioner Forman. Kurer then provided an update on Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Kurer reported the potential limitation on contribution agreement dollars for assistance with Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) plans. An annual review of the Civil Rights documentation was shared on screen and reviewed by the staff and Board Supervisors.

Staff Reports:

Staff provided a report of their activities for the past months to the Board of Supervisors via email and briefly discussed their reports and any activities not included in their reports. Billat discussed the upcoming spring workload for Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Zeitler discussed surveying a new project and meetings attended. Dawson provided an update on a completed Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) certification which was not included on her report.

BWSR Update:

Copeland discussed the August Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Board Meeting and project tour to take place in Freeborn and Mower Counties. Copeland also presented on current stages of funding for One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) processes.

Supervisor Reports:

Heers Jr. discussed his attendance at two legislative meetings one on March 17 with local Representatives Bennett and Mueller, and the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) Legislative Briefing on March 18. No other meetings were attended in the past month by supervisors.

Adjournment:

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

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

Paul Heers, Jr., Board Secretary

Date