



Minutes of the April 21, 2016 Regular Board Meeting

Minutes of the April 21, 2016 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Regular Board of Supervisor's meeting, conference room, USDA Service Center, Dodge Center, Minnesota.

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Larry Scherger at 7:17 PM.

Members Present: Larry Scherger, Chair
Bill Thompson, Vice-Chair
Don Hesel, PR&I
David Livingston, Secretary
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Adam King, District Manager, Dodge SWCD
Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, NRCS
Steven Gray, Dodge County District 5 Commissioner (Arrived: 7:35)

Approval of Meeting Agenda – There was one addition to the agenda, One Watershed, One Plan to the New Business. A motion was made to approve the April 21, 2016 meeting agenda as amended.

Motion: Glenn Hahn
Seconded: Don Hesel
The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the March 17, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes – Revisions to the March 17, 2016 meeting minutes included: changing the spelling of “instillation” to “installation” on page 3, insert we “will” work with the DNR on page 2, clarify that discussion was on the time to change booth themes, not time to man the county fair booth on page 3, and the sessions attended at the Governor's Water Summit were “Water in the Rural Environment,” and “Living Cover.” The errors were corrected. A motion was made to approve the March 17, 2016 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District's regular Board of Supervisors meeting minutes as revised.

Motion: Bill Thompson
Seconded: Glenn Hahn
The motion carried unanimously.

Partner Agency Reports

District Conservationist's Report

Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, NRCS, reported working with Area VII Technical Joint Powers Board Soil Health Specialist, Dean Thomas, on a cover crop program through an LCCMR grant received by the Area VII Technical Joint Powers Board. Two producers from Dodge

County have enrolled in the two year program. The Local Work Group will be held on Thursday, April 28, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. The Local Work Group will be looking at local priorities for federal farm bill programs. There will be a cover crop presentation on April 27, 2016 in Lamberton, MN. There has been ongoing construction of conservation practices in the county while the Soil Conservation Technician has been splitting time between Dodge and Mower Counties, and the Resource Conservationist has been splitting time with Dodge, Olmsted, and Mower Counties. The CRP sign-up continues, with the CP-42 Pollinator Habitat the most popular. Native seed for the CRP practices is in short supply, and if the seed supply runs out, the practice area will be seeded down with a temporary cover crop until seed can be found. DeVetter has also worked on the WRPO for one of the RIM-WRP easements.

Steven Gray entered at 7:35 P.M.

County Commissioner's Report

Steven Gray, Dodge County District 5 Commissioner, reported that he is the board chair this year, and the County Administrator search is on the fast track. The building projects have come in under budget and are now wrapping up. There will be an open house towards the end of June. Dodge County has responded to the proposed Zip Rail by adding an addendum.

There were no other partner agency reports.

One Watershed One Plan

The Zumbro Watershed Partnership is considering approaching the county boards in the watershed for support, and there are questions of whether the county can provide that support. The Zumbro Watershed Partnership is at a watershed moment and will either "sink or swim." Commissioner Gray had attended the Governors Water Summit and One Watershed One Plan has gone from being suggested to being law, and a concern is that, as time goes on, the state will no longer fund the planning process in the future. One question is if the Zumbro Watershed Partnership is an integral player in the Zumbro River Watershed? The board indicated that they felt that going for the One Watershed One Plan in the Zumbro at this time was a good idea, and that it is better to be proactive.

The Cedar River Watershed has a lot of inventory analysis already completed. Adam King, District Manager, has met with the other partners in the Cedar River Watershed and presented the board with a resolution to partner for the purposes of a One Watershed One Plan in the Cedar River Watershed. A motion was made to table the resolution to partner for the purposes of a One Watershed One Plan in the Cedar River Watershed.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Approval of the Treasurer's Financial Statements and Payment of New Bills – Glenn Hahn, Treasurer, reported on the March 2016 financials, which showed a balance of \$395,504.26 in total current assets, with \$9,457.43 in revenues, and \$18,477.41 in expenditures. The hang-up of the Year-End reporting was PERA. PERA had changed reporting requirements while reports were being made, and Deb had questions on how they wanted the reporting handled. Because of the changes an extension was asked for and received by the BWSR. Year-End reports were submitted

by March 31, 2016. \$300.00 from Hiawatha Valley Resource Conservation and Development, and \$120.00 from Khimaira was added to the aging summary. Adam King, District Manager, informed the board that Dodge County has approved payment for the Hiawatha Valley Resource Conservation and Development Dues. A motion was made to approve the March Treasurer's Report, and to pay the bills on the aging summary for a payables total of \$1,040.66.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Bill Thompson

The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Community Education – Bill Thompson, District 1 Supervisor, informed the board that the planned community education course will be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2016, and Tuesday, June 21, 2016 from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Kasson-Mantorville Community Education Room in Kasson. Supervisor Thompson also presented the Community Education 2016 page where the class is advertised. There will be discussion, with others leading specific portions of the discussion.

New Business

Cover Crop Program Recommendations

Adam King, District Manager, presented a proposal from Dodge SWCD/NRCS staff on a cover crop program. The criteria presented was:

- 1) Land planted must be in Dodge County.
- 2) Participant may not be enrolled in any other program for the same activity.
- 3) Seeding would be done in a timely manner according to NRCS Practice Standard 340, giving the cover crop ample time to emerge and establish, with no fall tillage and the cover crop remaining in the field over the winter.
- 4) The cover crop would be terminated, or used for forage in the spring, and not taken to maturity for grain harvest.
- 5) Manure application would be allowed as long as adequate ground cover is maintained.
- 6) The District Cover Crop Cost-Share will be an annual program needing SWCD Board approval each year.
- 7) The Dodge SWCD Cover Crop Cost-Share program will use the **NRCS EQIP practice rate of \$41.21 / Acre and limit the maximum amount of acres enrolled to 100 acres.**

The board discussed the program recommendations including changing the maximum acreage to 50 acres to encourage producers to plant part of a field in cover crops to compare, and to make as many opportunities to include as many producers as possible. A motion was made to approve the 2016 SWCD Cover Crop Cost-Share Program as part of their District Cost-Share Program with the following criteria:

1. Land planted must be in Dodge County
2. Participant may not be enrolled in any other program for the same activity.
3. Seeding would be done in a timely according to NRCS Practice Standard 340, giving the cover crop ample time to emerge and establish, with the cover crop remaining in the field over the winter,
4. The cover crop would be terminated, or used for forage in the spring, and not taken to maturity for grain harvest,

5. Manure application would be allowed as long as adequate ground cover is maintained,
6. The District Cover Crop Cost-Share will be an annual program needing SWCD Board approval each year,
7. The Dodge SWCD Cover Crop Cost-Share program will use the **NRCS EQIP practice rate of \$41.21 / Acre and limit the maximum amount of acres enrolled to 50 acres** with the intent to enroll as many producers as possible.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Bill Thompson

The motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence

Adam King, District Manager, presented a letter to the board from the Minnesota Association of Conservation Districts notifying the districts that they are accepting resolutions. King also informed the board that he has applied for and has been recommended for funding from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for a Clean Water Act Section 319 grant for \$219,000, using the Middle Fork Zumbro River Critical Source Area Restoration grant received from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Clean Water Fund as match.

Meeting Reports

Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP) – Bill Thompson, District 1 Supervisor, reported attending the ZWP Board Meeting on April 14, 2016. Dick Peterson will be representing Rice Soil and Water Conservation District on the ZWP board, with other new citizen members attending their first meeting. A letter of support for the new CREP III program was signed and approved. McKnight is curbing it's funding towards the ZWP, and the ZWP is looking for ways to fill the funding gap. There were 6-8 applicants that had applied for the Executive Director position at the time of the meeting. The Watershed Restoration And Protection Strategies (WRAPS) process has started and are currently conducting the zonation surveys. The next WRAPS meeting will be in June. The Buffer Summit held in Mazeppa, and the One Watershed One Plan Transition Plan were discussed. The Educational Sign project is continuing, and Earth Fest 2016 will be held in Rochester with the ZWP having a booth. Wabasha and Olmsted Counties have established a Joint Powers Board in order to dredge Lake Zumbro.

Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) – Don Hesper, District 2 Supervisor, reported attending the RC&D meeting and John Beckwith announced the RC&D is receiving two additional grants: one for \$25,000 from SARE to study winter grazing of goats for Buckthorn control, and the second from Ag Start for \$5,000 to make a business model for goats that graze buckthorn. The RC&D has purged files that they are not required to keep, and are now down to one filing cabinet that is in Beckwith's house. They are trying to get their purpose and message out to the county commissioners. An audit was conducted and passed. The Hiawatha Valley RC&D is going to be expanding to all of southern Minnesota, but its main focus will remain in the southeast portion.

Cover Crops – Glenn Hahn, District 5 Supervisor, reported attending a cover crop demonstration workshop. Hahn said he would like to start seeing more of these cover crop demonstrations showing the benefits of cover crops in Dodge County.

Cedar River Watershed District (CRWD) – David Livingston, District 4 Supervisor, reported attending the CRWD meeting on April 20, 2016, where the Dobbins retention projects were showcased. One was a large grade stabilization, and the other was a streambank restoration. Project levies and bonding were discussed. The CRWD was asking for \$1.6 million in bonding from the state, but has now cut the amount to \$1.175 million.

Managers' Report

Adam King, District Manager, reported being recommended for funding from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for his Clean Water Act Section 319 grant, and working on the workplan for that grant.

Other New Business

There was no other new business

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Larry Scherger, Chair, called for a motion for adjournment at 12:06 A.M.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 7:15 p.m. in the conference room of the USDA Service Center building, 916 2nd St. SE, Dodge Center, Minnesota.

Approved:  Date: 5-19-16 Recorder: Adam King
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Supervisors: Bill Thompson – Don Heser – Larry Scherger – David Livingston – Glenn Hahn

