



Minutes of the August 20, 2015 Regular Board Meeting

Minutes of the August 20, 2015 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 7:18 PM.

Members Present: Larry Scherger, Chair
Bill Thompson, Vice-Chair
Don Hesel, PR&I
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer
David Livingston, Secretary (late arrival 9:30)

Members Absent: none

Others Present: Adam King, District Manager, Dodge SWCD
Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, NRCS
Sen. Matt Schmit, District 21 State Senator

Approval of Meeting Agenda – There were two additions made to the agenda, the addition of Sen. Matt Schmit with a legislative report under Partner Agency Reports, and grant opportunities under New Business. A motion was made to approve the August 20, 2015 meeting agenda as amended.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Don Hesel

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the July 16, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes – There were no revisions to the July 16, 2015 meeting minutes. A motion was made to approve the July 16, 2015 regular board meeting minutes as revised.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Don Hesel

The motion carried unanimously.

Partner Agency Reports

Legislative Report

Sen. Matt Schmit, District 21 State Senator, reported that the legislature passed a conservative budget in the last session, and did not turn the surplus into a deficit, leaving funds available for next year. They would like to provide local assistance to help offset property taxes, offering some property tax relief, as well as, supporting more transportation infrastructure projects next year with surplus funds. Sen. Schmit explained the role of inflation with next year's bonding bills, with less inflation there would be less surplus. The buffer bill was passed in hopes to provide some financial relief to soil and water conservation districts, to work towards cleaner waters, and he

wants the bill to be practical and make sense. The legislature also provided funding to school districts and nursing homes. One of his goals for next year is to focus on broadband expansion, getting high speed internet into rural areas.

District Conservationist's Report

Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, NRCS, reported on the current workload. There are currently 34 Conservation Reserve Program contracts that will all need a conservation plan, site plan, and operation and maintenance agreements. There are 15,000 acres of CP-38E to enroll, needing a minimum of 15 native species: 5 grasses, 5 forbs and 5 of either. There are 8 CP-22, 9 CP-21, 10 CP-8A, 6 CP-38E, 1 CP-16A, and 1 CP-27/28 current contracts eligible for re-enrollment. A composter is currently being installed, and an animal mortality facility is slated for installation soon through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program will have only one ranking period in FY2016, and the cutoff date has not yet been established. Currently they are working on completing 10% spot checks for CSP contracts, and progress is being made on the 2 unclosed RIM-WRP contracts. One has a draft design from the BWSR and will need a ditch meeting to introduce the plan cost to the citizens. Two are interested in the WRE program for floodplain/wetland restorations. The Client Gateway is being rolled out and will allow for producers to apply for programs online, review and sign contracts, view tracks and fields, and track payments. Access is currently restricted to non-mobile devices and the client will need level 2 clearance. No entities are allowed at this time. The Ag Conservation Experience Service program is allowing the NRCS to hire retirees (55+) back to provide services. They won't be considered federal or state employees and shouldn't affect current operations.

County Commissioner's Report

Rodney Peterson, Dodge County District 3 Commissioner, was unable to attend.

There were no other partner agency reports.

Approval of the Treasurer's Financial Statements and Payment of New Bills – Glenn Hahn, Treasurer, discussed and reviewed the July Balance Sheet and aging summary, cash reserves, net assets, and expenditures. There is a total of \$261,749.12 in our accounts, with \$90,073.95 coming in as revenues and \$11,765.42 going out as expenditures. The New York Life Securities check has not come in the mail yet. Glenn will check in with Jerry Fahning to see where the check is. We have received the Dodge County allocation of \$90,000. Adam gave an overview of the copier contract, and reported that Blain's salary is not in the expenditures, and only appears on the balance sheet. The board asked Adam to check into revising the names on the budget to better express what those funds are for, and to look into the postage expenditures. Claremont Service Center and Metro Sales Inc. were added to the aging summary. A motion was made to accept the financial report and pay all presented bills on the aging summary totaling \$788.42.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

2016 Revised Budget Approval

At the board meeting on July 16, 2015 the board approved the the preliminary budget and to send an allotment request of \$127,790.33 to Dodge County. After talking with the Dodge County Environmental Services, the amount under the Dodge County Water Plan Contract should be changed \$8,000 from \$17,000 to \$25,000. This would bring the Dodge County allotment request down by \$8,000 from \$127,790 to \$119,790. A motion was made to approve the revised budget and to send an allotment request of \$119,790 along with a memo, and the budget to Dodge County.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bill Thompson

The motion carried unanimously.

David Livingston entered at 9:30 P.M.

FY2015 Minnesota Department of Natural Resource Groundwater Level Monitoring Contract

At the board meeting on July 16, 2015 the board of supervisors approved the FY2016 Groundwater Level Monitoring Contract with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for \$720. The request sent from the DNR said for FY2016, but meant FY2015, and in FY2015 only one well was monitored. At \$30/reading to be read once a month for eight months of the year, a total of request of \$240 should have been sent to the DNR. A motion was made to approve and sign the FY2015 groundwater level monitoring contract with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for \$240.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Dave Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

FY2016 Grant Update

The FY16 CWF grant period is now open and will close on Friday, August 28, 2015. Adam King has been partnering with Dodge County and the Cedar River Watershed District on a saturated buffer grant. Another grant that Adam King is looking into is the top 50 critical source areas grant.

New Business

FY2016 Board of Water and Soil Resources Programs and Operations Grant

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources has sent out their Programs and Operations grant agreement through Elink. The grant total is \$29,916.00. There is \$19,343.00 for Conservation Delivery, \$9,908 for Conservation Cost-Share, and \$665 for Easement Delivery. A motion was made to approve and sign the FY16 BWSR Programs and Operations Grant Agreement.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Don Hesper

The motion carried unanimously.

New Vehicle Discussion (Mileage vs. New Vehicle)

The board has tabled the item.

Correspondence

Adam King shared with the board a flyer for a soil health day in Freeborn County, and a training put on by MCIT. Adam also shared an article that was talked about at the Cedar River Watershed District meeting on August 19, 2015 about the Shell Rock Watershed District in Albert Lea. The Dodge County Extension is asking for nominations for appointments.

Dave Livingston shared that he and Tom Johnston, District Technician, went to Lynn Schmeling's farm to take pictures for the 2015 Outstanding Conservationist of the Year. Dave reported that Lynn and his family are doing a really good job and has a lot of conservation on the land. The board asked Adam King to get a newspaper article out.

Meeting Reports

Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP) – Adam King, District Manager, reported attending a ZWP Board Retreat on August 13, 2015. There was a rainfall simulator demonstration, and the sign projects were discussed.

Hiawatha Valley Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) – Don Hesel, District 2 Supervisor, reported attending the Hiawatha Valley RC&D meeting at the River Bend Nature Center and seeing the goats in action. They like eating Canadian Thistle, will eat Wild Parsnip, and most importantly eat Buckthorn.

MASWCD/MNDNR Groundwater Meeting – Supervisors reported listening to talks by staff of the MNDNR, MASWCD, and the BWSR. Groundwater and groundwater quality in karst areas were reviewed and the effects of road salt and nitrates were discussed.

Dodge County Feedlot Committee – Glenn Hahn, District 5 Supervisor, reported that the lawsuit with Dodge County over feedlots is ongoing.

Root River One Watershed One Plan – Glenn Hahn, District 5 Supervisor, reported that the August Policy Committee meeting was canceled, and are going to look closely at the governance structure and how the plan will be funded in the future. Sections I, II and V of the plan has been reviewed by the Planning Work Group, and will be reviewed by the Policy Committee at their next meeting.

Cedar River Watershed District (CRWD) – David Livingston, District 4 Supervisor, reported attending the CRWD board meeting held on August 19, 2015. The CRWD board approved a \$250,000 levy. The CRWD is receiving \$6,000,000 from the Hormel Foundation for installing identified projects in their Capital Improvement Plan. There was also discussion on the Ramsey Dam that is owned by Hormel. Hormel doesn't want to own the dam, and neither does the City of Austin, or the Cedar River Watershed District. Hormel has discussed taking the dam out, but the City of Austin and the Cedar River Watershed District would like to see the dam stay for its flood benefits.

Managers' Report

Adam King, District Manager, reported attending multiple meetings, including the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Finance Committee meeting and shared with the board the new dues structure.

Other New Business

New Grant Opportunities – Bill Thompson, District 1 Supervisor, shared the new Multi-purpose Drainage Management Competitive Grants Request for Proposal.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Larry Scherger called for a motion for adjournment at 11:34 P.M.

Motion: David 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, September 17, 2015 at 7:15 p.m. in the conference room of the USDA Service Center building, 916 2nd St. SE, Dodge Center, Minnesota.

Approved:  Date: Sep 17-15 Recorder: Adam King
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Supervisors: Bill Thompson – Don Hesel – Larry Scherger – David Livingston – Glenn Hahn

