Minutes of the December 21, 2017 Regular Board Meeting

Minutes of the December 21, 2017 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District’s 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  
David Livingston, Secretary  
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer  
Bruce Freerksen, PR&I (in at 8:31 P.M.)

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Adam King, District Manager, Dodge SWCD  
Michael Muzzy, District Conservationist, USDA NRCS  
Rhonda Toquam, Dodge County District IV Commissioner (in at 7:22 P.M.)

**Approval of Meeting Agenda** – Additions to the December 21, 2017 agenda included the 2018 Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Dues under Other New Business. A motion was made to approve the December 21, 2017 meeting agenda as revised.

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

**Approval of the October 26, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes** – There were no corrections to the minutes of the November 16, 2017 board meeting. A motion was made to approve the November 16, 2017 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District’s regular Board of Supervisors meeting minutes as presented.

Motion: Glenn Hahn  
Seconded: David Livingston  
The motion carried unanimously.

**Partner Agency Reports**

Rhonda Toquam entered at 7:22 P.M.

**Dodge County Commissioner’s Report**  
Rhonda Toquam, Dodge County District IV Commissioner, reported that the Dodge County Commissioners are still working to finalize the 2018 budget, levy taxes, and complete year-end tasks. The Ditch Committee was held on 12/21/2017 and the Havana Ditch System will be assessed $5,000, and the Ripley Ditch System will be assessed $15,000. The petition on County Ditch 20 was approved, with 60% of citizens signing the petition. Steve Penkava was approved as the

December 21, 2017 Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting minutes  

Supervisors: Bill Thompson – Bruce Freerksen – Larry Scherger – David Livingston – Glenn Hahn
engineer for the ditch systems, and an attorney has been hired to assist with working through ditch improvement and repair. A barn / feedlot has been proposed in Ripley Township, which has its own planning and zoning. Ripley Township did not respond to the permit within 60 days, and the permit was automatically approved. Dodge County is seeking nominations for the Planning and Zoning Committee.

**Natural Resource Conservation Service Report**

Michael Muzzy, District Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) reported that he is the new District Conservationist for Dodge County, covering Dodge and Olmsted Counties. Brian DeVetter, the former District Conservationist for Dodge County has been transferred full time to Mower County. The Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District has helped the NRCS on about 40 Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) plans, and CRP acres have run out nationwide. Muzzy has been working on 8 applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) with plans needing to be completed by Friday, January 19, 2018. Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) participants are coming in to get their payments approved. Cathe Pullman, State Conservationist, NRCS, is on extended sick leave, with Lanette Dietrich, Assistant State Conservationist – Easement Programs, NRCS, the acting State Conservationist until January 01, 2018. Curtis Elke, State Conservationist of Idaho, NRCS, will become the acting State Conservation of Minnesota after that. Noel Frank, District Conservationist for Steele and Waseca Counties will be retiring at the end of 2017. In 2010 there were 419 MN NRCS Employees, and currently there are 238. MN NRCS has been capped at 280 employees, but currently are not allowed to hire any new employees to fill vacated positions. MN NRCS potentially will post for new hirings in February. MN NRCS is currently contracting with Ultima to assist with current understaffing issues. ACES, a program that hires people that are over 55 years old that would like to come back and assist, and contribution agreements with soil and water conservation districts are other options being considered to address staffing issues. Muzzy presented the Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners, the Civil Rights Policy Statement, Anti-Harassment Policy Statement, the “And Justice For All” poster, Form AD-2106, the Memorandum of Agreement, the Cooperative Working Agreement, and Operational Agreement, between the USDA NRCS and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District.

There were no other partner agency reports.

Bruce Freerksen entered at 8:31 P.M.

**Treasurer’s Report**

**Approval of the Treasurer’s Financial Statements and Payment of New Bills** – Glenn Hahn, Treasurer, presented the November 2017 Revenues of $27,254.02, Expenditures of $52,049.84 Balance Sheet, and Aging Summary. Verizon Wireless for $35.01, Goodhue SWCD for $150.00, Metro Sales Inc. for $110.82, Innovative Office Solutions Inc. for $10.75, D.C. Hardware LLC. for $21.27, TechRight Service Inc. for $22.00, Mower SWCD for $93.94, Truxa Company Inc. for $156.36, Truxa Company Inc. for $70.27, Peterson Company LTD. For $2,400.00, Ed McNamara for $660.00, and Wells Fargo Visa for $323.12 were added to the Aging Summary, for a total of $4,398.17. A motion was made to approve the November 2017 Treasurer’s Report, and to approve payment of the bills on the Aging Summary, for a payables total of $4,398.17.

- Motion: David Livingston
- Seconded: Bill Thompson
- The motion carried unanimously.
Unfinished Business

2018 Budget Approval
Adam King, District Manager, presented the Finance Committee’s recommendation of the 2018 budget, and the 2018 workload estimator. The supervisors discussed the budget. A motion was made to approve the Finance Committee’s recommendation of the 2018 Budget.

Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen
The motion carried unanimously

King presented Cost of Living Increase for Social Security at a 2.0% increase, and Dodge County at a 2.75% increase. The supervisors discussed the cost of living increase. A motion was made to approve the Cost of Living increase for Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Employees at a 2.5% increase.

Motion: Glenn Hahn
Seconded: David Livingston
The motion carried unanimously

King reported that the 2018 IRS mileage rate has increased by 1 cent, to $0.545 / mile. A motion was made to approve an increase in the mileage rate for district business to $0.545 / mile.

Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Glenn Hahn
The motion carried unanimously

New Accountant
Adam King, District Manager, received two responses back from the requests sent: Jamie Standinger, CPA, and Scanlon, Murch & Associates, LLC. The quote from Jamie Standinger was less than the quote from Scanlon, Murch & Associates, LLC. The supervisors discussed the two responses. A motion was made to hire Jamie Standinger, CPA for accounting services for the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District.

Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen
The motion carried unanimously

New Drill Update
Adam King, District Manager, gave an update on the new drill, and discussed with the Supervisors what to do with the old drill. After discussion, the Supervisors decided to sell the old drill as-is.

New Business

District Cost-Share Contract 2016-10 (Granger) Payment
Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Bruce Granger of Concord Township is requesting payment for District Cost-Share Contract 2016-10. Construction has completed on his project, and all invoices and vouchers have been received and signed. A motion was made to approve payment for District Cost-Share Contract 2016-10 for Bruce Granger.

Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Bill Thompson
The motion carried unanimously

December 21, 2017 Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting minutes

Supervisors: Bill Thompson – Bruce Freerksen – Larry Scherger – David Livingston – Glenn Hahn
District Cost-Share Contract 2016-11 (Granger) Payment

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Bruce Granger of Concord Township is requesting payment for District Cost-Share Contract 2016-11. Construction has completed on his project, and all invoices and vouchers have been received and signed. A motion was made to approve payment for District Cost-Share Contract 2016-11 for Bruce Granger.

Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Bill Thompson
The motion carried unanimously

District Cost-Share Contract 2018-03 (Curlee) Encumbrance

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that James and Kathleen Curlee are requesting cost-share for a well decommission. The estimated cost of the well decommission is $1,525.00. The Curlees are requesting 50% up to $500.00 in cost-share, the maximum allowed for this practice. A motion was made to approve the encumbrance of District Cost-Share Contract 2018-03 for a well decommissioning for James and Kathleen Curlee at 50% cost-share not to exceed $500.00.

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

2018 Local Capacity Services Workplan

Adam King, District Manager, presented the draft grant workplan to the supervisors. The supervisors discussed the draft grant workplan. A consensus was made to move forward with the draft workplan developed by King.

Personnel Committee Recommendations

Adam King, District Manager, has completed annual evaluations of staff, and the Personnel Committee has reviewed them. The Personnel Committee recommends a step increase for Adam King, from step 5 to step 4, a step increase for Blaine Delzer, from step 4 to step 3, a step increase for Jessica Bakken, from step 8 to step 7. A motion was made to approve the Personnel Committee’s recommendations of a step increase for King, Delzer, and Bakken.

Motion: Glenn Hahn
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen
The motion carried unanimously

Other New Business

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) 2018 Dues

2018 Dues for the MASWCD are $3,208.94. The Supervisors discussed the dues. A motion was made to approve payment of $3,208.94 for the 2018 MASWCD Dues.

Motion: Bill Thompson
Seconded: David Livingston
The motion carried unanimously

There was no other new business.

Correspondence & Staff Report

Adam King, District Manager, presented the supervisors the annual report from the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

December 21, 2017 Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting minutes
Supervisor Reports

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) – Bill Thompson, District I Supervisor, reported attending the MASWCD Annual Convention on December 3 – 5, 2017, where the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) – MASWCD meetings on SWCD funding were discussed. AMC will remain neutral as the MASWCD continues to push for SWCDs to obtain taxing authority. The governor's 25X25 town hall meeting results were discussed. Richard Cruse, a professor at Iowa State University, Department of Agronomy, gave the keynote address.

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Mowing and Haying Meeting – David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor, reported attending the MnDOT meeting on mowing and haying trunk road ditches. The meeting was well attended by many producers from the area. Livingston presented the letter from the Dodge SWCD to MnDOT on mowing and haying trunk road ditches, and thanked Sen. Drackowski for being instrumental in bringing the meeting to Rochester.

Cedar River Watershed District (CRWD) – David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, was unable to attend the CRWD meeting on Wednesday, December 20, 2017.

One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) – Cedar River Watershed – David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported that the next 1W1P – Cedar River Watershed Policy Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 03, 2018.

Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) – Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor, reported attending the RC&D meeting on November 27, 2017, where the Fugle’s Mill, planting Kernza for water quality, and goats used for Buckthorn control were discussed.

Dodge County Feedlot Advisory Committee – Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, reported speaking with Melissa DeVetter, Dodge County Planning and Zoning, about the committee, and informed her that the Dodge SWCD would still like a spot on the Feedlot Advisory Committee.

Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP) – Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, reported attending the ZWP meeting on December 14, 2017, where finding additional funding was discussed.

Next Meeting
The next meeting of the Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors will be Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 7:15 p.m. in the conference room of the USDA Service Center building, 916 2nd St. SE, Dodge Center, Minnesota.

Adjournment
Hearing no further business, Larry Scherger, Chair, called for a motion for adjournment at 11:28 P.M.

Motion: Glenn Hahn
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen
The motion carried unanimously.

Approved: ___________________________ Date: 1-18-18 Recorder: Adam King

December 21, 2017 Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting minutes Page 5 of 5

Supervisors: Bill Thompson – Bruce Freerksen– Larry Scherger – David Livingston – Glenn Hahn