Minutes of the February 16, 2017 Regular Board Meeting

Minutes of the February 16, 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 7:15 PM.

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Adam King, District Manager, Dodge SWCD
Rhonda Toquam, Dodge County District IV Commissioner
Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, NRCS

Oath of Office – Adam King, District Manager, assisted Bill Thompson with taking the Oath of Office.

Approval of Meeting Agenda – There was one addition to the agenda: Recommendation of Kevin Kiser to the Cedar River Watershed District Board of Managers, under Other New Business. A motion was made to approve the February 16, 2017 meeting agenda as amended.
  Motion: Glenn Hahn
  Seconded: Bill Thompson
  The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the January 19, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes – Corrections to the minutes of the January 19, 2017 board meeting include adding the word “be” before the word “coming” on page 3 under Natural Resource Conservation Service Report, and changing “weather” to “whether”, and adding the word “manner” after “timely” on page 5 under Set 2017 District Cost-Share Program. A motion was made to approve the January 19, 2017 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District’s regular Board of Supervisors meeting minutes as amended.
  Motion: Glenn Hahn
  Seconded: Bruce Freerksen
  The motion carried unanimously.

Partner Agency Reports

Dodge County Commissioner’s Report
Rhonda Toquam, Dodge County District IV Commissioner, informed the board that all Dodge County Commissioners and Jim Elmquist, County Administrator, spent the day at the
Minnesota Capitol, meeting with legislators expressing their concerns of transportation funding for roads and bridges, with bridges closing or have closed in Dodge County. Concerns over public health and software/IT issues were also discussed. Dodge County will be holding a Strategic Planning session this spring.

David Livingston brought up that the Dodge County Commissioners will need to appoint a manager to the Cedar River Watershed District Board. Kevin Kiser was previously appointed and felt that he is doing a good job. A motion was made to recommend to the Dodge County Commissioners, that Kevin Kiser be appointed to the Cedar River Watershed District Board of Managers.

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

Natural Resource Conservation Service Report

Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service reported on Palmer Amaranth, a very invasive plan that may have been established during native grass seeding. There is a joint effort to identify and diagnose each site, with identification being made by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. DeVetter is currently working in both Mower and Dodge counties, as the NRCS is very short staffed. There is also a hiring freeze at the federal level, so they are planning on being short staffed for the near future. DeVetter will be spending 3 days a week in Mower, and the other 2 in Dodge county. For CRP there are 23 renewals, and 40 new offers. Work is still being completed on CSP, EQIP, and WRP easements. There was a teleconference on the RCPP small feedlot grant, and there is a EQIP signup deadline of March 6, 2017 for those projects. Those producers signing up will need a Certified Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP).

Zumbro Watershed Partnership

Sarah Middleton, Executive Director, Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP), was unable to attend the meeting.

There were no other partner agency reports.

Treasurer’s Report

Approval of the Treasurer’s Financial Statements and Payment of New Bills — Glenn Hahn, Treasurer, reported and presented the January 2017 Revenues, Expenditures, Balance Sheet, Grant Expenditures, and Aging Summary, as well as the updated Revenues, Expenditures, Balance Sheet, and Grant Expenditures for all of 2016. Hahn mentioned that Deb from Accounting Plus is looking to retire soon, and told him that the Dodge SWCD should start looking for another accountant/bookkeeper. Church Offset Printing for $316.00, Minnesota Conservation Volunteer for $20.00, Atypical Title for $46.00, and Metro Sales Incorporated for $213.00 were added to the Aging Summary. A motion was made to approve the January 2017 Treasurer’s Report, and to approve payment of the bills on the Aging Summary, for a payables total of $1,120.81.

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

Unfinished Business
New Vehicle Discussion

Adam King, District Manager, reported looking online for used vehicles at Adamson’s Motors and at Kuehn Motors. King test drove a Chevy Cruise and a Ford Focus at Kuehn Motors in Austin. King has also talked with Duke at Dodge County on purchasing a Dodge County Fleet Vehicle, and was told that Dodge County sends all of their vehicles to auction. Duke recommended contacting Nelson Ford in Fergus Falls, as they deal with the state contract often, and may be able to provide more information on the state contract and SWCD using it. King contacted Sue Kugler at Nelson Ford in Fergus Falls, and received a quote for a new Ford Focus and a Ford Fusion. Supervisor Thompson stated that a Ford Fusion may be the better option, even at a higher price. Commissioner Toquam stated that Krejci Ford in Blooming Prairie often matches the state contract price. The board instructed King to look into Krejci Ford in Blooming Prairie.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Day at the Capitol

Adam King, District Manager, informed the board that the MASWCD Legislative Day at the Capitol will be held on Monday, March 20, 2017 – Tuesday, March 21, 2017. A motion was made to approve sending Supervisor Thompson, and Adam King, District Manager, to the MASWCD Legislative Day at the Capitol at a cost of $80 each for registration, for a total of $160.00.

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

New Business

Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program Sub-Agreement with the Southeast Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Joint Powers Board

Adam King, District Manager, informed the board that the Southeast Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Services Joint Powers Board has received $55,000 from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for the implementation of the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program. The sub-agreement allows for each SWCD in the area to work on and receive reimbursement for up to $2,500.00, with additional amounts depending on how other Area SWCD’s are in need of the funding. A motion was made to sign and approve the Sub-Agreement between the SE SWCD Technical Joint Powers Board and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for promotion and assessment services of the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program.

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

Approval of New Conservation Technician Position

The Personnel Committee and Adam King, District Manager, recommend the hire of Jessica Bakken as the new Conservation Technician for the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District. A motion was made to approve the hire of Jessica Bakken as the new Conservation for the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District, with a start date of Monday, February 27, 2017 at a salary of $17.33 / hour.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen
Seconded: Glenn Hahn
The motion carried unanimously
Master Joint Powers Agreement for Professional and Technical Services between the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

Adam King, District Manager, presented the board with a Master Joint Powers Agreement (MJPA) for Professional and Technical Services between the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District. The MJPA is needed for the Dodge SWCD to get paid for work completed on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Previously the district would receive funding for work completed on RIM or CREP after the easement had been recorded and the landowner paid, but with the MJPA, the district will receive some funding, even if the easement wasn’t completely completed. There was continued discussion on the timeline of the CREP signup. A motion was made to approve and sign the Master Joint Powers Agreement for Professional and Technical Services between the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District.

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

Other New Business

There was no other new business.

Correspondence

Adam King, District Manager, presented the governor’s 25 by 25 press release, that there will be no increase in premiums for dental insurance, and information on the upcoming CREP III signup.

Supervisor Reports

Dodge County Feedlot Committee – Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, reported that there was no Dodge County Feedlot Committee meeting last month.

Soil Health Field Day – Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, reported attending a soil health field day where moldboard plowing doing less damage to the soil than a chisel plow was discussed. Hahn expressed that he would like to see more soil health events and feedlot meetings.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts – Bill Thompson, District I Supervisor, reported planning attending the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts meeting and provided a list of topics to be covered. Thompson will be in charge of the Area VII Summer Meeting and the Area VII resolutions.

Cedar River Watershed District – David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported attending the Cedar River Watershed District Meeting on February 15, 2017 where the annual plan was discussed. The Cedar River Watershed District is also looking for members to be on a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). Some of the Mangers felt the draft list was too Austin centric. Staff will seek additional members from outside of Austin. The Udopho Ditch project was discussed, and the Planning Work Group for the One Watershed One Plan – Cedar River Watershed is recommending Barr as their consultant.
Southeast Area Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Support Joint Powers Board – Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, reported attending the SE Area SWCD Technical Support JPB meeting where he was elected chair. The JPB has hired a new employee. His name is Chris Nelson, and he is stationed in Rochester. They are looking at increasing the dues in order to provide match for the Capacity Services grant from the Board of Water and Soil Resources. The JPB and the Southeast Minnesota Water Resources Board are looking at reorganizing the structure of both organizations, and are going to look into a shared director. A 2% Cost of Living Allowance was given to the JPB employees.

Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP) – Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, reported attending the ZWP meeting on February 09, 2017, and that three educational sites have been completed and installed. There are three more planned for installation in 2017. Their budget is hurting, and did not receive any funding from the McKnight Foundation last year. The Zumbro Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) is nearing completion and should be ready for submittal soon.

Next Meeting
The next meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be Thursday, March 16, 2017 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 10:13 P.M.

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