

Minutes of the August 17, 2017 Regular Board Meeting

Minutes of the August 17, 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 7:19 PM.

Members Present: Larry Scherger, Chair
Bill Thompson, Vice-Chair
David Livingston, Secretary
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer
Bruce Freerksen, PR&I (in at 7:28)

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Adam King, District Manager, Dodge SWCD
Blaine Delzer, District Technician, Dodge SWCD
Ed McNamara, Goodhue SWCD District IV Supervisor
Rhonda Toquam, Dodge County District IV Commissioner (in at 7:39)
Bryce Lange, Community and Business Development Specialist, CEDA
Mark Dittrich, Ag Marketing and Development, MDA
Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, USDA NRCS

Approval of Meeting Agenda – Additions to the agenda include the FY16 Buffer Law Implementation Grant Close-Out, training request, and Plowville update. A motion was made to approve the August 17, 2017 meeting agenda as presented.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the July 20, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes – There were no corrections to the minutes of the July 20, 2017 board meeting. A motion was made to approve the July 20, 2017 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District's regular Board of Supervisors meeting minutes as presented.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Partner Agency Reports

Natural Resource Conservation Service Report

Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service, reported that the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) deadline is tomorrow, August 18, 2017, and has multiple applications submitted for grade stabilizations, strip tillage, cover crops, and

grassed water ways. Those EQIP contracts should be funded in March 2018. The Van Zuilen RIM-WRP easement is currently being constructed.

Plowville Field Day Report

Blaine Delzer, District Technician, Ed McNamara, Goodhue SWCD District IV Supervisor, and Mark Dittrich, Ag Marketing and Development, Minnesota Department of Agriculture reported that the Plowville Field Day will be held on Tuesday, September 19, 2017 from 8:00 A.M. through 3:30 P.M. Speakers have committed to the event, and the cover crop seed has been planted. Equipment used to establish cover crops and other soil health practices will be there with representatives to talk about them. The Dodge Center Lion's Club will be selling food for the event. Event organizers are hoping to that the supervisors will help welcome everyone to the event. Advertising for the event should go out next week, with letters sent directly to some producers, radio, T.V., newspaper, and Facebook ads. Delzer will be the main contact for the event.

Rhonda Toquam entered at 7:39 P.M.

Dodge County Commissioner's Report

Rhonda Toquam, Dodge County District IV Commissioner, reported that the Dodge County Commissioners have started their budget process. A wheelage tax has been raised to help fund road and bridge improvements. The Zumbro Watershed Partnership will be at the next Dodge County Commissioners meeting, on Tuesday August 22, 2017, presenting their budget request.

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 July 2017 Revenues, Expenditures, Balance Sheet, and Aging Summary. Wells Fargo Visa for \$214.7, Metro Sales Inc. for \$338.55, and the South-East Soil and Water Conservation District (SE SWCD) Technical Joint Powers Board (JPB) for \$854.55 were added to the Aging Summary, for a total of \$1,764.60.

Adam King, District Manager, reported hearing back from the auditor, Michael Peterson, and that the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District needs collateral from the bank for the amount over the FDIC limit. King has checked with Citizens State Bank of Hayfield, but no collateral is offered, however, an Insured Cash Sweep (ICS) is offered. King presented information on the ICS. King explained that the ICS would take a portion of district funds, and transfer them to other banks within their network, keeping the amount at each bank, including Citizens State Bank of Hayfield, under the FDIC limit. King informed the supervisors that Peterson explained that the ICS is legal and meets state statute requirements, but expressed that it can be cumbersome, and is a relatively newer practice. Peterson recommends that the district split the funds between another bank. The supervisors instructed King to explore options with Farmers Bank in West Concord, Home Federal Bank in Kasson, and Equity Bank in Claremont.

A motion was made to approve the July 2017 Treasurer's Report, and to approve payment of the bills on the Aging Summary, for a payables total of \$1,764.60.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Sub-agreement between the Southeast Technical Support Joint Powers Board and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for the Lower Mississippi River Feedlot Management in Minnesota

The sub-agreement, and feedlot projects were discussed. Dodge SWCD has one planned project for a Certified Nutrient Management Plan and CAP plan so far. A motion was made to approve the sub-agreement between the Southeast Technical Support Joint Powers Board and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for entering into cost-share contracts for eligible projects for the Lower Mississippi River Feedlot Management in Minnesota.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously

New Business

Listening Session on the Dodge County Comprehensive Land Use Management Plan Update

Bryce Lange, Community and Business Development Specialist, Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA), introduced the work of CEDA to the supervisors, including working with Fillmore, Houston, and Dodge Counties on comprehensive plans. Lange facilitated a questions and answer session with the supervisors, including:

What are the strengths of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District? – Employees that know the conservation field, have a new District Manager, have a diverse board, receive good county support, and have good supervisor participation in partner organizations.

What goes into building county strengths? – The ability to be deliberate in building partnerships, ability to find funding, and continue to seek funding.

What are the weaknesses of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District? – Lack of stable funding, deteriorating relationship with the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (supplies, office space).

What are some ideas for minimizing those weaknesses? – State and federal partners are pulling back, so we will have to stand on our own (getting our own server, computers, licenses), and simplification of regulation.

What are some opportunities of the county or soil and water conservation district? – The attitude towards conservation and clean water has been good. Additional opportunities include reaching out to and working with partners like the City of Kasson, and the Cedar River Watershed District.

What are the threats to the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District? – Lack of stable funding, increased regulation, activist groups, citizens getting too far removed from living on a farm, and a lack of understanding of the agriculture industry.

Do you see urbanization, or the expansion of the City of Rochester, as a threat? – It's already here.

What can be done to overcome a threat? – Education, outreach, and promotion. Having informed politicians.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Land Use and Zoning – Can be adjusted. Currently have a good policy to keep expansion close to cities in order to protect agriculture. The policies seem open to renewable energy. Have good advisory groups in Dodge County (Feedlot Advisory, Planning and Zoning Board, Public Hearings).

Water Management – There is a lot to do, including quality and quantity challenges. The public and private sectors must work together. There are groundwater issues, and there needs to be more communication. Everyone is to blame. These issues are bigger than Dodge County.

Agriculture Regulations – A 50-foot buffer on all land (one size fits all approach) does not work. There are drainage issues that need to be addressed.

Environmental Protection – Has been done through regulation, but that has been limiting to agricultural producers, even putting some out of business. Livestock are required to have forms before being given prescriptions. There is too much over regulation.

LAST QUESTIONS

What to be aware about when looking to the future? – We are a bedroom community, and it's hard to find a place to live in Dodge County. The school systems here are smaller and are high quality.

What is your vision for Dodge County in the future? – There are fears that the county will get swallowed up by the City of Rochester, but Dodge County would like to maintain its own identity. Want to see an industry for jobs in Dodge County, hopefully the agriculture industry, but it probably won't be. Schools are the base of the community. A sustainable agriculture system with larger farms, maybe an opportunity to make a living on small farms. The county has a good infrastructure.

Are there any other comments? – None.

New Printer Purchase

The Supervisors discussed an email that was sent by DeVetter saying that the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District is no longer allowed to use office supplies purchased by the NRCS, and use of the NRCS printer is restricted to farmbill activities. Adam King, District Manager, presented a quote for a new color copier/scanner/printer from Metro Sales Inc, the company that the district currently uses for its printer. The quote is \$4,988.00 to purchase or \$93.62 a month for a 60-month lease. A motion was made to purchase a new color copier/printer/scanner from Metro Sales Inc. for \$4,988.00.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously

Trout Unlimited Letter of Support

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that he has received a request from Trout Unlimited to provide a Letter of Support for their Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to provide funding for projects on cold water streams of the Driftless Area. The supervisors discussed the letter and decided that because there are no cold-water streams in Dodge County, that warm water stream restorations should be a focus. No motion was made.

Jessica Bakken 6-Month Review

Adam King, District Manager informed the supervisors that he had conducted a favorable 6-month review for Jessica Bakken, District Technician, and determined that she should be able to use sick leave and annual leave. A motion was made to approve the favorable 6-month review for Jessica Bakken, District Technician, and approve the use of sick leave and annual leave.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously

Robert Eustice Letter

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Robert Eustice has sent a letter along with his payment for the no-till drill rental. The letter explains that he used the no-till drill to seed his native prairie, and had the no-till drill on the lowest setting. But the native seed still went through too fast, and only got a portion of the area planted. This required Eustice to purchase additional seed to complete the planting. The additional seed costs were \$1,800.00, and Eustice is requesting the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District to reimburse him for the \$1,800.00 in additional seed costs. The supervisors discussed the letter, and felt that Eustice has some responsibility for the seed overage. A motion was made to reimburse Robert Eustice for half of the seed cost overage, \$900.00.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bill Thompson

The motion carried unanimously

Dumpy Level Sale

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Blaine Delzer, District Technician, is interested in purchasing the old dumpy level. District staff have not used the dumpy level for many years, as staff have been able to use the NRCS's equipment. District staff now use the new survey equipment, and the dumpy level will no longer be needed. King provided the supervisors with a price list of similar dumpy levels from Ebay. A motion was made to offer to sell the dumpy level to Blaine Delzer for \$50.00.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously

FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer Cost-Share Contract FY16 SB-01 (Folie)

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Kenneth Folie is requesting cost-share for a saturated buffer from the FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer Grant. The total estimated cost of the saturated buffer is \$4,376.00, and requesting to encumber 75% of the cost of the practice not to exceed \$3,282.00. Dodge County will cost-share on the remaining 25% of the practice. A motion was made to approve the encumbrance of FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer cost-share fund contract FY16SB-01 for a saturated buffer for Kenneth Folie at 75% of the cost of the practice not to exceed \$3,282.00.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously

FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer Cost-Share Contract FY16 SB-02 (Folie)

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Kenneth Folie is requesting cost-share for a saturated buffer from the FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer Grant. The total estimated cost of the saturated buffer is \$5,298.00, and requesting to encumber 75% of the cost of the practice not to exceed \$3,974.00. Dodge County will cost-share on the remaining 25% of the practice. A motion was made to approve the encumbrance of FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer cost-share fund contract FY16SB-02 for a saturated buffer for Kenneth Folie at 75% of the cost of the practice not to exceed \$3,974.00.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously

FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer Cost-Share Contract FY16 SB-03 (Edgar)

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Dale Edgar is requesting cost-share for a saturated buffer from the FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer Grant. The total estimated cost of the saturated buffer is \$4,723.00, and requesting to encumber 75% of the cost of the practice not to exceed \$3,542.00. Dodge County will cost-share on the remaining 25% of the practice. A motion was made to approve the encumbrance of FY16 Clean Water Fund Saturated Buffer cost-share fund contract FY16SB-03 for a saturated buffer for Dale Edgar at 75% of the cost of the practice not to exceed \$3,542.00.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously

FY2016 Buffer Law Implementation Close-Out

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that all funds of the FY16 Board of Water and Soil Resources Buffer Law Implementation Grant (P16-4145) have been exhausted. A motion was made to authorize Adam King, District Manager, to sign and submit the Financial Report, and close out the FY16 Board of Water and Soil Resources Buffer Law Implementation Grant (P16-4145).

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously

Employee Training Request: BWSR Academy and MASWCD Governance 101

Jessica Bakken, District Technician, has requested to attend the BWSR Academy on November 1 - 3, 2017 at Cragun's Resort, Brainard, MN. Registration for the training is \$45.00/day. Bakken has also requested to attend the MASWCD Governance 101 training at the Airport Marriott in Bloomington, MN on September 14 – 15, 2017. Registration for the training is \$150.00. A motion was made to send Jessica Bakken to the BWSR Academy at Cragun's in Brainard, MN at a cost of \$45.00/day for registration, and to the MASWCD Governance 101 training at the Airport Marriott in Bloomington, MN at a cost of \$150.00 for registration.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Bill Thompson

The motion carried unanimously

Other New Business

Southeast Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Support Joint Powers Board Letter of Support for the Soil Health Technician Position

Adam King, District Manager, presented the supervisors with a letter of support from the Southeast Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Support Joint Powers Board requesting the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service to help support a Soil Health Technician position. This position has been grant funded in the past, but the funding source no longer exists. Since this position has been working more than 50% on the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the letter is requesting support for the position. A motion was made to sign the letter of support from the Southeast Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Support Joint Powers Board to the United States Department of

Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service requesting support for the regional Soil Health Technician.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously

There was no other new business.

Correspondence & Staff Report

Adam King, District Manager, presented the Navigating Key Land Issues training brochure from MCIT.

Supervisor Reports

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

One Watershed One Plan – Root River Watershed – Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, reported that the next Policy Committee Meeting will be held on August 28, 2017.

Governor Dayton's 25X25 Town Hall Meeting – Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, and Bill Thompson, District I Supervisor reported that there were good exercises to get input from everyone, and felt that there was more input given by citizens, than information received by citizens.

One Watershed One Plan – Cedar River Watershed – David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported attending the One Watershed One Plan – Cedar River Watershed Policy Committee Meeting on July 24, 2017, and that they decided to hire a Steve Woods from the Freshwater Society as a facilitator for a conversation on success with everyone. The next meeting will be held on September 25, 2017.

Cedar River Watershed District (CRWD) – David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported attending the CRWD meeting on Wednesday, August 16, 2017 where a public hearing was held on the 2018 levy. The levy was approved at the same amount as in 2017. Payables were discussed and the preliminary budget and 2016 audit were approved. A summary of the 2017 project levy was given. The CRWD is requesting people post pictures of the Cedar River to their Facebook page, and a winner for best picture will be chosen every week to receive a \$10.00 Chamber of Commerce gift card. There was outreach with a media event for canoe access on the Cedar River, and approved a crop damage payment for the Holtz project. Bids had gone out for some of the capital improvement projects, and came in way over estimated costs. The projects were rebid, with the second round of bids coming in very close to the estimated costs. There are additional projects still in the queue.

Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) – Bruce Freerksen, District 2 Supervisor, reported that he was unable to attend the RC&D meeting.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts – Bill Thompson, District I Supervisor, reported that there will be an area MASWCD meeting on September 20, 2017 in Austin. There were about 20 resolutions that made it through the resolution process and will be coming for supervisor approval shortly, including Thompson's resolution, and one on JAA.

Bill Thompson, District I Supervisor also presented “Thinking Outside the Farm to Avoid Regulation,” an article coming from the Iowa portion of the Cedar River Watershed.

Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP) – Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, reported that he was unable to attend the ZWP Meeting on August 10, 2017.

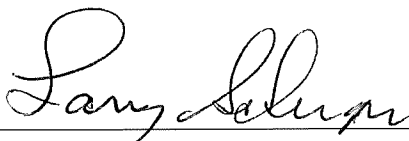
Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be Thursday, September 21, 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 12:27 A.M.

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

Approved:  Date: 9-21-17 Recorder: Adam King
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Supervisors: Bill Thompson – Bruce Freerksen– Larry Scherger – David Livingston – Glenn Hahn