



## **Minutes of the November 20, 2014 Regular Board Meeting**

Minutes of the November 20, 2014 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 Chairman Larry Scherger at 7:16 PM.

**Members Present:** Larry Scherger, Chairman  
Bill Thompson, Vice-chairman  
David Livingston, Secretary  
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer (in at 8:40)  
Don Hesar, PR&I

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Adam King, District Manager, Dodge SWCD  
Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, NRCS  
Rodney Peterson, Dodge County District 3 Commissioner  
Dean Schrandt, Water Program Manager, Dodge County

**Approval of Meeting Agenda** – There were no additions to the agenda. A motion was made to approve the November 20, 2014 meeting agenda as presented.

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

**Approval of the October 16, 2014 Board Meeting Minutes** – There were no revisions to the October 16, 2014 board minutes. A motion was made to approve the October 16, 2014 regular board meeting minutes as presented.

Motion: Dave Livingston  
Seconded: Don Hesar  
The motion carried unanimously.

## **Agency Reports**

### **District Conservationist's Report**

Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist, NRCS, reported that they are working on CSP contracts with five out of ten landowners deciding to move forward. There are 130 total in the southeast area, and the program is going to be changing. End of the year employee assessments and trainings and updating Individual Development Plans (IDPs) are being planned. The EQIP signup is continuous, but deadlines for the year are approaching. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) and University of Minnesota Extension are putting on farmbill informational meetings, with one in most

counties in Minnesota. The Dodge County FSA/Extension meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10. As of December 1, 2014, the NRCS is to provide a receipt to any producer that asks for one for purposes of recording the interaction with the producer.

### **County Commissioner's Report**

Rodney Peterson, Dodge County District 3 Commissioner, reported that Dodge County is working on the new administration building and expect to be in the building sometime late spring/early summer. Preliminary tax statements went out with the proposed tax rate of 12%. Dodge County Commissioners would like to bring the proposed levy down for the official budget. The Association of Minnesota Counties annual conference is December 7-9 in St. Cloud.

### **County Water Plan Report**

Dean Schrandt, Water Program Manager, Dodge County, reported going to the Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP) Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting and will be meeting with Justin Watkins about the watershed restoration plan. The proposed 2015 Dodge County Water Plan Contract is entering its fourth year and the proposed contract is to keep the total amount of the contract at \$25,000, with \$5,000 set aside for representation on the Wetland Conservation Act's Technical Evaluation Panel. One change in the proposed contract for 2015 is the hourly rate is increasing from \$35/hour to \$40/hour. Because of staffing turnover and shifts in responsibilities, the Dodge SWCD will not use all of the 2014 Dodge County Water Plan Contract dollars, but expect more hours to be used in 2015. Ryan Thesing, Feedlot Officer, Dodge County, has accepted another position and will no longer be employed with Dodge County. The soil and water lesson in local schools is being handed back over to the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District. Dodge County will still help out, but the SWCD will be taking the lead. The One Watershed One Plan for the Root River Watershed Memorandum of Agreement will be presented to the Dodge County Commissioners at the December 11, 2014 meeting. Dean and Adam had looked at the conservation project on Bruce Wolf's property and expressed interest in installing more of these types of projects.

Glen Hahn entered at 8:40 p.m.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **2015 Wage Scales/Hourly Rates/Employee Handbook Update**

Adam King, District Manager, presented a draft employee handbook that includes the 2015 wage scales. After review of the proposed handbook, several changes were made. Adam King will make the changes and seek approval and adoption of the new employee handbook at the December board meeting.

#### **Community Education**

Bill Thompson, District 3 Supervisor, reported that he is still looking into the Community Education Program through Kasson-Mantorville. Adam King asked if the board was interested in having the soil and water lesson continued in local schools. The board expressed that they would like the lessons to continue, and look into getting into the Ag classes for the 6<sup>th</sup> graders and potentially the high schools environmental science classes. .

### **Blue Thumb/Raingarden Update**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the board of what the Blue Thumb organization does and the benefits of becoming a Blue Thumb partner. Adam King indicated that many SWCDs and watershed districts across Minnesota are Blue Thumb partners, and they accept new partners in December. The cost of becoming a Blue Thumb partner in 2014 was \$500 or 10 volunteer hours per year, but changes are anticipated in the Blue Thumb program in the next year and costs may be going up. Adam King said he would look into it and bring back more information for the next board meeting.

**Approval of the Treasurer's Financial Statements and New Bill Payments** – Glenn Hahn discussed and reviewed cash reserves, net assets, and expenditures. The district had received drill charges, and payment from MAWRC. Two bills were added to the aging summary. A motion was made to approve the October 2014 treasurer's financial statements as presented and to pay all presented bills totaling \$3,394.93.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Bill Thompson

The motion carried unanimously.

### **New Business**

#### **One Watershed One Plan for the Root River Watershed Memorandum of Agreement**

Adam King, District Manager, presented the One Watershed One Plan for the Root River Watershed Memorandum of Agreement. A motion was made to approve and sign the One Watershed One Plan for the Root River Watershed Memorandum of Agreement.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously

#### **2015 Dodge County Water Plan Contract**

A motion was made to approve the 2015 Dodge County Water Plan Contract as presented by Dean Schrandt, Water Program Manager, Dodge County, in the County Water Plan Report.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Bill Thompson

The motion carried unanimously

#### **Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees (MACDE) Dues**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the board that membership dues for the MACDE were \$20.00 per employee, totaling \$60.00 for the office. A motion was made to pay the MACDE membership dues for the three employees totaling \$60.00.

Motion: Dave Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously

#### **FY 2015 Conservation Cost-Share Technical Assistance Option**

Adam King, District Manager, presented an option for all Conservation Cost-Share funds from the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) could be used for technical assistance, and to seek direction from the board on whether to go with the technical assistance option or provide landowners financial assistance for conservation projects. Adam King expressed that the technical

assistance option would provide opportunities for staff to work on federally funded EQIP projects or locally funded conservation projects, but could be used to provide financial assistance to landowners whose projects were not locally funded or funded through EQIP. The board expressed that while providing financial assistance for projects not funded through EQIP is nice, the budget depends on these funds for staff time to provide technical assistance on conservation projects. Adam King will provide the technical assistance option contract to sign for the next board meeting.

### **Correspondence**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the board that he has been finishing a newsletter and is receiving quotes from printers.

Don Heser, District 2 Supervisor, shared the Zumbro Watershed Partnership newspaper article by Kevin Strauss that was in the Dodge County Independent newspaper.

### **Meeting Reports**

Zumbro Watershed Partnership – Bill Thompson, District 3 Supervisor, and Adam King, District Manager, attended the November 13, 2014 ZWP Meeting and reported the following meeting items:

- The ZWP is planning their H3: Healthy Lands, Healthy Waters, Healthy Communities workshop for 2015.
- Kevin Strauss is writing articles and sending them to local newspapers monthly. He would like to know what newspapers have published his articles.
- The ZWP received a letter from a Minnesota conservation group to send to Senator Al Franken about the “Waters of the U.S.” The ZWP board voted to not sign or send the letter saying they needed to look into the issue. Adam King looked into what the NACD has sent to the EPA saying that it doesn’t support any measure that would expand jurisdictional “Waters of the U.S.” citing concerns over tributaries, adjacency, other waters, and significant nexus.

Cedar River Watershed District – David Livingston, District 4 Supervisor, and Adam King, District Manager, attended The November 19, 2014 meeting of the Cedar River Watershed District Board and reported on the following meeting items:

- The board looked into changing the CRP incentive for buffer strips for 2015. The decision was tabled until the next meeting.
- The Dobbins Creek projects are starting
- The Ault/Penkava project is complete
- The CRWD has approved to spend up to \$17,000 for a Capital Improvement Plan that will work with the City of Austin’s Vision 2020 plan. With the Capital Improvement Plan in place, the Hormel Foundation would be willing to provide up to 50% cost-share funding for 10-20 projects. That funding could be used as match for the tax levy, Clean Water Fund Grants, or bonding. The foundation could also provide funding for a full time employee that would increase capacity of the CRWD. The Hormel Foundation providing 100% the first year, 75% the second year, and 50% the third and fourth years. The Capital Improvement Plan should be completed by January.

Resource Conservation & Development – The RC&D will have a meeting on November 24, 2014.

Dodge County Feedlot Committee – Glenn Hahn, District 5 Supervisor, reported the Dodge County Feedlot Committee is starting over with the Masching recommendations. They will review the project carefully and make sure everything is done correctly.

### **Managers' Report**

Adam King, District Manager, reported that Tom Johnston is working on conservation projects, and has attended ditch meetings, while Blaine Delzer has been working hard on feedlots and spending time in Mower County. Adam King and Blaine Delzer attended the BWSR Academy last month and Adam King is planning on attending the MASWCD convention next month. Adam King has been working on the employee handbook updates and finishing the newsletter.

### **Other New Business**

Adam King, District Manager, has talked with Deb of Accountants Plus, and she has asked to submit for postage as she is the one that sends out the board packets and paychecks. The board expressed interest in receiving some handouts emailed, cutting down on the amount that must be mailed. A motion was made to allow for Accountants Plus to charge for postage.

Motion: Bill Thompson

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously

### **Agenda Items for the Next Meeting**

Bill Thompson, District 3 Supervisor, would like to discuss meeting frequency and who will be attending those meetings at the next board meeting.

### **Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chairman Larry Scherger asked for a motion for adjournment at 12:07 p.m.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

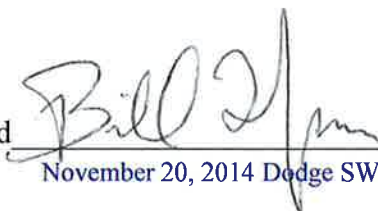
Seconded: Dave Livingston

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, December 18, 2014 at 7:15 p.m. in the conference room of the USDA Service Center building, 916 2<sup>nd</sup> St. SE, Dodge Center, Minnesota.

Approved



Date 1-15-2015 Recorder: Adam King

November 20, 2014 Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting minutes

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**Supervisors: Bill Thompson – Don Hesel – Larry Scherger – David Livingston – Glenn Hahn**

