



Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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Dodge Center, Minnesota 55927

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Minutes of the July 18, 2023

Dodge Soil & Water Conservation District

Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Larry Scherger, Board Chair, at 7:20 PM.

Members Present: Larry Scherger, Chair
Rick Alberts, Vice-Chair
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer
David Livingston, Secretary
Bruce Freerksen, PR&I (in at 7:26 PM)

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Adam King, District Manager, Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District; Samantha Rojo, Administrative Professional, Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District, Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); Beth Hanggi, Fahning and Associates; Nancy Peterson, Dodge County Resident.

Approval of Meeting Agenda: Additions to the July 18, 2023 board meeting agenda include District Cost-Share Contract 2023-03 (West) Encumbrance, District Cost-Share Contract 2023WAGZ-DC-04 (Anita Madery Irr Trust) Amendment, and District Cost-Share Contract 2023WAGZ-DC-04 (Anita Madery Irr Trust) Payment. A motion was made to approve the July 18, 2023 meeting agenda, as amended.
Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Glenn Hahn
The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the June 20, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes: The supervisors discussed the June 20, 2023 board meeting minutes. There were no additions or corrections. A motion was made to approve the June 20, 2023 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District's Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes, as presented.
Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Glenn Hahn
The motion carried unanimously.

Bruce Freerksen entered the meeting at 7:26 PM.

Partner Agency Reports

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Report

David Copeland, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, was unable to attend the meeting.

Natural Resource Conservation Service Report

Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), reported that EQIP signup deadline will be the first week in October this year, and there is a fair amount of interest in EQIP currently which could result in competitive applications. Bird noted that construction on projects is moving along with waterways and basins being installed, and notified the supervisors of the District Conservationist position open in Austin. Bird reported attending the recent field day hosted by the University of Minnesota Extension on controlling volunteer corn and soybeans, and said it was a great event.

Dodge County Commissioner's Report

John Allen, Dodge County District I Commissioner, was unable to attend the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Approval of the Treasurer's Financial Statements, Payment of New Bills

Glenn Hahn, Treasurer, presented the June 2023 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering what is in our checking and savings, Revenues of \$55,097.56, Expenditures of \$22,371.10, the General Ledger and Aging Summary, with a payables total of \$15,613.45. The supervisors discussed the treasurer's report. A motion was made to approve the June 2023 Treasurer's Report and bills on the Aging Summary, for a payables total of \$15,613.45.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota Coverage

The Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District has received the Blue Cross Blue Shield Renewal Notice for 2024 (fiscal year September 01, 2023 – August 31, 2024). Adam King, District Manager, explained that the 2024 renewal for BlueAccess HSA Silver Plan 642 (current plan) reflects a significant increase in the deductible; from \$3,850 to \$4,400, a 12.5% increase. If renewed, the plan premium amount would decrease, however, from \$2,418.07/month to \$2,373.15/month, a 1.2% decrease. This plan still has the option for a Health Savings Account (HSA), in which the district has contributed \$1,000 annually per employee in the past.

King informed the supervisors that staff are looking at a new plan to help bring the deductible back to a reasonable amount; the BlueAccess HSA Gold \$3500 (\$7000) Plan 690 would have a total premium of \$2,513.75/month, resulting in a 4% increase (\$95.59/month) from the current plan and cost. King added that the deductible would be 26% lower than the renewing Plan 642, including that Plan 690 also has the option for HSA contributions.

Dental insurance is also through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, and the current dental plan (Freedom Enhanced with \$1,500 Max) reflects no changes, other than an approximate 13% decrease in the premium; from \$206.40/month to \$182.00/month.

The supervisors discussed the dental plan renewal and compared the current and proposed health plans. A motion was made to change the health plan for the 23-24 fiscal year to the BlueAccess HSA Gold \$3500 (\$7000) Plan 690 through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, and to renew the current dental insurance plan as-is (Freedom Enhanced with \$1,500 Max).

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was also made to increase the district's Health Savings Account contribution for staff HSA accounts, from \$1,000 annually to \$2,500 annually per staff member enrolled in the group health plan.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

2024 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Preliminary Budget

Adam King, District Manager, presented the 2024 Dodge SWCD Preliminary Budget and recommendations from the Finance Committee. King explained that the budget includes the Dodge County allocation request in the amount of \$150,000, which the district would use to put funds into project and salary reserves. King also noted the change in capacity funding coming through SWCD Aid, including when the FY24 payments are to be received, and the additional 2 payments for FY25 SWCD Aid. The supervisors discussed the preliminary budget. A motion was made to approve the 2024 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Preliminary Budget and submitting of the budget to the Dodge County Commissioners.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Larry Scherger

The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Dodge SWCD Aid Resolution 01-2023

Adam King, District Manager, presented Resolution 01-2023 to Adopt Guidelines on Use of FY2024 SWCD Aid Payments which sets forth the distribution appropriation and amount awarded to the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District (\$158,897.50) via SWCD Aid, including the duties and services to be carried out by the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District as outlined in Minnesota Statute 103C. A motion was made to approve Larry Scherger, Board Chair, to sign and certify Resolution 01-2023 for the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

2024 ESRI Renewal Quotation

Adam King, District Manager, explained that ESRI provides the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software, and that Dodge SWCD has already purchased two GIS licenses from ESRI. King explained that to continue with GIS support and upgrades, ESRI charges \$1,667.00 per year, for the first license and \$1,334.00 for the second, totaling \$3,123.97 with taxes. King added that if Dodge SWCD chooses not to continue with support and upgrades, and later decide to activate receiving support and upgrades, ESRI will back-charge for every year that was missed. A motion was made to approve renewing the ESRI support / upgrades for 2024 and to pay the total amount due via check after a final invoice is issued.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Server and Computer Upgrade Proposal

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that the district server along with two staff computers were purchased in 2017, and two other staff computers were purchased in 2016 and 2014, adding that, generally, computers and servers should be replaced approximately every five years. King's computer is currently nine years old, and Jessica Klingfus, District Technician, has a PC that is six years old. King reports that issues have been arising with the computers, including not having current connections (HDMI), and computers not starting correctly. King relays that although there have been no problems with the server, it is something that should be replaced prior to issues becoming a problem. King provided a network proposal quotation for a new server and new computers from TechRight Services, our IT support contractor, in the amount of \$9,005.00. The supervisors would like King to investigate the HP brand computer options in the quote further, and table the purchase of a server and/or new computers until more info is obtained.

Employee/Staff Development

Adam King, District Manager, notified the supervisors he has approached the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT) about assisting the district with employee / staff development, as the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District has never conducted any. King relayed that MCIT uses Sand Creek, an AllOne Health Company, as a part of their Employee Assistance Program, and he has been in contact with Susan Herreid Ph.D, CEAP, to discuss the staff development training services that she provides. King explained the employee / staff development would provide the district an opportunity to

identify strengths and weaknesses within the office and staff, and find action items that can be taken to help improve the overall office performance strengthen staff's professional relationships. The development training would include bringing in Herreid to facilitate individual interviews with each of the staff to discover what is working well and ways that the office can be improved, then a facilitated joint discussion with all staff and Ms. Herreid to review feedback received from the individual interviews, and present action items that can be taken. King noted that direct services are billed at \$295.00/hr., with planning/preparation and documentation services are billed and \$100.00/hr., and travel is billed at \$75.00/hr. For the district, with 4 individual remote interviews, an in-person facilitated meeting, meeting prep., and travel, King noted the total quote of \$3,770.00. A motion was made to approve moving forward with the employee / staff development quote of \$3,770.00 provided by Susan Herreid Ph.D, CEAP of Sand Creek.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Cell Phone Policy

Adam King, District Manager, relayed to the supervisors that staff have brought forward concerns about giving out their personal cell phone numbers to some landowners and contractors, as well as, concerns with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MN GDPR) as it relates to public data stored on personal devices. King explained that with those concerns, staff are recommending the cell phone policy be updated to include that the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District provide a cell phone / plan to employees that routinely work in the field with contractors and/or landowners. King informed the supervisors that a quote has been requested from Verizon to add a cell phone and data onto the current plan, and the supervisors agreed that until a quote is obtained, the discussion will be tabled.

Drinking Water Protection in the Karst Region Sub-agreement between Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District and Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

Adam King, District Manager, presented the Sub-agreement between the Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for the FY23 Drinking Water Protection in the Karst Region grant. King explained the grant total is \$106,500, with \$20,000 dedicated to Well Sealing Cost-Share, \$6,500 for Well sealing technical assistance, \$20,000.00 dedicated to pre-plant nitrogen incentive payments, and \$60,000 dedicated to side dress nitrogen BMP incentives. King added that all funding is available on a first come first served basis. A motion was made to approve Larry Scherger, Board Chair, to sign and certify the Sub-agreement between the Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District and the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for the FY23 Drinking Water Protection in the Karst Region grant.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

Other New Business

District Cost-Share Contract 2023-03 (West) Encumbrance

Bryan West of Hayfield, MN has requested cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for the installation of a 412-Grassed Waterway to be installed in Section 17 of Vernon Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$4,215.75, and he is requesting to encumber 75%, not to exceed \$3,161.81. A motion was made to approve the encumbrance of cost-share contract 2023-03 for Bryan West to install a 412-Grassed Waterway at 75% of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$3,161.81 using District Cost-Share funds.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2023WAGZ-DC-04 (Anita Madery Irr Trust) Amendment

Anita Madery Irr Trust has requested an amendment to the Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2023WAGZ-DC-04. The estimated cost of the practice was \$6,857.00 with Federal funding potentially covering \$2,314.00, and watershed-based implementation funding from the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) covering the additional 56%, for a combined total of 90% of total project costs. The final cost of the project was \$6,516.40, however, due to reduced quantities, federal funds were only able to cover \$1,802.04 resulting in 87% of the total project costs being covered. Because of this,

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Anita Madero Irr Trust is requesting to encumber an additional \$205.42, to bring the cost-share amount up to \$4,062.72, covering 90% of the total eligible project costs. A motion was made for the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District to approve the amendment of Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2023WAGZ-DC-04 for the Anita Madero Irr Trust, to include an additional \$205.42, bringing the total encumbered amount from the WAGZ Watershed Based Implementation Funding to \$4,062.72, and total financial assistance to 90% when combined with federal funds.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2023WAGZ-DC-04 (Anita Madero Irr Trust) Payment

The Anita Madero Irr Trust has requested payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2023WAGZ-DC-04 for the installation of a 638-Water & Sediment Control Basin in Section 14 of Canisteo Township. Anita Madero Irr Trust is authorized to encumber \$4,062.72; the total cost for practice installation was \$6,516.40, therefore Anita Madero Irr Trust is requesting 62% of the total project cost, and 90% when combined with federal funds, not to exceed \$4,062.72. A motion was made to approve payment of Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2023WAGZ-DC-04 for the installation of a 638-Water & Sediment Control Basin in Section 14 of Canisteo Township at 62% of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$4,062.72 using watershed-based implementation funding from the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) to the Anita Madero Irr. Trust.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence & Staff Report

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors about the USDA Farm Service Agency's Emergency Haying and Grazing of CRP Acres program, and shared a Coverage Document Change provided from the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT) regarding a clause about PFAS chemical issues. King also relayed that he has been working on the 2024 preliminary budget and Jessica Klingfus, District Technician, has been busy out in the field. Samantha Rojo, Administrative Professional, reports the district's presence at the county fair went well, and that she has been working on the quarterly payroll filings.

Supervisor Reports

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, informed the supervisors that he attended the finance committee meeting at the Dodge SWCD office last month.

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, shared the Cedar River Watershed District's annual newsletter with the supervisors. Livingston reported attending the Cedar River Watershed District meeting on June 21st and the MASWCD SE Area 7 Meeting in Stewartville on June 27th where 3 of the 5 resolutions presented were passed to the next step.

Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor

Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor, did not provide a report.

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, attended the recent Joint Powers Board meeting where new chair, Bill Rowenkamp of Winona, was appointed. Scherger added that the budget, current TSA staff workload, annual district dues, and grants currently in progress were discussed. Scherger also reported that the lease space was brought up as it will be needing renewal soon.

Rick Alberts, District I Supervisor

Rick Alberts, District I Supervisor, did not provide a report.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be held Tuesday, August 15th, 2023 at 7:15 p.m. in the conference room of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center, 916 2nd Street SE, Dodge Center, MN.

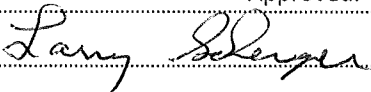
Adjournment

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

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	8-15-23	Samantha Rojo