



# Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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## Minutes of the April 16, 2024

### Dodge Soil & Water Conservation District

#### Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting

*The meeting was called to order by Larry Scherger, Board Chair, at 7:16 P.M.*

**Members Present:** Larry Scherger, Chair  
Rick Alberts, Vice-Chair  
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer  
David Livingston, Secretary

**Members Absent:** Bruce Freerksen, PR&I

**Others Present:** Adam King, District Manager, Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District; Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda:** Additions to the April 16, 2024 board meeting agenda include the BWSR Soil Health Staffing Grant Agreement under Other New Business. A motion was made to approve the April 16, 2024 meeting agenda, as revised.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the Mar. 19, 2024** The supervisors discussed the March 19, 2024 board meeting minutes.

**Board Meeting Minutes:** Corrections include replacing “members” with “officers” under Glenn Hahn’s Supervisor Report on page 5. A motion was made to approve the March 19, 2024 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District’s Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes, as corrected.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

### Partner Agency Reports

#### **Natural Resource Conservation Service Report**

Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), reported that staff are working on the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) with status reviews completed and are now looking at specific practices. Bird reported that there are thirteen Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) projects in Dodge County, that there is an updated review process this year, and four projects have been signed off on so far. Bird is still assisting with the workload in

Steele County until June, with Soil Conservationist positions being advertised for Steele and Freeborn Counties. Pheasants Forever has an intern that will be housed in the Dodge Center Service Center that will be starting May 15, 2024 and working through August. The intern will mostly be working on grassland and habitat practices. The USDA – NRCS has funded a “Conservation Through Retail” grant for Truterra / Land O’ Lakes that will cover multiple counties in Minnesota including Dodge, Mower, Freeborn, Steele, and Rice. The grant partners with cooperatives including Central Farm Service (CFS), and Nexus and they will be hiring Conservation Agronomist positions to serve the area.

### **Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Report**

Jill Sackett Eberhart, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, was unable to attend the meeting.

### **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, Treasure, presented the March 2024 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering account balances, revenues of \$32,623.98, expenditures of \$18,002.20, the general ledger, and aging summary with a payables total of \$923.81. The supervisors discussed the treasurer’s report, including the KMTelecom invoice which has increased with the addition of fiberoptic internet. A motion was made to pay the KMTelecom monthly invoices at the increased rate of \$109.99 as they are received.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made to approve the March 2024 Treasurer’s Report, and pay bills on the aging summary for a payables total of \$923.81.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

The supervisors continued to discuss Certificates of Deposit (CD) rates. King provided information on CDs at the two approved financial institutions. A motion was made to authorize \$100,000 from the Heritage Bank account to be moved into a Certificate of Deposit for no more than six months at an interest rate of no less than five percent.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **Personnel Committee Recommendations**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that the he attempted to set up interviews with the top five candidates for the Administrative Professional position. An additional candidate applied that ranked highly, and the Personnel Committee asked for an interview. Three of the candidates never responded, and interviews were set up with the other three candidates. Two candidates withdrew prior to their interview, and the Personnel Committee conducted one interview. It was felt that the candidate was well qualified and well suited

for the position, which King offered to the candidate. The candidate declined, stating she did not want to be in a position that was mostly accounting or bookkeeping.

The Personnel Committee met again to discuss the position. The Personnel Committee is recommending removing the Administrative Professional B31 grade from the wage scale making all positions under the District Manager a B23 grade, and reposting the position.

The Personnel Committee also discussed receiving the BWSR Soil Health Staffing grant to build soil health capacity within the district. The Personnel Committee reviewed the position description and wage scale for the new Soil Health Conservation Technician position. The Personnel Committee is recommending posting for a Soil Health Conservation Technician position.

A budget for promoting the positions was discussed at the Personnel Committee meeting. This would allow the district to be able to sponsor positions on job websites, and promote the postings elsewhere. The Personnel Committee is recommending a budget of \$250.00 per position for advertising the position postings.

A motion was made to approve posting for an Administrative Professional position, and posting for a Soil Health Conservation Technician position, with both positions at a B23 Grade and closing on Monday, May 06, 2024, with a budget of \$250.00 per posting for promoting the postings.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Equipment Purchase**

Adam King, District Manager, presented information on drones from DJI. The supervisors discussed the different drones, their options, and what other districts have purchased in the past and their experience with them. A motion was made to approve the purchase of a DJI Mini 4 Pro – Fly More Combo.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

### **New Business**

#### **Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-04 (Edgar) Encumbrance**

Larry Edgar of Kasson, MN is requesting cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 412 – Grassed Waterway project in Section 16 of Canisteo Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$26,840.00, and is requesting to encumber up to 90%, not to exceed \$24,606.00. A motion was made to approve and encumber Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-04 for Larry Edgar to install a Grassed Waterway in Section 16 of Canisteo Township at 90% of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$24,606.00.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-08 (Toquam) Encumbrance**

Brennen Toquam of Claremont, MN is requesting cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 412 – Grassed Waterway project in Section 27 of Claremont Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$5,025.00, and is requesting to encumber up to 13%, not to exceed \$674.50, with 3 acres of pre-construction cover at \$150 per acre for an additional \$450.00 and a total encumbrance of \$1,574.50. A

motion was made to approve and encumber Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-08 for Brennen Toquam to install a Grassed Waterway in Section 27 of Claremont Township at 13% of the total cost of the project plus pre-construction cover, not to exceed a total of \$1,574.50.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-09 (Balzum) Encumbrance**

Muriel Ann Balzum Revocable Living Trust of Dodge Center, MN is requesting cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 412 – Grassed Waterway project in Section 12 of Wasioja Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$39,604.40, and is requesting to encumber up to 18%, not to exceed \$7,612.96, with 2 acres of pre-construction cover at \$150 per acre for an additional \$300, and a total encumbrance of \$7,612.96. A motion was made to approve and encumber Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-09 for Muriel Ann Balzum Revocable Living Trust to install a Grassed Waterway in Section 12 of Wasioja Township at 18% of the total cost of the project plus pre-construction cover, not to exceed \$7,6912.96.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-10 (Edgar) Encumbrance**

Dennis Edgar of Kasson, MN is requesting cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 412 – Grassed Waterway project in Section 16 of Canisteo Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$4,240.50, and is requesting to encumber up to 90%, not to exceed \$3,816.45 with 1 acre of pre-construction cover at \$150 per acre for an additional \$150, and a total encumbrance of \$3,966.45. A motion was made to approve and encumber Zumbro Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-10 for Dennis Edgar to install a Grassed Waterway in Section 16 of Canisteo Township at 90% of the total cost of the project plus pre-construction cover, not to exceed \$3,966.45.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-02 (Schmeling) Encumbrance**

Lynn Schmeling of Blooming Prairie, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 25 of Westfield Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$50/acre/year with a 15-year contract. Schmeling is enrolling 9.93 acres into the program, with a total incentive of \$7,447.50. A motion was made to approve and encumber Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-02 for Lynn Schmeling to install a Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) in Section 25 of Westfield Township at for an incentive of \$50/acre/year for 15 years totaling \$7,447.50.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-03 (Klocke Et. Al. T362) Encumbrance**

The Klocke Brothers of Blooming Prairie, MN are requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 27/28 of

Westfield. The incentive payment for this practice is \$50/acre/year with a 15-year contract. The Kloches are enrolling 31.69 acres into the program, with a total incentive of \$23,767.50. A motion was made to approve and encumber Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-03 for Duane Klocke Et. Al. to install a Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) in Section 27/28 of Westfield Township at for an incentive of \$50/acre/year for 15 years totaling \$23,767.50.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

Abstain: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried.

#### **Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-04 (Klocke Et. Al. T588) Encumbrance**

The Klocke Brothers of Blooming Prairie, MN are requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 24 of Westfield Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$50/acre/year with a 15-year contract. The Kloches are enrolling 6.57 acres into the program, with a total incentive of \$4,927.50. A motion was made to approve and encumber Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-04 for Duane Klocke Et. Al. to install a Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) in Section 24 of Westfield Township at for an incentive of \$50/acre/year for 15 years totaling \$4,927.50.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

Abstain: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried.

#### **Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-05 (Klocke Et. Al. T588) Encumbrance**

The Klocke Brothers of Blooming Prairie, MN are requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed for a 327 – Conservation Cover, Prairie Strips, project in Section 24 of Westfield Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$80/acre/year with a 15-year contract. The Kloches are enrolling 6.57 acres into the program, with a total incentive of \$14,628.00. A motion was made to approve and encumber Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-05 for Duane Klocke Et. Al. to install Conservation Cover, Prairie Strips in Section 24 of Westfield Township at for an incentive of \$80/acre/year for 15 years totaling \$14,628.00.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

Abstain: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried.

#### **Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-06 (Klocke T589) Encumbrance**

Duane Klocke of Blooming Prairie, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 24 of Westfield Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$50/acre/year with a 15-year contract. Klocke is enrolling 6.18 acres into the program, with a total incentive of \$4,635.00. A motion was made to approve and encumber Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-06 for Duane Klocke to install a Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) in Section 24 of Westfield Township at for an incentive of \$50/acre/year for 15 years totaling \$4,635.50.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

Abstain: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried.

## **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Local Work Group (LWG) Meeting**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that the USDA – NRCS LWG is planned for Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at the Blooming Prairie City Hall / Fire Station starting at 9:00 am. The LWG will again be combined with Dodge, Freeborn, Mower, and Steele Counties.

## **Independent Contractor Agreement Between the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District and Mark Moenning for 2024**

Adam King, District Manager, presented the Independent Contractor Agreement between the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District and Mark Moenning. King informed the Supervisors that this is the same agreement previously signed in previous year with the Prevailing Wage amount updated to \$71.22. The Supervisors discussed the contract. A motion was made to approve the 2024 Independent Contractor Agreement between the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District and Mark Moenning.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

## **Other New Business**

### **Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Soil Health Staffing Grant Agreement**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources has awarded the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District a FY24 BWSR Dodge Soil Health Staffing grant in the amount of \$382,500.00, and the grant agreement is available for approval. King explained that the majority of the grant will be used to fund the new Soil Health Conservation Technician position, with a small amount available for administration and equipment/office supplies costs. A motion was made to authorize Adam King, District Manager to sign and submit the grant agreement for the FY24 BWSR Dodge Soil Health Staffing Grant totaling \$382,500.00.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

## **Correspondence & Staff Report**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that he has been working with the Personnel Committee on hiring, along with watershed meetings, and that Jessica Klingfus has been busy in the field surveying and designing conservation projects.

## **Supervisor Reports**

### **Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor**

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, reported attending the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) meeting on March 27, 2024 at Oxbow Park put on by Pheasants Forever.

### **David Livingston, District IV Supervisor**

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported attending the Cedar River Watershed District (CRWD) board meeting on March 20, 2024 where they discussed East Side Lake, and the 15% flood threat reduction that it provides. The whitewater feasibility study is complete and is proposing 2-foot falls. A design is in possess and should be completed in 2024 with permitting to begin in 2025. The City of Austin has hired a new position to

coordinate the whitewater project. Staff continue to work on the Orchard Creek access project, and working out ownership. Staff have also been working on Canoemobile events.

**Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor**

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, did not provide a report.

**Rick Albers, District I Supervisor**

Rick Albers, 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, May 21, 2024 at 7:15 p.m. in the conference room of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center, 916 2<sup>nd</sup> Street SE, Dodge Center, MN.

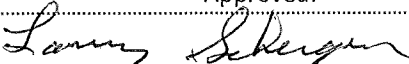
**Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Larry Scherger, Chair, called for a motion for adjournment at 10:46 P.M.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Rick Albers

The motion carried unanimously.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	3-21-24	Adam King

April 19, 2024 Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

