



Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday, January 16, 2019

Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, January 19, 2019 in the Conference Room of the USDA Ag Center Building located at 809 8th Street SE, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Those present were Chairman Tony Beck, Eugene Pavelko, Jerome Flottemesch, Travis Schauer and Kathy Stenger. Staff members include District Administrator Peter Mead, Office Manager Jen Wentz and NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz. County Commissioner Barry Nelson was also in attendance.

Call to Order

Chairman Beck called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda Items

(December 19, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes; Employee Program Reports)

Motion (Stenger, Flottemesch) to approve the January Agenda, December Meeting Minutes and Employee Reports. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Financial Reports

Treasurers Report and Bills for Approval

Motion (Flottemesch, Schauer) to approve the December Treasurers Report and pay the list of bills for January. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Administrator's Report

Attended a TSA Host Managers meeting in Waite Park.

Will attend the TSA managers meeting tomorrow in Thief River Falls.

BRRWD 1W1P public meeting attendance with Jerome Flottemesch. Next step is to prioritize the 30+ resource issues identified earlier.

Phil attended the Crow Wing Healthy Waters meeting. The Nature Conservancy is the lead on this project.

Attended the Red Eye 1W1P steering committee meeting.

Working to integrate TSA roles with 1W1P work happening throughout the TSA, most specifically utilizing GIS Staff and existing data.

Jim Hest is retiring in July, and succession planning is under way. Much time has been devoted to updating work orders and invoicing work performed dating back to 2012, as well as ensuring existing jobs move forward without delay.

Jeff Norby is retiring at the end of February and is willing to assist with drafting and design as needed during the summer months.

With the help of Wes Drake and Nicole Wallace, we now have an engineering projects calculating tool that will make WSCBs and Grade Stabilizations easier to project cost up front to limit pre-project workloads. Similar to the one we use currently for the Shoreland Program.

Supervisor Business

Restate Board and Committee Appointments

Tony Beck will remain Board Chairman for calendar year 2019.

Travis Schauer will remain Vice Chairman for calendar year 2019.

Gene Pavelko will remain Secretary for calendar year 2019.

Kathy Stenger will remain Treasurer for calendar year 2019.

Jerome Flottesmesch will remain Board member for calendar year 2019.

Flottesmesch and Stenger will remain as personnel committee members.

Pavelko and Schauer will remain as budget committee members. Kathy Stenger, as board Treasurer, is considered an ex officio member of this committee.

Recognition of newly (re)elected officials - Flottesmesch and Pavelko were recently sworn in to their Soil & Water board positions.

Recognition of Authorized Representative(s) & Signature Authority - Mead, Wentz and Clem as authorized reps or with signature authority. Stenger also retains authority with her position of Treasurer.

Recognition of Official Financial Institution - We will remain with Bremer Bank for our financial institution.

Recognition of Official News Publication - DL Tribune will remain the official newspaper for all publications and legal notices.

Review & Approval of Compensated Absences – Jen reported 2018 year-end figures to the board for all employee annual, sick and compensatory benefits.

TSA board delegate has been appointed to Jerry Flottesmesch. All other members will be alternates.

Flottesmesch will remain on the policy committee for Buffalo Red 1W1P.

Beck will remain on the policy committee for Red Eye 1W1P.

Schauer will remain on the policy committee for Wild Rice 1W1P.

Motion (Stenger, Flottesmesch) to approve the above appointments. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

2019 Operational Budget

Mead reviewed any Cost & Revenue Adjustments, including staffing changes, new grants and agreements, and adjustments based on 2018 year-end actuals.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Schauer) to approve the updated budget for 2019.

Supervisor and Employee Expense Policies

2019 Mileage Rates Expense and 2019 Travel Policy and Per Diem Rates. Jen reviewed the current rates for 2019 from the adopted federal rate system.

Reimbursement Policy. Employees are currently and Supervisors will begin to use the GSA Travel Per Diem Rates provided that State Auditor allows elected officials to do so.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Schauer) to approve GSA Travel Rates with the exception of approval by the Office of the State Auditor.

Open Forum

Jerome Flottesch will be stepping down from his Soil & Water board position in two years. He is involved in many committees and other board appointed positions such as the TSA. Gene Pavelko has decided to assist with the TSA need and will begin attending all TSA meetings. Administration will inform Gene of our next TSA meeting.

Financial Assistance Policies

Mead reviewed the main points of each policy and noted any additions or changes for 2019

State Cost Share Fund Policy –

Local Rates: Prior to receiving any applications from land occupiers, district boards may set different cost share rates up to the maximum identified in BWSR policy. These rates are as follow:

Ag Waste Systems: Landowners are eligible for up to \$3500.00 cost-sharing of an engineer's preparation of a certified system, not to exceed 75% of project costs.

Field Windbreaks: Landowners are eligible for up to 75% cost-sharing of nursery stock and associated costs of planting. Current rates are available on the 2018 Tree Planting Fee Schedule.

Shoreline/Streambank Stabilization: Landowners are eligible for up to 50% cost-sharing of permitting fees, plant material, erosion control products, associated materials and labor costs. Parcels with an active shoreland violation from DNR, county or other regulatory agencies will not be eligible for cost-share assistance until coming into compliance. Steps beyond the minimum required for compliance should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Current shoreland rates are available on the 2019 Shoreland Fee Schedule.

Structural Land Management Practices: Landowners are eligible for up to 75% cost-sharing of structural land management practices such as water and sediment control basins, grassed waterways, grade stabilizations and other site appropriate approached to erosion reduction and nutrient management.

Non-state contributions. A land occupier may provide the remainder of the local share of the implementation cost through in-kind services, or non-state funds. The district board shall determine whether charges for in-kind services and materials are practical and reasonable.

Reports will change to one for all state cost-share projects and no longer be split with Shoreland projects.

Flat Rate State Cost Share Fund Policy -

Buffer Implementation

Becker County landowners and land occupiers are eligible to receive \$300.00 per acre in Cost-Share Assistance for qualifying efforts to achieve compliance with Minnesota Statutes §103F.48, commonly known as Minnesota's Buffer Law.

To qualify for cost share assistance buffers on public waters must be a continuous buffer of perennially rooted vegetation measuring a 50-foot average width, 30 foot minimum width measuring from from the top or crown of the bank, as required by Minnesota Statutes §103F.48, Subd. 3(c). Where there is no definable bank, measurement must be from the edge of the normal water level; or buffers must meet the design criteria set forth in USDA-NRCS Conservation Practice Standard 393 (Filter Strip). For public drainage systems established under chapter 103E, a 16.5-foot minimum width continuous buffer as provided in section 103E.021, subdivision 1. The buffer vegetation shall not impede future maintenance of the ditch. A Cropping history is required, which is defined as agricultural crop production for at least two of the last five years.

Remaining conditions and policies are covered in the FY 19 Buffer Implementation Policy

Cover Crops

Becker County Landowners are eligible to receive up to 150% of the FY19 / FY20 USDA NRCS EQIP program rates per acre for cover crop establishment with a minimum three year commitment. Current rates are available in the 2019 Cover Crop Program Policy.

Clean Water Legacy Cost Share Assistance Policy—

Becker County targeted Phosphorus Reduction and Lake Protection Project (Phase II): Landowners are eligible for cost-sharing of permitting fees, plant material, erosion control products, associated materials and labor costs. Eligible lakes are categorized according to phosphorus sensitivity significance, biological class & water quality conditions. Tier 1 lakes are eligible for 50% cost share, where tier 2 lakes are eligible for up to 75%. Parcels with an active shoreland violation from DNR, county or other regulatory agencies will not be eligible for cost-share assistance until coming into compliance. Steps beyond the minimum required for compliance should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Eligible Lakes and percentage rates are listed in the attached table. Current shoreland fees for service are available on the 2019 Shoreland Fee Schedule.

Buffalo-Red River Shallow Lakes and Mainstem Improvement Project (Phases II), Wild Rice Sediment Reduction Project, Upper Buffalo River Sediment Reduction Project, Top Down Buffalo Watershed Accelerated Implementation Project: Landowners are eligible for cost-sharing of structural and vegetative land management practices such as water and sediment control basins, grassed waterways, grade stabilizations, filter strips and other site appropriate approaches to erosion reduction and nutrient management. Landowners and producers implementing all recommended erosion control measures are eligible for up to 90% cost-share; those implementing some but not all measures are eligible for up to 75% of the cost of implementation.

Tree Planting -

Tree planting fees will be as appear below for 2019:

Machine Planting Rates & Setup

Set-up / Staking Fee.....\$150.00
Bareroot Trees.....\$0.25 per tree tree
Potted Trees.....\$1.50 per tree tree

Hand Planting Rates & Setup

Set-up / Staking Fee.....\$200.00
Bareroot Trees.....\$1.50 per tree
Potted Trees.....\$3.00 per tree

No Set up fee for plantings greater than 1,000 trees

Engineering Services -

Engineering Services will be provided at the calendar year’s Current Billable Rates, Current rate for the District Engineer is \$70.12. Engineering Technician’s current Rate is \$45.02.

Wetland Conservation Act & Shoreland Program Fees for service: No Changes for 2019

Pesticide Testing: \$25 fee to take the test for commercial exam

Motion (Pavelko, Flottesmesch) to approve the new rates for State Cost Share, Flat Rate State Cost Share, Clean Water Legacy Cost Share Assistance and Program Fee Schedules that supersede all previous rates and board motions. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Human Resources

Review and Approve Performance Appraisals: Peter has completed all performance reviews, still needs to meet with a few employees to go over and collect signatures from the supervisors.

2019 Personnel Handbook Revision Schedule: Peter has created a schedule for updating the handbook. Jen is working with other districts and MCIT about legal things that need to be included in the policy handbook that hasn't been in the past. Plan to have it ready for approval by July 2019. Will send out information according to the schedule.

Education & Outreach

Planning for 2019 Education & Outreach Events is underway, with arrangements being made so far for:

- Annual Board Retreat February 12th at Cormorant Lakes Sportsman Club
- Soil Health Roundtable March 7th
- Ag in the Classroom (TBA)
- 4th Grade Water Festival in April (TBA)
- 5th Grade Conservation Tour May 14th & May 16th at the Ike Fischer Farm
- Soil Health Field Day (TBA)
- Area 1 Soil Health Tour and Training

Clean Water Legacy Vouchers for Payment

#CWL-30-BR, Kevan Nelson, Water & Sediment Control Basins. Total projects cost \$

Motion (Pavelko, Schauer) to approve the Clean Water Legacy voucher for payment.

Adjourn

With no further business to attend, the meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

Approved: Eugene Pavelko, Becker SWCD Secretary

Date: February 20, 2019