



Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday November 20, 2019

## **Meeting Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday November 20, 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, Jerome Flottemesch, Kathleen Stenger, Travis Schauer and Eugene Pavelko. Staff members include District Administrator Peter Mead, Office Manager Deana Westberg, NRCS Soil Conservationist Travis Doeden, NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, and visitor Michelle Andresen.

Call to Order Chairman Beck called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

### **Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda Items**

(October 16, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes; Employee Program Reports)

Motion (Pavelko, Schauer) to approve the October Meeting Minutes and Employee Reports. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Mead added 2 Grants and an application for Approval to the November agenda.

Motion (Stenger, Schauer) to approve the amended agenda. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **Financial Reports**

Treasurers Report and Bills for Approval were reviewed by Mead and Westberg.

Motion (Flottemesch, Schauer) to approve the October's Treasurer's Report and the list of bills to pay for November. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **District Reports**

District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz gave an update on programs and staffing.

Musielewicz explained that the NRCS is pretty much at a stand-still on the CSP payment front. As of today, we cannot make any payments.

EQIP applications are coming in. To date, 21 new or deferred applications have been received with more anticipated as staff continues to work on initial engineering plans and landowner meetings. Appreciation was given to SWCD Engineering Techs Claire Olson & Nicole Wallace for their excellent work. None of the EQIP or SWCD engineering projects could have happened this year without them.

No word yet on the 2020 program delivery schedule. It is anticipated it will be later than usual with the farm bill rule making, etc.

Travis Doeden was introduced to the board as the new NRCS Soil Conservationist, starting his duties in Detroit Lakes on October 15th. Welcome Travis.

It appears the Team Lead position for CST 3 (Becker, Clay & Wilkin) will be opening soon. This person will supervise the NRCS staff within the Team and act as a liaison to the SWCD's, Watershed Districts, etc. These new positions require the existing office spaces to be updated. Musielewicz explained the necessary changes.

### **Administrator's Report was given by Peter Mead.**

November and the remainder of October have been remarkably busy, with construction still underway on numerous projects and "meeting season" in full swing. Mead praised District staff's ability to produce quality work, solve problems on the fly and work together so effectively.

The last month has had no shortage of local water planning. October 23<sup>rd</sup> Mead attended a Buffalo Red 1W1P Planning Committee meeting in Barnesville, on the 24<sup>th</sup> a Redeye 1W1P Advisory Committee meeting in Perham, on the 25<sup>th</sup> there was a Wild Rice 1W1P Steering Committee conference call, November 6<sup>th</sup> held a Wild Rice 1W1P Advisory Committee meeting in Ada, followed by a Policy Committee meeting where board action was taken on the advisory and steering committee recommendations. The coming week will include a Redeye Advisory Team meeting, and both a Buffalo Red Steering Committee and Policy Committee meeting.

October 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> All SWCD staff, with the exception of Aaron Salo and Wes Drake attended the annual BWSR Academy at Breezy Point. As numerous staff pointed out in their reports, there were a number of quite useful and informative sessions.

November 1<sup>st</sup> The State Education and Promotion Team meeting was held in St Paul & via Web Ex.

November 4<sup>th</sup> Crow Wing Health Watershed Partnership meeting was held in Park Rapids. Phil Doll attended. Discussion focused on pending easements and efforts to author and submit a RCPP Working Lands easement program application by December 6<sup>th</sup>.

On November 13<sup>th</sup> Mead and Westberg attended an Area 1 MN Association of Conservation District Employees (MACDE) meeting in Crookston, and held a brief TSA Manager's meeting following. The meeting was well attended, with representation from 15 of the 16 districts in our area. At the TSA meeting Mead encouraged managers to think about the workload and needs of their districts and discuss them with their boards prior to January's TSA Manager meeting, particularly with the pending influx of 1W1P Implementation dollars.

November 18<sup>th</sup> Phil Doll and Mead participated in a conference call with TNC, BWSR and SWCD staff regarding the Working Lands RCPP application, and RIM program logistics. There will be an additional meeting this afternoon.

November 19<sup>th</sup> Mead, Westberg and Bentley attended the Area 1 meeting at MState in Detroit lakes, along with Supervisors Flottesmesch, Beck, Schauer, Pavelko and Stenger. At Area 1 director Paul Krabbenhoff's request Pavelko agreed to serve as co-chair of the Area Association.

Mead congratulated Michelle and Todd Andresen as being selected by MASWCD as winner of Area 1 Outstanding Conservationist. The Andresens will automatically advance as a State candidate. The state winner will be announced at the MASWCD Convention in Bloomington on December 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Open Forum**

Discussion regarding staffing and implementation in surrounding counties and producer experiences working with staff in neighboring districts.

### **Local Water Management**

Mead discussed 1W1P updates on Buffalo Red, Wild Rice & Red Eye River Watersheds. Mead reviewed content from the drafts of Buffalo Red plan sections 5 and 6, provided the board with a Red Eye

Watershed newsletter and discussed the actions taken at the last Wild Rice Policy Committee Meeting. While the process is very time consuming, the quality of work produced by each group is encouraging.

### **MASWCD**

Area 1 Meeting Recap was explained by Mead. CREP, Wild Rice & RIM Easement Programs were the topics along with discussion on the costs and workload associated with monitoring and management.

MASWCD Annual Convention is December 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>. Mead, Westberg, Technician Dahring and four board supervisors will be attending. Outstanding Conservationist Todd & Michelle Andresen will also be attending. Tony Beck and Mead will be attending the Leadership Summit held for Administrators and Board Chairs beginning at 3 on Sunday.

### **Grants and Agreements**

Mead provided an overview of two pending applications to the NRCS's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). One grant titled Implementing Innovative Irrigation Practices to Protect Groundwater Quality and Quantity is spearheaded by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 18 SWCDs and Central Lakes College. Darren Newville in East Ottertail has put a lot of legwork into pulling everyone together. The other, titled Working Lands for Water is being spearheaded by the Nature Conservancy, but the SWCD will serve as applicant and fiscal agent. The aim is to achieve riparian protection via a new flavor of RIM working lands Easements that will allow prescribed grazing in the Crow Wing, Redeye, Pine and parts of the Otter Tail, Leech lake and Mississippi Headwaters watersheds.

Peter presented two Resolutions for support, Resolution 19-3 in support of Implementing Innovative Irrigation Practices to Protect Groundwater Quality and Quantity, and Resolution 19-4 in support of Working Lands for Water RCPP Application.

Motion (Schauer, Stenger) to approve Resolutions 19-3 and 19-4 as presented, and serve as fiscal agent for the working lands application if funded. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **Event Planning**

2020 Retreat/Planning Session was tentatively set for Tamarack NWR on Wednesday February 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **State Cost Share Applications for Approval**

#SCS-19-5, Darren Keranen, Ag Waste System – Total Project Cost: \$390,218 Cost Share: \$3,500

Motion (Stenger,Pavelko) to approve the State Cost Share Application as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **Clean Water Legacy Vouchers for Approval**

#CWL-3-TD, Brent Gilbertson, Fence / Use Exclusion– Total Project Cost: \$7,972 Cost Share: \$5,979

#CWL-43-BR, Bruce Nelson, Mulching & Crimping– Total Project Cost: \$2,200 Cost Share: \$1,650

Motion (Flottesmesch, Pavelko) to approve the Clean Water Legacy Vouchers as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

### **Adjourn**

Seeing no further business, Chairman Beck adjourned the meeting at 10:12 am.

**Approved: Eugene Pavelko, Becker SWCD Secretary**

**Date: December 18, 2019**