

**Becker Soil & Water Conservation District
Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting
February 18, 2009**

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, January 21st, at 8:00 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Ag Center Building, 809 8th St. S.E., Detroit Lakes, Minn.

Those present were supervisors Duane Grossman, Jerome Flottesmesch, Don Lefebvre, Tony Beck, Joe Stenger Dist. Secretary Ginger Flynn, Dist. Technicians Ed Clem and Dean Hendrickson, District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, BWSR Board Conservationist Chad Severts and Dist. Administrator Brad Grant.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lefebvre.

The January 21st meeting minutes were presented for approval.

Motion by Grossman, second by Flottesmesch to approve the January 21st minutes as sent out and received by the supervisors. Affirmative: Grossman, Flottesmesch, Beck, Stenger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Ginger presented the 2008 Year End Financial Report.

Motion by Flottesmesch, second by Stenger to accept the 2008 financial report as presented. Affirmative: Stenger, Beck, Flottesmesch, Grossman. Opposed: None: Motion carried.

The January financial statements and bills payable were presented.

Motion by Grossman, second by Beck to approve the January financial reports and authorize payment of bills. Affirmative: Beck, Stenger, Grossman Flottesmesch. Opposed: None: Motion carried.

Reports:

WesMin RC&D – Don reported on the Annual Meeting of the MN Association of RC&D held January 29th in St. Cloud. During the annual meeting reports were heard from Dr. Mohammed Iddrisu, RC&D Forester; NRCS State Conservationist Bill Hunt; and others. Don presented the MARC&D's Annual Report to Board.

WesMin RC&D Regular and Annual Meeting – Don reported on the Annual WesMin Annual Meeting that was held Feb. 11th in Wadena. Ed Musielewicz and Brad Grant also attended. The featured speaker for the meeting was Kerry Nixon of the Central Minnesota Ethanol Coop spoke on cellulose manufacturing process. Wadena SWCD presented a power point on their SWCD's activities and programs. Several awards were presented. The regular monthly WesMin meeting was held following the annual meeting.

Bio-mass workshop – Don presented a WesMin RC&D Project Proposal for a biomass workshop to be held March 26th in Ponsford. A grant has been secured by WesMin to cover the costs. A \$10 registration will be charged to those attending to cover the meal expense. Some up-front costs for printing a brochure and mailing are expected.

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Motion by Flottemesch, second by Grossman to approve the project proposal for the Biomass Workshop and cover the up-front costs for the event. Costs to be reimbursed through WesMin Grant. Affirmative: Beck, Stenger, Flottemesch, Grossman. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Dist. Conservationist Report – Dist. Conservationist Ed Musielewicz reported on the following:

- The EQIP, WHIP, WRP program audit is complete.
- Met with Buffalo-Red Watershed Administrator Bruce Albright on the Hay Creek Project. Sent out letters to landowners in the project area concerning contracting the work and permission issues.
- NRCS is operating on a continuous resolution until the Federal budget is final.
- Minnesota is scheduled to receive \$26 million for the EQIP program and \$8 million for WRP.
- Hope to have a scoring period for EQIP in early April.
- Met with Tera Guetter of the Pelican River Watershed District on the Rice Lake Project. The Rice Lake Restoration structure could be eligible for stimulus funds.
- Jeff Norby and Brad attended a Pelican River WSD meeting on the flowering rush problem in Detroit Lake.

Dist. Technicians Report – Ed Clem and Dean Hendrickson reported on the following:

- Completed several windbreak plans this past month.
- Reviewing designs for sediment basins from the JPB staff for the Hay Creek area.
- Ed completed the year-end Elink reporting.
- Staff will be appearing on the KDLM Hodge Podge program the 4th Thursday of each month starting in February. Our first show will feature our upcoming Tree Days.

Concerning the tree program, Brad noted that the windbreak designs are about or above average, but our smaller orders seem to be down. With the discontinuing of the printed version of County Line, our ability to get our tree order out to the public is limited. Last year we were able to purchase radio ads with funds provided through a grant from the Red River Basin Commission. Should we consider purchasing a smaller radio promotion on our own this year?

Motion by Flottemesch, second by Stenger to authorize up to \$500 for radio spots for the District Tree Program. Affirmative: Beck, Grossman, Stenger, Flottemesch. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Budget Meeting – Brad reported on the recent budget meeting with Department Heads and the County Commissioners. All department budgets were reviewed and reduction made too many of them. To date our allocation has not been reduced, but we have indicated that we will monitor our expenses and revenues to determine if the District can return a portion of the County funds later in the year.

MASWCD Area I Meeting – Jerome, Duane, Tony, Joe and Brad attended the organizational meeting of the new MASWCD Area I held on Feb. 5th in Mahnomen. The purpose of the meeting was to elect a Chairperson and Vice-chairperson for the new area. Thirty-three supervisors were present plus 25 staff. Former Area II Chairman Ross Aigner of Wilkin SWCD was elected Chairman and former Area I Chairperson Russ Severson was elected Vice-Chairperson for the new Area II. A brief BWSR report was given by Ron Shelito, North Regional Supervisor. The Area I supervisors decided to have the regular spring meeting on March 17th, with East Otter Tail SWCD hosting the event. It will be held in Ada or Mahnomen.

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Review Area I Bylaws – The supervisors reviewed the new Area I Bylaws that had been sent out. No changes were noted.

Red River Valley Conservation Service Area Joint Powers Agreement (RRVCSA) - The RRVCSA agreement was presented for consideration. This is the new Non-Point Engineering Assistance Program agreement with the 17 SWCD's in the new Area I.

Motion by Flottesch, second by Stenger to join the Red River Valley Conservation Service Area Joint Powers organization. Affirmative: Flottesch, Stenger, Grossman, Beck. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Grossman, second by Beck to appoint Jerome Flottesch as the regular member to the RRVCSA Joint Powers Board. Affirmative: Beck, Grossman, Stenger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Flottesch, second by Grossman to appoint Joe Stenger as the alternate to the RRVCSA Joint Powers Board. Affirmative: Beck, Grossman, Flottesch. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Discussed the desire to be the Host District and fiscal agent for the RRVCSA. The Becker SWCD currently serves as the host and fiscal agent for the WCMJPB which is being dissolved.

Motion by Stenger, second by Beck to apply to be the Host District and fiscal agent for the RRVCSA. Affirmative: Stenger, Beck, Flottesch, Grossman. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Comprehensive Local Water Management (LWP) funds – Ginger noted that we have \$1,900.00 of LWP funds unencumbered for 2009. Brad asked consideration be given to provide funding for the publication of a Shoreland Homeowners Guide similar to ones completed for Aitkin and Crow Wing Counties. Becker COLA is currently raising funds for the project also. We would receive copies of the booklet when complete.

Motion by Grossman, second by Stenger to allocate \$500.00 of water plan funds to the Shoreland Guide Project and \$1,400.00 to the Abandoned Well Sealing Program. Affirmative: Grossman, Stenger, Flottesch, Beck. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Contribution to STS Program – It was reported that we recently had the Sentence to Serve Program clean the office vehicles. This is the second time we have used that service and they do a very good job. They do have expenses such soap, cleaning materials, etc. Brad asked the board to consider a monetary contribution to the STS program.

Motion by Flottesch, second by Grossman to make a \$25.00 donation to the Becker County Sentence to Serve Program. Affirmative: Grossman, Flottesch, Beck, Stenger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) – Brad reported that the SWAG Grant that will monitor 16 additional lakes in 2009 and 2010 in cooperation with RMB Laboratories has been approved. Monitoring will begin this spring.

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AgBMP Loan Program –The 2009 AgBMP Loan Program application was submitted. We requested \$136,000 in funds. Two landowners have expressed interest in loans for drills. We should hear on the amount approved in early March.

Wetland Conservation Act – Technical evaluation panel met on Feb.5th. Discussed the Paakh Wetland Banking Plan. Representatives from Aggregate Gravel were present and discussed wetland issues near a pit area in Cormorant Township that they plan to start mining soon. The Year-End WCA Report is complete. We had 5 violations last year, 15 exemptions were issued and 5 replacement plans approved. 144 requests for assistance dealing with wetlands were received in 2008. Brad noted that there are two wetland trainings scheduled this year. One March 24th in Detroit Lakes and the other one in Bemidji in June.

State Cost-share Contracts – The following state cost-share contract were presented for action:

Cost-Share Contract #08-28 with Robert Scherzer was presented for cancelation. Bob has not been able to get a well sealer to seal it as of yet, but will sign-up under 2009 funds.

Motion by Stenger, second by Beck to cancel Cost-Share Contract #08-28. Affirmative: Stenger, Beck, Grossman, Flottemesch. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Cost- Share Contract #09-16 with Robert Scherzer for an abandoned well sealing was presented for consideration.

Motion by Grossman, second by Stenger to approve Cost-Share Contract #09-16 for 50% of the cost not to exceed \$240.00. Affirmative: Grossman, Stenger, Beck, Flottemesch. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Cost-Share Contract #08-25 with Ben Walther was presented for payment authorization for an abandoned well sealing. Total cost of sealing \$235.00. Eligible cost-share payment \$117.50.

Motion by Grossman, second by Stenger to authorize payment of contract #08-25 in the amount of \$117.50. Affirmative: Flottemesch, Stenger, Grossman, Beck. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Cost-share fund balance was discussed and the need for additional funds for shelterbelts.

Motion by Flottemesch, second by Stenger to allocate an additional \$4,000.00 of cost-share funds toward shelterbelts. Affirmative: Grossman, Flottemesch, Beck, Stenger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Cost-Share Contract #08-35 with Les Pritchard for a shelterbelt. Estimated cost \$1,191.30. Eligible cost-share 75% not to exceed \$893.00. \$890.00 from FY08 and \$3.00 from 09FY

Cost-Share Contract #09-14 with Mike Herzog, field windbreak. Estimated cost \$2,194.70. Eligible cost-share 75% not to exceed \$224.00.

Cost-Share Contract #09-15 with Bob Howard, field windbreaks. Estimated cost \$1,147.25. Eligible cost-share 75% not to exceed \$680.00.

Cost-Share Contract #09-17 with Duane Jasken, shelterbelt. Estimated cost \$905.70. Eligible cost-share 75% not to exceed \$679.00.

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Cost-Share Contract #09-18 with Todd Funfar, field windbreak. Estimated cost \$6,504.00. Eligible cost-share 75% not to exceed \$4,878.00.

Motion by Beck, second by Grossman to approve the above listed cost-share contracts in the amounts presented. Affirmative: Grossman, Flottemesch, Beck, Stenger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

The following abandoned well sealing contracts were presented for payment authorization from water plan funds:

Cont. AW#449 with Cheryl Aune. Total cost of sealing \$250.00. Eligible cost-share \$125.00.

Cont. AW#463 with Jill Mickelson. Total cost of sealing \$200.00. Eligible cost-share \$100.00.

Motion by Flottemesch, second by Stenger to approve payment of the above listed well sealing contracts from water plan funds in the amounts listed. Affirmative: Grossman, Beck, Stenger, Flottemesch. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

BWSR Board Conservationist Chad Severts was present and gave a report on the roles of the Board of Water and Soil Resources and their assistance to Districts for the benefit of the new supervisors. Chad also touched on the 5 year amendment to the Becker County Local Water Management Plan that is due in 2009. Chad will work with Brad on the procedures to follow, etc.

Other –

- Brad requested the supervisors review the no-till drill rental policy when it is rented by landowners outside of Becker County. Requested that payment be made up front in order to avoid chasing bad accounts in other counties and filing claims in small claims court.

Motion by Grossman, second by Flottemesch to require no-till drill rental payment up front when used outside Becker County. Affirmative: Flottemesch, Grossman, Beck, Stenger. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

- The Annual Township Ag Inspectors meeting will be held March 25th in Callaway. Also Brad and Marsha will present a resolution to the County Commissioners in March asking their support of a gravel pit certification program. This information has been sent out to all townships and has received favorable feedback. Gravel pit certification is being started in several surrounding counties and can help reduce the spread of invasive and noxious species.

Being no further business Chairman Lefebvre recessed the meeting. 11:30 a.m.

12:15 p.m. Chairman Lefebvre re-convened the meeting for the purpose of reviewing the Becker SWCD 2009 Annual Plan of Operations, goal setting, also reviewed the progress of district programs and activities.

Those present were supervisors Duane Grossman, Jerome Flottemesch, Don Lefebvre, Tony Beck, Joe Stenger Dist. Secretary Ginger Flynn, Dist. Technicians Ed Clem and Dean Hendrickson, District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, BWSR Board Conservationist Chad Severts, NRCS Soil Conservation Tech. Jeff Norby, Asst. Ag. Inspector Marsha Watland, NRCS Soil Conservationist Dan Pazdernik and Dist. Administrator Brad Grant.

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Brad presented a draft copy of the 2009 Annual Plan of Operations for the District. The group proceeded to review the plan and make necessary additions and corrections to the work plan.

Following the review a motion by Stenger, second by Grossman to approve the 2009 Becker SWCD Plan of Operations and forward it to BWSR and place it on our web site. Affirmative: Grossman, Beck, Stenger, Flottesch. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Lefebvre. 1:10 p.m.