

**Becker Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting
Wednesday, July 20th, 2011**

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation Districts Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, July 20, 2011, at 8:00 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Ag Center Building, 809 8th St. S.E. in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Those present were supervisors Duane Grossman, Jerome Flottesch, Tony Beck, Don Lefebvre, County Commissioner Barry Nelson, Dist. Secretary Ginger Flynn, District Technician Ed Clem, and Dist. Administrator Brad Grant.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Grossman.

Motion (Lefebvre, Beck) to approve the minutes of the June 15th meeting as sent out and received by the supervisors. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

The June financial statements and bills were presented for consideration.

Motion (Flottesch, Beck) to approve the financial statements, payment of bills. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Brad noted that the mileage rate has been increased to 55.5 cents per mile beginning July 1st.

8:25 a.m. Dist. Conservationist Ed Musielewicz and Soil Conservationist Nicole Labey arrived.

Ed introduced Nicole to the supervisors. Nicole told a little about herself. She is a 2011 graduate of the University of Wisconsin River Falls with a major in Crops and Soils and a minor in Conservation. She is the current National Soils Judging Champion. Nicole is a Soil Conservationist with NRCS and began work in Becker County on July 20th.

Reports:

Dist. Conservationist Ed Musielewicz reported on the following:

- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) deadline for signing contracts is Friday. Ed noted we had \$1 million in CSP contracts this year.
- CRP – A total of 59 contracts out of 96 were accepted from the last general sign-up. Some of those not accepted are now trying to enroll some acres in under the continuous CRP program. Plans for the general sign-up must be done by Sept. 1st.
- Ed reported to the Board on the class action law suits against the USDA involving Hispanics, Native Americans, and females. The Farm Service Agency holds weekly meetings on the matters for people to attend. These are held in the Ag Center Conference Room. No one has attended so far.
- The timing for the EQIP Local Work Group meetings has been changed from November to July. Ed must have one in Becker County by the end of the month. The only day available is Friday, July 29th. Ed will send out letters. The meeting will be held in the Ag Center Conference Room beginning at 10:00 a.m.

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CRP Planning – Brad noted that Ed. M. had been notified that the SWCD has an opportunity to assist with the preparation of the last CRP sign-up plan preparation, via a contribution agreement. It will be similar to the one from last December. The SWCD would do 40 plans with some being for the continuous sign-up program.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Beck), to enter into a contribution agreement to prepare CRP plans.

Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Dist. Technician – Ed Clem reported on the following:

- Attended hydric soils training last month that was offered by NRCS. Ed felt it was very valuable training.
- No-Till Drill is out at U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Less than 200 acres were seeded with the drill this spring.
- Had several wetland issues relating to high water.
- Supervised construction on the Nick Zurn sediment basins. Several others are under construction.

Area I Meeting – Supervisors reported on the Area I Minn. Assn. of SWCD's meeting that they attended June 23rd in Ada.

Red River Valley Conservation Service Area JPB (RRVCSA) – Jerome reported on the RRVCSA Joint Powers Board meeting held June 23rd in Ada.

Envirothon – Ginger reported on the Envirothon meeting held July 12th. The Junior Envirothon is scheduled for October 5th at the Prairie Wetlands Center in Fergus Falls and the Senior Envirothon will be April 25, 2012 also at Prairie Wetlands Center.

NRCS Wetland Partnership Initiative – Brad updated the supervisors on the Wetland Partnership Initiative with NRCS to enter into a contribution agreement to have the SWCD carryout the wetland determinations for the Food Security Act. Ed M. and Brad sat in on a tele-conference on July 14th and received information on developing the budget, and the need for a statement of financial burden to receive a 75% contribution agreement instead of 50%. We have to let Rachel McGill, NRCS St. Paul, know verbally our intent to participate by August 5th and have all the paper work in by August 19th. After our verbal commitment, NRCS will draft the final contribution agreement and send it out to us for signature. As the supervisors approved entering into the agreement at their June meeting, no action is needed.

Wetland Conservation Act Report – Fourteen concerns over wetland issues were addressed since last meeting. Seven had to do with high water impacting various properties and roads or driveways. Two gravel pit site visits, one violation that was issued a cease and desist order by the Conservation Officer and is a repeat violation with the same landowner and location as in 2001.

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Ag Inspector Program – Marsha has submitted a pre-proposal for a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant. Request is for \$75,000 to be used for invasive plant management on recreational trails. We will hear later this fall if we make the cut for the grant, than the final request will be submitted.

Brad noted we would like to purchase a small hand sprayer so when Marsha is out and we see small isolated area of invasive species along a road shoulder, etc. we can stop and treat it. The supervisors felt this was fine and go ahead and purchase the sprayer.

Brad noted that wild parsnips, is becoming more of a concern. Growing conditions have been great for weeds this year. Now that it is on the noxious weed list we must enforce it. This time of year we are having it clipped, and then spray later this fall, and again in the spring. 2-4,D will work and provides a more economical means of treatment.

2012 Budget – A preliminary budget for 2012 was presented for discussion. On the revenue side we will be seeing a reduction in State funds. However, we did receive an email this week stating the state budget will reflect a smaller reduction than was expected. In 2011, our allocation from Becker County was \$183,561. Our budget is due to the County Administrator August 10th, with budget meetings to be scheduled with the county commissioners later in August.

Motion by (Flottesch/Beck) second by Lefebvre to appoint Tony Beck and Duane Grossman to the budget committee, and meet with District Administrator to develop the final budget request from to county and request the percentage increase that the state reduces funding. Duane and Tony will also present the budget to the county commissioners. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

BWSR Academy – Ginger and Marsha have been asked to be presenters at the BWSR Training Academy in October. Ginger would discuss the bookkeeping programs, etc. and Marsha will do a presentation on our Ag Inspector Program.

Equipment Needs – Ginger and Brad noted that the Rick Kelsven Becker Co. IT Department will be ordering computers for Becker County and asked if we would be ordering any. Rick has the County on a 4 year replacement plan. Ginger noted our computers are 7 years old. The new computers with the new program run between \$600 & \$800. We would not replace monitors. The District has 4 computers that it owns. The capital outlay budget is \$3,750.

After much discussion, motion (Flottesch, Beck) to purchase 4 new computers through Becker County IT Department. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Cost-share Program – The following cost-share contracts were presented for payment authorization:

Cont. #10-10 with Bill Zurn, well sealing. Total cost \$425.00. Eligible payment \$212.50.

Cont. #10-15 with Marlene Brandon, well sealing. Cost \$525.00. Eligible payment \$240.00.

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Motion (Lefebvre, Flottesmesch) to approve payment of the above cost-share contracts for the amounts presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Conservationist of the Year Award – Nominations for the 2011 Conservationist of the Year were discussed. Several candidates were brought up for consideration.

After discussion, motion (Flottesmesch, Beck) to select Randy Lefebvre as the 2011 Conservationist of the Year. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Upcoming events – July 25-27, Ag Inspectors Short Course
July 29th – Nitrate testing at the Becker County Fair
SWCD Governance 101 – Sept. 12th & 13th

Being no further business, motion (Beck, Flottesmesch) to adjourn. Affirmative. Unanimous. Carried.

Approved: Jerome Flottesmesch

Date: August 17, 2011