



Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday, April 20, 2016

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, April 20th in the Conference Room of the USDA Ag Center Building located at 809 8th Street SE, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Those present were Supervisors Tony Beck, Jerome Flottemesch, Travis Schauer, Kathy Stenger and Chairperson Eugene Pavelko. Others present include Becker County Commissioner Barry Nelson, District Administrator Peter Mead, Office Manager Jen Wentz, NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, Ag Inspector/Shoreland Technician Marsha Watland, Wetland Specialist Ed Clem and AIS/Water Quality Coordinator Karl Koenig.

Call to Order – meeting called to order by Chairman Pavelko at 8:29 a.m.

Approval of March Meeting Minutes – no changes to report.

Motion (Stenger, Beck) to approve March meeting minutes. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Financial Reports

March Treasurers Report and April bills to pay were reviewed.

Motion (Flottemesch, Schauer) to accept the March Treasurers Report and approve the bills for April. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Overdue invoice with Chad West, Cotton Lake shoreland restoration using State Cost-Share funds. Board gave specific instruction and assistance on the next steps with this process.

District Reports

District Conservationist - Ed Musielewicz

- EQIP 2016 – all high priority applications will be preapproved in late April; medium and low priority projects were approved April 19th with 38 potential contracts. All must be signed and obligated by next Friday
- CSP – we have 32 interviews and 12 reenrolls. Deadline for uploading is May 20th.
- EQIP 2017 – August 19th is the deadline for applying funds for 2017 ranking, scoring and contracting. Only one scoring period will be held. We have 6 pending applications
- Local Workgroup Meeting held annually is set for Thursday, June 16th at 9:00 a.m. in the USDA conference room.
- CRP – Aaron has been busy with 16 contracts approved this month. Ponsford Prairie contracts have been increasing. We have 82 contracts with approximately 1,400 acres due to expire at the end of September. Many of these are filter strips and riparian forest buffers. FSA has been working with these more efficiently. A few are waiting for cultural resource clearance.
- SFA – Sustainable Farming Association will hold a Soil Health Summit May 26-27. Cost is \$50 with a field day to be held in Green Valley Twp. Registration is required. We were approached to help with costs on this project using Clean Water funds through our Straight River grant, but the fit wasn't quite right.

District Administrator - Peter Mead

- NRCS – Conservation Client Gateway program, a web-based feature to assist landowners through contracts and paperwork via the web. Conservation Plans and applications can now be e-signed through this portal. The state is looking for one supervisor from each SWCD to assist and support this new program.
- Dirt work and staking of projects is already underway.
- LWP meeting was held last month at Becker County Courthouse to discuss priority concerns. Agency input and public survey results completed online and will be sent to BWSR for approval June 10th. We hope to have a draft completed by September or October.
- Soil Health trial locations have been set with Salo and Hummel leading this effort. Data is being collected and tracked with photos, coordinates etc.

- Aaron has been working with 10-12 pivots through the Irrigation Scheduler program. We have spreadsheets established for data recovery and have mailed letters to 160 producers and/or landowners regarding the program. Costs are set at \$200 per field; \$175 with multiple fields. The Straight River portion of this project will be available at no cost for the first season.
- We've been busy with landowner and project meetings held in our small office space. Thankfully, building improvements are moving along and we are nearing final approval with FSA. We have amended some plans a bit and throughout the building. Variances, permits, etc. are all on track.
- Water will be turned on at the storage shop today. Trees will start arriving tomorrow.
- Becker SWCD held a joint meeting with Clay SWCD and NRCS staff at RDO in Hawley April 7th to discuss Soil Health, the Core Four, Buffers, MAWQCP and other available programs.
- Resolutions will be due in early June for MASWCD Area 1.
- RRVCSA meeting held last month. Board opted to form a northern and southern committee with supervisors and/or managers appointed as voting board members. Mead will receive final approval on this with our county legal staff and MCIT.
- Working with ESRI and ArcGIS to develop an enterprise license agreement for more software and savings with TSA purchases as well as three different training programs for support and assistance. He and Mary are working on a needs inventory and skills level assessment to focus these sessions where need is greatest.

Program Reports

AIS Prevention

- Moving forward with hiring for this season; we have a large number of applicants with approximately 1/3 of staff returning from last year. He is hoping to add 16 new hires. Interviews have started with the majority to be held Thursday and Friday.
- We have been asked to assist with Tullaby and Twin Lake inspections through an agreement with Mahnomon County. We need to establish an MOU with their staff to set some parameters. Both counties will need access agreements to make this a successful partnership. We will have a total of 25 lakes in full/partial AIS operation this season.
- Attended the COLA kickoff meeting; not too many in attendance as most lakeshore property owners are part-time residents. He hopes to have several volunteers this year.
- Attended the Detroit and Long Lake meeting to present our program expectations.
- Secured a local radio spot this Friday morning to promote AIS awareness. Receiving a lot of great response and special requests from agencies this year.
- Reviewing resort lake boat traffic. Bad Medicine Lake had a close call last year with access use. We're hoping to work more diligently with resort owners to collect data and stop lake infestations from spreading. Many resorts such as Cedar Crest are the main gateway to these lakes and have the greatest impact on lake preservation.
- Through assistance with the DNR, we have approached Lindner's Angling Buzz, a fishing tournament media company that will focus on several regions throughout the area to offer a 30 second AIS awareness advertisement which is set to run continuously throughout the season. Koenig has secured sponsorship from 30 counties using a tiered payment based on DNR AIS Prevention Aid received.
- Local AIS advertising has been finalized and will be placed at the Pit 611, Zorbaz, the Bridge and Holiday Inn.
- He would like to budget for an AIS treatment fund used for any new infestations. Many lakeshore property owners know what they're looking for and it would be wise to secure funding for future treatments. We don't have unlimited funding with this program and it would be nice to have a back-up plan for future AIS treatment needs. Timing is extremely critical in order to create lasting results. Some lakes add a tax assessment to control weeds; this may be a good option for long-term vision of AIS prevention and treatment.
- Employee time tracking was discussed, as well as information regarding temporary, seasonal employment lasting less than 67 days per year.

Wetland Conservation Act

- Receiving calls daily on wetland issues with building permits and driveway installs referred from Planning & Zoning.

- Attended the TEP panel a couple weeks ago with DNR, Army Corps and BWSR. Addressed the issues in Spring Creek Twp to straighten the township road that weaves around a wetland. He will provide wetland delineation for the township and forward it to the county highway engineer for road design that meets state safety standards while avoiding wetland impact.
- Army Corps to sign off on the concurrent point 1 for Purpose and Need to expand the airport whether that be on or off site. Alternatives will now be discussed. Timeframe for the next step is set for the end of May but it could be six months to a year before alternatives are established. Cultural resource concerns may influence the decision process.

Trees & Native Plant Material

- First shipment of trees will arrive tomorrow with the bulk of them on Friday. We will be very close to meeting our five year average on sales of approximately 16,000 trees. Many varieties have been sold down to zero making wrapping extremely critical. We had a really good sales push in mid-late March.
- We have 3 tree planting jobs this year which will be completed by May 10th. Machine planting is \$0.25 per tree with hand planting rates slightly higher.

Ag Inspector & CWMA

- Annual Twp. Weed Inspector training was held last month in Callaway with 68 people in attendance. This was the first year for the panel session with staff from Highway department, MnDOT, USFW and Woods & Wheels ATV club. She's asking township officials to respond by mid-May to work through county highway ditch issues and address mapping concerns.
- Pesticide exams are moving along.
- Weed notices have started this week.

Shoreland

- Working through updates with the 2016 Realtime Landscape program. Any designs completed previously had to be adapted to the new version.
- 15 completed cost share designs set to be installed in May and June.
- We have 15 2016 sites completed and ready for install. She's looking for better communication efforts with the addition of Gabe in her department.
- Working with Planning & Zoning landowner referrals.
- Recent site evaluations have come about because of our tax insert flyer.
- St. Claire Lake north of Richwood and Buffalo Lake was referred through a contractor call.
- One mitigation project on Lake Sallie has been referred from Pelican River Watershed.
- Recently met with the Damien Society and Detroit and Sallie lakeshore owners. She presented shorescapes to enhance the look and function of property.
- Presented at the Freshman Career Tour yesterday – our District taught 3 areas of work: Shoreland, Surveying and AIS Inspections. All sessions were held at the north access to Big Detroit Lake.
- Shoreland project plants and materials will be coming soon. It will be nice to have water and space to house these items at our new storage facility in the north industrial park.
- Looking at how we can incorporate summer interns and conservation corps workers in a variety of projects.
- Receiving good complements from townships and officials for our working relationship and expertise.

Open Forum

Water Quality Concerns –

Special guest Lowell Deede (walked all public roads in Becker county over the last 2 ½ years) has been collecting water transparency samples from Floyd Lake and has extended his efforts to all perimeter streams and rivers that border our county. His data is available to any and all agencies. He explained how and where he has taken readings and what he has discovered through this process. He has shared the information with MPCA and BRRWD. Many readings were taken along the Buffalo River and Manitoba Junction. Our Board agrees that many of these readings will be nice to have for the new Buffer Law management efforts as well as outlook for the future. Mead and Koenig have been working with Moriya Rufer from RMB Labs to address water quality monitoring and the lack thereof. Long-term measurements will be a great tool to break this trend. Comparative statistics are necessary for public involvement. Over time, this data will provide that. Story mapping would be an excellent way to spread this data to the public and various agencies for use statewide. This technique involves combining photos, maps and

words into an interactive web format which is a very pleasing, aesthetic way to harness public involvement.

County Announcements –

Steve Skoog will be leading the Land Use Department answering to the County Administrator and supervising Planning & Zoning, NRM, Assessor's Office, Parks & Rec as well as Environmental Services. The new NRM supervisor will start soon; Stacie White has been hired as the new IT Director. A vacancy remains with the Planning & Zoning supervisor.

Setback changes are still being discussed. An average of existing structures plus 20 feet will be reviewed at the next board meeting. His suggestion was to apply Average plus 20' to the first traditional 75' and then 10-20 feet in anything beyond that. This should reduce the tunneling effect seen by many landowners. Better ideas or solutions are always welcome. Currently, our setback standard is Average plus 20'.

District News –

Employee and Supervisor apparel purchases will be made soon and are due to Leticia by May 6th.

Grants & Agreements

MN DNR WIA Amended Joint Powers Agreement

New WIA signup payments have increased to SWCDs and are offered up to \$4,000. The program is largely seeking easement or conservation habitat acres, CRP and/or WRP. Landowners can earn up to \$15 per acre for the program. WIA stamps are then purchased by hunters for access to these sites.

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

MN DNR Watercraft Inspection Grant

We were successful in acquiring funding to pay 50% of the costs of inspector hours on Detroit Lake. This will allow for additional staff and availability at this location and increased AIS awareness for Becker County. There is a max of 320 hours that will amount to approximately \$2,000 for inspection assistance.

Motion (Beck, Flottesmesch) to approve the MN DNR Watercraft Inspection grant agreement. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Clean Water Legacy Contracts for Approval

Land Projects

CWL-13-BR, Jesse Ullrich, Filter Strip/Filter Strip Incentive. \$32,928 estimated project costs; \$11,760 from 2015 Buffalo-Red CWL funds and CCRP of \$21,168 to cover 100% of the total project costs.

CWL-14-BR, Curt Ullrich, Grassed Waterway. \$14,815 estimated project costs; \$9,765 from 2015 Buffalo-Red CWL funds and EQIP of \$3,568 to cover 90% of the total project costs.

CWL-15-BR, Jill Fahrlander & Mary Poling, Critical Area Planting/Shoreline Stabilization. \$43,957 estimated project costs; \$9,561 from 2015 Buffalo-Red CWL funds and \$30,000 from Buffalo-Red River Watershed District to cover 90% of the total project costs.

Motion (Schauer, Beck) to approve the 2015 Clean Water Legacy contracts and encumber the amounts noted above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Shoreland Projects

We established a cost share rate based on DNR water resource values to pay 50% of the total project costs on low/medium priority areas and 75% of total project costs for high/very high concern areas.

CWL-01-LP, Bill & Jean Kauffman, Critical Area Planting on Lake Eunice. \$5,770 estimated project costs; \$2,885 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-02-LP, Jerry & Beverly Moyer, Critical Area Planting on Floyd Lake. \$3,797 estimated project costs; \$1,899 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-03-LP, Del Bergseth, Critical Area Planting on Little Bemidji Lake. \$8,855 estimated project costs; \$6,641 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 75% of total project costs.

CWL-04-LP, Allen Bergquist, Critical Area Planting/Raingarden on Lake Eunice. \$6,248 estimated project costs; \$3,124 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-05-LP, Stacey Jacobs, Critical Area Planting on Floyd Lake. \$3,614 estimated project costs; \$1,807 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-06-LP, Larry Wiebusch, Critical Area Planting on Lake Maud. \$4,546 estimated project costs; \$2,273 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-07-LP, Jean Kampmeyer, Critical Area Planting on Buffalo Lake. \$4,709 estimated project costs; \$3,531 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 75% of total project costs.

CWL-08-LP, Ron & Gwen Mueller, Critical Area Planting on Floyd Lake. \$5,836 estimated project costs; \$2,918 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-09-LP, Patricia Young, Critical Area Planting on Middle Cormorant Lake. \$2,114 estimated project costs; \$1,057 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-10-LP, James & Judy Erickson, Critical Area Planting / Raingarden on Maud Lake. \$6,154 estimated project costs; \$3,077 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-11-LP, Richard Gerasch, Critical Area Planting on Elbow Lake. \$6,058 estimated project costs; \$3,029 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-12-LP, Craig & Anita Hoehne, Critical Area Planting on Strawberry Lake. \$5,998 estimated project costs; \$2,999 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CWL-13-LP, Eric & Lori Daeuber, Critical Area Planting on Elbow Lake. \$8,424 estimated project costs; \$4,212 from 2016 Lake Protection CWL funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

Motion (Flottesch, Stenger) to approve the 2016 Clean Water Legacy Lake Protection contracts and encumber the amounts noted above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

State Cost Share Contracts for Approval

CS-16-01, Don & Joan Pake, Critical Area Planting/Shoreline Stabilization on Big Sugar Bush Lake. \$6,236 estimated project costs; \$3,118 from 2016 State Cost-Share funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

CS-16-02, Curt Briggs, Sediment Basin and Raingarden in the SWCD parking lot. \$4,382 estimated project costs; \$2,191 from 2016 State Cost-Share funds to cover 50% of total project costs.

Motion (Schauer, Stenger) to approve the 2016 State Cost-Share contracts and encumber the amounts noted above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Adjourn

Being no further business, Chairman Pavelko adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.