



Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday, April 19, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, April 19, 2017 in the Conference Room of the USDA Ag Center Building located at 809 8th Street SE, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Those present: Supervisors Tony Beck, Jerome Flottesmesch, Travis Schauer, Chairman Eugene Pavelko and Kathy Stenger. Others present include Becker County Commissioner Barry Nelson, Office Manager Jen Wentz, NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, Ag Inspector/Shoreland Coordinator Marsha Watland, Water Resource Tech Ed Clem, AIS/Water Quality Coordinator Karl Koenig and Program Technician Aaron Salo.

Call to Order

Board meeting was called to order by Chairman Pavelko at 8:31 a.m.

Approval of March Meeting Minutes

March meeting minutes were distributed prior to the meeting today.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Beck) to approve the March meeting minutes as written. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Financial Reports

Treasurer's Report & Bills for Approval were presented to the board.

Motion (Stenger, Schauer) to approve the March Treasurer's Report and list of Bills for April. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

District Reports

District Conservationist - Ed Musielewicz

- EQIP program. We received 35 eligibility notices and have funded 26 of those for a total of \$1.1 million.
- RCCP (Regional Conservationist Conservation Program) promotes habitat improvement on land. They are responsible for the Golden Wing Warbler program as well as Ag Certainty. We received two applicants this year. Jim Lang, EOT Ag Certainty Program Tech is able to assist landowners with certification through MDA to ensure requirements for soil, water and plant resources are being met.
- CSP program. We have 19 applicants with 7 interviews completed. The remaining 12 applicants must be contacted and interviewed by June 9th.
- We will begin engineering practices next week. Danny Olson will start the Joel Crabtree project.

Administrator's Report – given by Aaron Salo in Peter Mead's absence

- Straight River Groundwater Protection meeting was held March 6th in Osage. Great speakers were on hand including Luke Stuewe, MDA; Precision agronomist, Ed Musielewicz, Aaron Salo and Jim Lang. Nitrate testing was provided by Hubbard SWCD. Irrigation scheduling and uniformity tests have been arranged and fertigation retrofits for pivots were discussed. GIS and remote pivot mgmt. was also discussed. We are anxious to get more interest in our Irrigation Scheduler program.
- Soil Health Roundtable was held the following week. Producers from Becker, Clay, Otter Tail and Mahanomen/Norman counties and staff were there to facilitate. Great discussions took place – constructive and informative for cover crops and soil health. Follow-up since the meeting has offered more networking and connections. Near future focus is to add more positive press for the Straight River Water Mgmt. Plan as opposed to what was recently published in the Detroit Lakes Tribune.
- March 28th was Ag in the Classroom for Frazee schools.

- Buffer Law compliance. DNR is removing 540 water course segments for a total of 640 miles across the state. Becker has 13 segments that total at least 17 miles. Ditch systems were placed on the map and not on the list. This was discovered recently and the commissioner has decided to remove those segments. DNR hydrologist will send maps to those areas affected by the change. This coincides to a clerical error in the 80's that did not allow an appeal process for altered ditches. Alternative practice language has always been in the law. The Six Pack of Alternatives now includes side water inlets and Ag certainty.
- Equipment updates – USFWS drills are no longer available for rent or purchase. They have since been placed on GSA auction and bid process.
- Aaron attended a CREP webinar Tuesday. This is not a huge workload for Becker County. Updated rates were released late Monday and have decreased across the state.
- CRP continues to run strong. No general CRP sign-ups have been discussed.
- WIA site deadlines are April 28th. \$275,000 has been made available from Pheasants Forever for management of those sites. This is a three year contract for maintenance such as a burn, clipping or tree removal.
- DNR-WLI has two more projects to be completed by June 30th. We have recently closed and paid the Douglas Morrison CRP tree removal.
- The Becker County Water Plan should be approved next month. Peter Mead completed the 146 page project and we are receiving great feedback thus far.
- Mead has been asked to take part in the Cormorant Lakes Watershed District citizen's advisory committee.

Program Reports

Wetland Conservation Act

Ed has been reviewing small, minor wetland issues. No applications at this point but several will be coming soon.

He attended another airport meeting including FAA, EPA, BWSR, DNR, various consultants and city officials regarding the mitigation proposal. The decisions at hand: recondition or refurbish sewage areas into replacement for wetlands. Concerns: timing of the replacement and whether they should carry out that construction while addressing wetland impacts. Per WCA regulations, we need assurance for the impacts. The airport is considering a federal FAA grant. Per grant guidelines, work must begin by late summer in order to move forward. FAA is looking to purchase banking credits with some on-site replacement possible. Becker County wetland banking credits must be purchased before work can begin. We foresee many difficulties on the replacement, with ecological and engineering concerns. The final decision and application will be completed very soon and received by the TEP. If approved, the proposal and TEP recommendations will be presented to the Soil & Water Board for final approval or denial based on WCA laws and impact regulations.

Trees and Native Plant Materials

Apple trees from Bailey's Nursery will be delivered Thursday with the remaining stock from Schumacher's on Friday and DNR trees will be here Monday. Tree wrapping will begin next week. All deliveries will be brought to the shop/storage building, including potted evergreens. Most of our sales have been preorders. We won't have many varieties for sale to the public on Saturday, April 29th.

Shoreland Protection

The crew have been designing and scheduling contract meetings. They will be making site evaluations of all projects installed in 2016.

Native plant sales – we have sold 6 native planting kits and approximately four native plant orders for the season.

AIS Prevention

Karl has been conducting AIS Inspector interviews over the last few days. He has 37 applicants thus far. 18 have been with the program before. Half of the interviews are complete and he is pleased with the group of candidates this year. He plans to expand inspectors into additional lakes while adding more hours this season. Legally, we have to interview and train every candidate, every year. Level 1 & 2 Watercraft inspection training is scheduled for next week.

Inspection Liaison position has been posted. He has received only a few applications but all were unfavorable. He's looking at including this position into his own work schedule in order to reduce personnel costs.

Outreach this year includes bar coasters for many of the area resorts and lakeside bar and grills. He will also utilize TV3 local broadcasting efforts. We will once again submit a ½ page advertisement in the Summer Guide magazine newspaper insert.

The 5th Grade Conservation Tour is scheduled for May 11 and 12. He and DNR Conservation Officer, Angie Warren will lead the AIS station.

He hopes to have a decontamination unit at H-O-L access off Hwy 34 and wishes to spread them throughout the county for better, increased use of the services our equipment provides. In order to do this, DNR permitting is required but he doesn't foresee this as an obstacle.

WQ Monitoring

MPCA recently released a site map for monitoring data. He's working with Lowell Deede's efforts and strategic points to allow more citizens involved in water quality monitoring. We'd like to address data now and into the future to ensure that water quality efforts are offering success for all our hard work. Deede's efforts have been extensive and at this point, all on his own dime.

Ag Inspector

Marsha presented the updated gravel pit certification form. She will conduct gravel pit inspections appointments for the next 2 ½ weeks. Gravel pit and mining sites that are active and not certified will be added as well. The following levels are noted on the updated form: Exceeds, Meets or Minimal.

Restricted noxious weeds have tripled in quantity. Honeysuckle sites have been reviewed from APHIs in Becker County with great control results. It was discussed how Palmer Amaranth made its way into Minnesota. Information received from MDA will be the most accurate.

She attended the Weed 'Em Out meeting in Morris on Tuesday. They presented information regarding Oriental Bittersweet, Japanese Hops and Palmer Amaranth. Identification is now at a higher level of awareness. U of MN Extension, MnDOT, and MDA were present.

She received a Minnesota Noxious Weed booklet from MN DOT. We were able to secure one copy for each of our fleet of vehicles—NRCS and Soil & Water.

Township weed tours. She was disappointed at the number of people who attended the Township/City Weed Inspector meeting in Callaway. She has scheduled inspections with a township and/or city weed official in hopes that this may promote awareness.

Weed notices will be mailed soon. Weed complaints have begun.

Having Claire on hand for graphic design has been wonderful. Claire developed a flyer and coaster design that we will distribute to local businesses, restaurants and bar owners to increase noxious weed awareness. Marsha is looking for board approval to use the design in larger advertisements such as billboards, etc.

Motion (Stenger, Flottemesch) to approve the proposed material be displayed for advertisement of noxious weed awareness and control. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

She will attend an Invasive Phragmites meeting next week with USFWS and MN DOT. The weed was spotted near Forest Hills Golf Club four years ago.

Open Forum

Jen noted the recent information received from MASWCD regarding the resolution process, requirements and deadline of July 21st for submittal. Each supervisor was given a copy.

Jen presented the engagement letter from Peterson Company Ltd. to perform the audit of our financials for fiscal year ending December 31, 2016. Because District revenues continue to remain near \$500,000 annually, we are required to complete the audit each year.

Motion (Flottesch, Beck) to approve Peterson Company Ltd. as our auditor for 2016 financial statements.
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

One Watershed One Plan

Salo presented information regarding 1W1P.

The resolution is in support of 1W1P activities in Becker County. Salo reviewed the objectives of the resolution and requirements on our part for the process.

Motion (Stenger, Schauer) to approve Resolution # 04-19-1A in support of 1W1P activities within Becker County and along watershed districts within the Otter Tail River, Crow Wing River, Buffalo River, Redeye River, Wild Rice River and Mississippi River headwater watersheds.

Grants & Agreements

Approve Submittal of 2017 DNR Watercraft Inspection Grant.

This grant will be used for DNR staffing hours on Big Cormorant and Big and Little Detroit Lake. DNR inspector staff would be reimbursed for 50% of their costs from state AIS aid. Coordination efforts between Karl and DNR staff to ensure accurate staffing levels. We would then use our hired staff elsewhere throughout the county in order to spread manpower further.

Motion (Beck, Stenger) to approve the submittal of 2017 DNR Watercraft Inspection Grant. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

State Cost-Share Contracts for Approval or Amendment

#CS-16-2, Jim & Pam Benedict, Contract Amendment. Additional materials are needed to complete the project. Total project costs \$8,196; eligible cost share not to exceed 50% or \$4,098.

#CS-16-6, Denise Fredrickson, Critical Area Planting. Installation this year. Total project costs \$3,758; eligible cost share not to exceed 50% or \$1,879.

Motion (Flottesch, Beck) to approve the 2016 State Cost-Share contracts as stated above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#CS-16-7, Travis Schauer, Water & Sediment Control Basins, Grassed Waterway. Total project costs \$32,102; EQIP and Cormorant Lakes Watershed funding and eligible cost share not to exceed 75% or \$1,745.20.

#CS-17-1, Travis Schauer, Water & Sediment Control Basins, Grassed Waterway. Total project costs \$ 32,102; EQIP and Cormorant Lakes Watershed funding and eligible cost share not to exceed 75% or \$755.

Motion (Beck, Flottesch) to approve 2016 & 2017 State Cost-Share contracts as stated above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Clean Water Legacy Contracts for Approval

#CWL-22-BR, Joel Crabtree, Water & Sediment Control Basin, Critical Area Planting. Total project costs \$8,514; eligible cost share not to exceed 90% or \$7,843.

#CWL-25-BR, Bruce Nelson, Wetland Restoration. Total project costs \$5,431; USDA EQIP funding and eligible cost share not to exceed 90% or \$3,176.

Motion (Flottesch, Schauer) to approve 2015 CWL-Buffalo Red Shallow Lakes contracts as stated above.
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#CWL-21-LP, Michael & Brenda Ruehl, Shoreline Stabilization. Total project costs \$4,112; eligible cost share not to exceed 50% or \$2,056.

#CWL-22-LP, Julie Herman, Shoreline Stabilization. Total project costs \$4,550; eligible cost share not to exceed 75% or \$3,413.

#CWL-23-LP, James & Carolyn Herman, Shoreline Stabilization. Total project costs \$7,001; eligible cost share not to exceed 75% or \$5,251.

Motion (Schauer, Beck) to approve 2016 CWL-Lake Protection contracts as stated above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#CWL-8-WR, Tom Bergren, Water & Sediment Control Basin. Total project costs \$131,152; USDA EQIP funding and eligible cost share not to exceed 90% or \$35,120.

Motion (Flottemesch, Stenger) to approve 2015 CWL-South Branch Wild Rice contracts as stated above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Adjourn

With nothing further to report; Chairman Pavelko adjourned the meeting at 10:27 a.m. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Approved: Kathy Stenger, Becker SWCD Secretary

Date: May 17, 2017