



Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, March 14, 2018 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 Flottesch, Eugene Pavelko, Travis Schauer and Kathy Stenger. Staff members include District Administrator Peter Mead, Office Manager Jen Wentz, Soil & Water Resource Technician Ed Clem and NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz.

Call to Order

Chairman Beck called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda Items

(February 21, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes; Employee Program Reports)

February meeting minutes shall be corrected to list area SWCDs by name in the Buffalo Red 1W1P motion.

Motion (Pavelko, Stenger) to approve the February minutes with changes as well as the agenda and consent agenda. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Financials

Treasurers Report and Bills for Approval were reviewed by Wentz. Motion (Flottesch, Schauer) to approve the February Treasurer's Report and March list of bills. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Supervisor's First Quarter Expenses & Special Meetings

Motion (Flottesch, Stenger) to approve and pay the supervisor payroll vouchers and mileage expenses with changes noted. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

District Reports

Administrator's Report

Phil Doll attended a meeting with TNC partners regarding "RIM in the Tree" in the upper Crow Wing watershed. TNC has interest in pursuing a Farm Bill application to fund part of Phil's time.

Peter attended the Watershed Summit on Feb. 24th in the Twin Cities and shared with the board a very appreciative thank you note from Jill Crafton, BWSR board member and executive member of the Isaak Walton League.

Phil, Logan and Peter attended the February "Zcience on Tap" series presenting pollinators by USFW staff. Logan led our table of information and was able to address questions when they arose.

Interviews were held for the two job positions of Conservation Planning Technician and Engineering Technician. Max Schmeling-Rykhus and Nicole Wallace will begin their new positions on April 4.

Mead has begun work on the Biennial Budget Request. The process opened at the beginning of March.

Cost data meeting was held with Wes Drake, Ed Clem, Jeff Norby and Ed Musielewicz to update average material and earthwork costs used in cost estimates for engineered projects.

EOT, Wadena and Hubbard counties met to increase efforts of the Irrigation Scheduler program. They discussed tools used and website data needed that will work together uniformly.

Attended a BWSR and MASWCD grant webinar for future NRCS partnerships. Technical assistance grant funding is encouraged for conservation planning assistance for all programs other than CRP and CSP.

Mead and Musielewicz attended a “Wrap up session” hosted by the freshwater society in New York Mills. This session highlighted the findings and feedback received at three regional producer meetings addressing barriers to conservation. Final results will be shared with participating districts in the near future.

Including the two new staff starting in April and a summer intern for NRCS, we were able to gather slightly used office furniture from the vacated Red River Basin office in Fargo. Office workstation rearranging will soon begin.

Mead attended the planning commission meeting which approved a conditional use permit for building a six foot high fence for the Cormorant Beach project and to satisfy nearby landowner’s privacy.

Engineering Report

Wes has been assisting Claire Olson with the picnic shelter for the Cormorant Beach project. He has also been working with WOT prelims for several landowners and site visits; EOT has a WSCB in the prelim stages and a variety of projects with Becker.

Wetland Conservation Act

Clem has been working with Wally Danielson’s wetland banking proposition. This is a drained basin south of his farmstead. He’s interested in banking credits for Ag use. The process for wetland banking has become arduous and regulation intensive. BWSR does not allow public funds to be used for developing wetland banking credits. Because of many time constraints, the District has denied his request for paid assistance. Steve Hofstad, BWSR Wetland Specialist and Army Corps of Engineer staff have offered another option—the 2018 Road Bank Easement signup which offers landowners a per acre easement payment. The return is less but funds are acquired up front.

Danielson is interested in holding credits for personal use. His application was sent on Friday. He can withhold acres that he wants to utilize from the banking credit pool.

Shoreland Program

Claire Olson has been working on 2018 Native Plant kit order forms and information. She has updated all species of seed mixes for customer and staff information.

She’s been working on plans and design for a few new projects and organizing the projects that will be constructed this spring and fall.

Graphic design projects have been asked of her on a regular basis for advertisements, flyers and other program materials. She is always willing to comply with these requests as well.

Several site visits have been planned for the upcoming season.

Chairman Beck closed the regular board meeting at 9:30 a.m. and opened the Public Hearing.

Public Hearing

Application #18-2, Detroit Lakes Public Utility, E2Q Project Wetland Replacement Plan

Introductions were made. Project description and purpose of meeting was reviewed by Ed Clem—

MPCA has led the need for this change to the wastewater treatment facility based on more stringent discharge requirements as well as future community growth. Maps of the existing and future infrastructure were reviewed.

Purpose and Need—as spelled out by MPCA requirements.

Project Alternatives—3 alternatives were considered including a no-build option, facility relocation, and a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative was brought forward in this application. The others were considered not feasible. Preferred alternative is to use the existing site with new technology that has the ability to reuse existing structures while only slightly increasing the footprint of the facility with minimal impact to surrounding wetlands.

TEP Findings and Recommendations—reviewed by Ed Clem with the following results:

TEP finds that the project purpose and need is reasonable. TEP finds that requirements of wetland impact avoidance, minimization and replacement are met based on alternatives analysis and proposed purchase of wetland bank credits. TEP finds that special considerations including threatened and endangered species and rare natural plant communities will not be significantly impacted as a result of project. TEP recommends approval of replacement plan with one contingency; BWSR Wetland Specialist and District wetland staff concur with impact amounts by reviewing wetland delineation this spring.

The following questions were addressed. Option to bypass St Claire Lake: they looked at the possibility of the Buffalo River and Ditch 5 (west of Stratus Gravel Pit) as well as Lake Sallie and Muskrat Lake but they were both near their water quality limits. The quality of the WWTF discharge water entering St Claire Lake will decrease phosphorous levels currently entering the lake. Land treatment process: retention pond systems and other land disposal systems are not required with the new facility. The new facility will have discharge to St. Claire Lake. Total dispersion will be to the lake and not into irrigation systems or holding ponds. Waste holding changes: solid wastes will be stored on-site and land applied according to MPCA guidelines.

Chairman Beck closed the public hearing at 9:48 a.m. and reopened regular board meeting.

Motion (Flottesch, Schauer) to approve the wetland replacement plan application based on the findings today and the TEP panel findings and their approval contingent upon delineation concurrence this spring. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Open Forum

Logo for District apparel—as the old District logo was registered with the state and still retains a purpose, our new logo is extensively used on websites, reports, flyers, etc. With that said the board has decided to be consistent with employees and chooses to use the new logo for future purchases with the option to continue wearing the old logo if they so choose, but not during public engagements of importance.

Motion (Schauer, Pavelko) to adopt the new logo and be consistent with employee apparel and to be worn at public meetings and conferences. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Buffer Implementation

Compliance Status – Kyle Vareberg, Planning & Zoning Director, has been assisted by Mead to complete a buffer survey. It was a 36-question survey with multiple-part questions asking for compliance information and use of funding from BWSR. Kyle will complete the remaining details and submit.

Adopted Local Ordinance – BWSR has approved Becker County's ordinance as adopted in December.

Mead reviewed the CRP Eligibility Exceptions under FSA Notice CRP-416.

Grants and Agreements

Review & Approve Polaris T.R.A.I.L.S. Submittal – Watland passed information to Mead and both have been working to complete a grant agreement for \$5,000 for treatment options and preserving access to trail systems. This will work in partnership with our CWMA grant funds.

Motion (Stenger, Pavelko) to approve submittal of the T.R.A.I.L.S. grant agreement. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

AIS Prevention

AIS Control Project Cost Share Policy.

DNR has removed all funding for the treatment of existing invasive species. Koenig shared a letter written by Toad Lake Association requesting that similar funds continue with efforts that have shown results on existing treatment areas. Effectiveness is shown but many of these efforts are more of an enhancement than anything else. Douglas County is offering a reimbursement grant for applicants interested in continuing treatment efforts on existing AIS management and we would like to mimic their idea.

Motion (Stenger, Pavelko) to participate in a treatment assistance policy that will allow up to \$4,000 for treatment and/or management of existing AIS. This will mostly be utilized by Lake Associations and Local Government Units. We will use the current funding set aside of \$20,000 with a maximum per applicant of \$4,000. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

State Cost Share Contracts for Approval

#SCS-2-2018, Travis Schauer, Full Season Cover Crops. Estimated project costs \$3,035 with 150% eligibility of EQIP for multi-species. He will complete 27.3 acres.

Motion (Pavelko, Flottesmesch) to approve the 2018 State Cost-Share contract for cover crops. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Clean Water Legacy Contracts for Approval

#CWL-1-CAP, Becker County, Middle Cormorant Beach Project. This project will retain Local Capacity funds and County match. Estimated project costs \$65,425. Some project specifications are not eligible for cost-share. Expected funding of \$58,000 from FY17 and FY18 Local Capacity and County match.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Schauer) to approve the Capacity contract for Middle Cormorant Beach. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Upcoming Events:

Ag in the Classroom, March 20th

Area 1 Meeting, March 20th Crookston

Soil Health Roundtable, March 20th Hawley

Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Workgroup March 21-22nd Moorhead

Annual TWP Weed Inspector Training, March 22nd, Callaway

"Zcience on Tap," March 26th, Zorbaz Detroit Lakes. Lake Sturgeon Restoration.

Local EQIP Workgroup Meeting, April 5th

Adjourn

Chairman Beck adjourned the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

Approved: Eugene Pavelko, Becker SWCD Secretary

Date: April 18, 2018