



## **Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday, January 20, 2021**

### **Meeting Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday January 20, 2021 at the Becker SWCD Shop Facility, 1366 Mallard Street, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Those present were Supervisors Travis Schauer, Tony Beck, Eugene Pavelko, Michelle Andresen and Curt Ballard. Staff members District Administrator Bryan Malone, Office Manager Deana Westberg, NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, District Technician Ed Clem and County Ag Inspector Marsha Watland.

#### **Call to Order**

Chairman Schauer called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

#### **Supervisor Business**

##### *Restate Board and Committee Appointments*

Travis Schauer will remain Board Chairman for calendar year 2021.

Gene Pavelko will remain Vice Chairman for calendar year 2021.

Michelle Andresen will remain Secretary for calendar year 2021.

Tony Beck will remain Treasurer for calendar year 2021.

Curt Ballard will remain Board member for calendar year 2021.

Tony Beck and Gene Pavelko will remain as personnel committee members.

Curt Ballard has been appointed and Gene Pavelko will remain as budget committee members. Tony Beck, as board Treasurer, is considered an ex officio member of this committee.

TSA board delegate has been appointed to Gene Pavelko. All other members will be alternates.

Gene Pavelko has been appointed and Travis Schauer as alternate to the policy committee for Buffalo Red 1W1P.

Beck will remain on the policy committee for Red Eye 1W1P.

Travis Schauer will remain and Gene Pavelko as alternate on the policy committee for Wild Rice 1W1P.

*Recognition of Authorized Representative(s) & Signature Authority* – Bryan Malone, Deana Westberg and Ed Clem as authorized reps or with signature authority. Tony Beck also retains authority with his position of Treasurer.

##### *Recognition of Official Financial Institution*

Motion (Andresen, Pavelko) to continue with Bremer Bank for daily checking and savings and to utilize any bank within our area for the best rates on CD's and other savings investments. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

*Recognition of Official News Publication and legal notices.*

Motion (Beck, Ballard) to remain with the DL Tribune all legal public notices and conservation announcements. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

*Statement of Economic Interest*

Travis Schauer, Gene Pavelko, Michelle Andresen and Tony Beck have filed the annual Statement of Economic Interest at the courthouse. Curt Ballard will schedule an appointment to complete this form.

**Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda Items**

(December 16, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes; Employee Program Reports)

Motion (Beck, Ballard) to approve the consent agenda items including the December meeting minutes and the employee program reports. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Financial Reports**

Malone reviewed the December Treasurers Report and the January Bills for Approval.

Malone reviewed the annual MASWCD dues invoice.

Motion (Ballard, Andresen) to approve the Treasurers Report, bills for payment and MASWCD dues. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**2021 Operations**

2021 Mileage, Travel Policy and Per Diem Rates were explained. The SWCD follows the federal government GSA rates. As of January 1, 2021 the reimbursement mileage rates for privately owned automobiles authorized for business miles driven has gone down 1.5 cents per mile. The new rate is .56 per mile and if Government furnished automobile was available and not used the rate is .16 per mile.

Motion (Pavelko, Beck) to approve the mileage, travel and per diem rates. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

*Review and approve Program Fee Schedules:*

-Tree Planting fee schedule will remain the same:

Machine Planting Rates & Setup	Hand Planting Rates & Setup
Set-up / Staking Fee.....\$150.00	Set-up / Staking Fee.....\$200.00
Bareroot Trees.....\$0.25 per tree	Bareroot Trees.....\$1.50 per tree
Potted Trees.....\$1.50 per tree	Potted Trees.....\$3.00 per tree

No Set up fee for plantings greater than 1,000 trees

-Plat Book, Wall Map and Pesticide Testing fees will remain the same:

Plat Book.....\$35.00 (includes tax) + \$8.00 shipping if requested

Wall Map.....\$40 (includes tax)

Pesticide Testing.....\$25.00 fee to take the test for commercial exams.

The board discussed with Watland if the Pesticide Exam Testing fee should be increased. It was tabled at this time and to be readdressed later in the year with possible increase effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

-Irrigation Water Management Service fee

Charge ½ of the EQIP rate

-Shoreland Service Fee

\$50.00 per hour basic flat rate

-Hydroseeding

Current hourly billable rate plus .30 square foot

-Stormwater Mitigation Service Fee

\$200 survey plan fee plus current hourly billable rate per hour

-Engineering Assistance Service Fees

Current hourly billable rate plus 15%

-Shoreland Mitigation Service Fee

Current hourly billable rate plus 15%

-Gravel Pit Certifications in surrounding counties. If Watland has the time and resource, she is allowed to provide this service at a charge of \$150 Certification Fee plus \$75.00 per hour including travel time.

Motion (Ballard, Beck) to approve the Program Fee Schedules that supersede all previous rates and board motions. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **District Reports**

District Administrator Bryan Malone reported:

- Still helping Pennington SWCD now and then.
- Weekly Monday Morning Staff Huddle Meetings via Microsoft Teams.
- Attended a Becker County Department Head Meeting.
- Scheduled to go before the County Board Meeting on 1/19 to introduce myself and for Karl Koenig to present the AIS 2020 report and 2021 budget.
- Meeting with SWCD and TSA staff as the opportunity arises.
- Met with Mead, Westberg and Bentley for grant log meeting.
- Completed workplans in elink to receive funding from BWSR.
- Went to the banks with Westberg to update signatory accounts and set up the new CD.
- Appeared on the Hodge Podge radio show.
- Numerous 1W1P meetings with BWSR staff, Buffalo Red River, Wild Rice and Red Eye.
- Assisted Clem with TEP scheduling and meeting on 1/19.
- Spoke with Holman of TNC to extend the RIM agreement for two more years.
- Met with the TSA Area 1 Managers on 1/12 to discuss staffing options and reorganization possibilities. Working on the possible reorganization budget. The potential reorganization could only retain the GIS Specialist and the other two existing staff would get employed by a District in the North and South. Licenses would remain in the TSA and the remaining grant funds would be equally split among the 16 districts.

### **Open Forum**

No discussion

### **MCC Apprentice**

Minnesota Conservation Corp hosts a summer apprentice program for Natural Resource students ages 18-25. The MCC advertise, interview, hire and pay the apprentice. This paid volunteer would help us with AIS inspections and data, Crow Wing project and summer field work. A fee of \$6,600 is paid to MCC for the position.

Motion (Beck, Andresen) to approve the hiring of a summer MCC apprentice. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **County Ag Inspector**

Marsha Watland, County Ag Inspector and SWCD employee presented a 2020 weed inspection summary complimenting the cooperation's with Gravel Pits, Townships and Counties, Sentence to Serve and fellow Ag Inspectors and SWCD employees.

Watland intends to retire someday and wants to propose training in an Assistant Ag Inspector. The requirement to be on the Minnesota Association of County Agricultural Inspectors Executive board is three years as a CAI. Watland sees the importance of a CAI being on a State Association Executive Board for up-to-date information and input to benefit Becker County and Associations. CAI training is offered online in February. Some of the duties of the CAI include:

- Seed Inspections
- Enforce Noxious Weeds
- Offer Pesticide Exams
- Ordering and Application of pesticides
- Gravel Pit Certifications
- Biological Controls
- Meet with Townships & Counties for yearly training
- Enforcement of Legal Notices
- Grant applications, budgets and administration
- Work with Sentence to Serve
- Work with Becker County CWMA Partners which includes Becker County Natural Resources and Highway Department, NRCS, FSA, USFWS, DNR, MNDOT, Recreation Organizations, White Earth Ag Program, Townships and Cities.
- Serve on many boards

Watland proudly announced that she was just notified that Becker SWCD was awarded a 2021 MDA Noxious Weed & Invasive Plant Grant for \$5,000. Funding available is \$80,000 for 87 counties.

### **2021 Financial Assistance Policy Review**

Malone reviewed the main points of each policy and noted no additions or changes for 2021.

State Cost Share Fund Policy: 50% of shoreland and 75% of trees

Flat Rate Cost Share Assistance Policy: Buffers \$300 an acre and Engineering fees for Ag Waste a flat rate of \$3,500

Clean Water Legacy Cost Share Assistance Policy: Current CWL grants with cost-share:

- Buffalo Red Shallow Lakes and Mainstream Improvement Strategy Phase II
- Becker County Targeted Phosphorus Reduction and Lake Protection Phase II
- Top Down Buffalo River Watershed Accelerated Improvement Project
- South Branch Wild Rice Sediment Reduction Project Phase II
- Local Capacity Services

Septic System Upgrade Grant(s) Policy (SSTS): The \$40,000 is a pass through to the county grant for septic improvements to low income families. The individual cost share is 50% or not to exceed \$7,500.

The grantee must be a permanent primary resident and remain at the granted land for 3 years or the grant is forfeited.

Motion (Beck, Ballard) to approve the 2021 Financial Assistance Policies for State Cost Share, Flat Rate State Cost Share, Clean Water Legacy Cost Share Assistance and Septic System Upgrade Grants.

Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans**

#### *Ottertail Planning MOA*

Ottertail River Watershed has been approved by BWSR to begin the planning process. The LGUs are asked to approve a MOA stating they will work with the other LGUs to develop a plan.

Motion (Ballard, Andresen) to approve the Ottertail Planning MOA as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

#### *Wild Rice Plan Adoption*

The Wild Rice Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan was approved by BWSR in December. LGUs are asked to adopt the plan and then begin working on the implementation plan which provides needed funding to install conservation practices that are part of the plan.

Motion (Andresen, Ballard) to adopt the Wild Rice CWMP as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

#### *Redeye Implementation MOA*

The Redeye River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan was adopted by the SWCD in September 2020. The LGUs are developing the implementation work plan that must be submitted to BWSR by March 1 first to receive implementation funding in 2021. LGUs are asked to enter an MOA that organizes the group working together to implement practices identified in the plan in order to submit the work plan.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to approve the Redeye River CWMP Implementation MOA as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

### **Grants & Agreements**

#### *The Nature Conservancy (TNC)*

This agreement for Phil Doll and the Crow Wing Easement was extended for two more years at \$12,000 per year. Contract extended to Feb 28, 2023.

Motion (Ballard, Beck) to approve The Nature Conservancy Agreement as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

#### *NACD Conservation Planning*

National Association of Conservation Districts Technical Assistance grant funds are available again for EQIP contracts and Rykhus's Conservation Technician time. Application will be made for the additional funding.

#### *NACD Urban Agriculture Conservation Grant Proposal- FY2021*

Funds are available to conservation districts to increase their capacity related to urban technical assistance and small-scale conservation, while addressing community needs in both rural and urban contexts. Application could be made to support our shoreline restoration program with a title of grant project title of: "For the Lake's Sake". This could provide technical assistance to urban Becker County

residents planning and implementing best management practices for restoring shorelines, managing and treating stormwater, identifying native plants, increasing pollinator habitat and improving water quality.

Motion (Pavelko, Beck) to approve the NACD UAC grant application and determine that no conflict of interest exists. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

#### *EOT & WOT Shared Engineer*

Discussion has taken place with East Otter Tail SWCD and West Otter Tail SWCD to update the shared Engineer services contract and renew. Clay SWCD has expressed interest in joining the group and would allow Wes to be removed from the 15% time spent on TSA projects. SWCD Engineer Drake time could then be split by four. A new agreement will be presented at a future meeting.

#### **Clean Water Legacy Amendments for Approval**

#CWL-37-BR, Curtis Nelson, WASCOD - Increase total cost-share percentage from 50% to 90% as they had installed added BMP as recommended by SWCD staff. Half (45%) from CWF funds and half (45%) from 319 funds.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to approve Clean Water Legacy Amendments as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

#### **Clean Water Legacy Vouchers for Payment**

# CWL-12-WR, John Austinson, WASCODS-Total Project Cost: \$78,585.12; 90% Cost Share: \$70,726.61  
# CWL-37-BR, Curtis Nelson, WASCODS-Total Project Cost: \$49,837.96; 45% Cost Share: \$22,427.08

Motion (Beck, Ballard) to approve Clean Water Legacy Vouchers for payment as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

*Next month Regular Board Meeting to be held at the Holiday Inn in Detroit Lakes, MN on Wednesday February 17th*

#### **Adjourn**

Seeing no further business, Chairman Schauer adjourned the meeting at 11:19 am.

**Approved: Michelle Andresen, Becker SWCD Secretary**

**Date: 02/17/2021**