



Blue Earth County

Soil & Water Conservation District

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Approved Minutes of March 10, 2016

Supervisors Present: Chairman: Emily Javens, Vice Chair: John Rollings, Treasurer: John Shanahan, Secretary: Carol Krosch, and PR&I: William Gardner.

Staff Present: District Manager: Jerad Bach, Conservation Specialist: John Billings, Interim District Conservationist: Danielle Waldschmidt

Guest: None

Proceedings: Meeting called to order by Chairman: Javens, at 4:05 p.m.

Pledge: All present said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Housekeeping:

Agenda: Rollings moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

Guests: None

Minutes: Rollings moved to approve the February 4, 2016 minutes, seconded by Krosch. Motion.

Treasurer's Report: (see attached)

Balance on hand	\$ 571,123.43
Receipts	\$ 185,002.31
Disbursements	<u>\$ 31,158.32</u>
Total	\$ 724,967.42

This record notes total dollar activity held by Blue Earth County SWCD.

Disbursements and receipts were reviewed and Supervisor monthly Per Diem/Expenses read. Krosch moved to pay Supervisors Per Diem/Expenses, and accept the Treasurer's Report subject to audit, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

Open Communications:

Guest: None

District Conservationist: Waldschmidt presented report. (See Attached) Waldschmidt announced that NRCS was close to making a decision the new hire, but no timeline had been established yet. Waldschmidt presented the Civil Rights Policies of the NRCS, and all Supervisors signed a form acknowledging the Civil Rights Policies had been reviewed.

District Manager: Bach presented report. (See Attached) Rollings asked for clarification on buffer widths for ditches. Javens and Shanahan asked about the expense of buffer seeding. Bach reviewed the current rules of the Buffer Legislation and explained the details concerning widths and seeding cost responsibilities. There was further discussion on the Buffer Legislation. Rollings added he has a couple air particulate samplers that he is willing to give the SWCD or anyone that might want to study wind erosion and particulates.

New Business:

FY16 Capacity Fund Equipment Purchase: Bach reviewed the details of the tractor purchase for the SWCD seeding services. Bach presented the quoted price of \$58,856.06 for a 2015 John Deere 5100e Tractor. Bach encouraged the Board to use 25% local cash to go with the FY16 Capacity Fund Grant. Rollings moved to purchase

the 2015 John Deere 5100e Tractor with (\$43,500.00) 74% coming from the FY16 Capacity Fund Grant and (\$15,356.06) 26% from the Local Cash reserve savings, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

LCCMR Letter of Support: Bach explained the purpose of the grant that the SWCD, County Ditch Authority, and ISG are planning to submit within the Lake Crystal Watershed. Bach reviewed the reasoning behind the Ditch Authority being the applicant, since they will be in charge of maintenance through the ditch system. Gardner asked about the original wetland project that had been proposed for the same site. Bach explained the proposed original plan did not fit the Wetland Banking Program. Rollings moved to approve a letter of support from the Blue Earth SWCD for the LCCMR grant application, seconded by Gardener. Motion adopted.

MPI Banquet Donation: Billings reviewed the letter of request from Minnesota Pheasants Inc. Billings discussed the past donations to the banquet auction. Gardner asked if one of the tree bundles could be changed to a packet of pollinator mix this year. Rollings moved to donate one bundle of trees and one packet of pollinator seed mix to the Minnesota Pheasants Inc banquet auction, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted with Gardner abstaining.

Position Title Update: Bach explained the evolution of the changing of titles for the new hire and how it relates with other titles in the office. Bach suggested the new hire be titled Conservation Specialist with the hierarchy of titles in the office being District Manager, Assistant Manager, Sr. Conservation Specialist, and Conservation Specialist. He said that there wasn't an updated position description or pay scale for all positions at this time, but he wanted to have the titles and structure in place prior to hiring the new employee. Bach explained that he desired to change Billings' title to Assistant Manager due to his advance level of access and responsibilities in the office. Bach explained how this system would be a promotion based system where employees have the ability to move up. The Supervisors came to a consensus that the new title should be Conservation Technician. Rollings moved to change Billings' position title to Assistant manager, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted. Javens moved to have the new position be titled Conservation Technician with office hierarchy of District Manager, Assistant Manager, Sr. Conservation Specialist, Conservation Specialist, and Conservation Technician, seconded by Gardner. Motion adopted.

Area VI MASWCD Dues: Billings reviewed the action taken by the Supervisors at the last Area VI MASWCD meeting to have dues set at \$400.00. Billings requested to pay the dues. Krosch moved to pay \$400.00 for the 2016 Area VI MASWCD dues, seconded by Rollings. Motion adopted.

Supervisors and Chairman:

Supervisors: Rollings reported that there are some odd land sales happening in north western Iowa that are quite confusing. **Krosch** reported that the County Board had approved a letter of support for the LCCMR grant. Krosch noted discussion at the County Board meeting about repairs to the Rapidan Dam. Krosch also mention the \$0.78 per acre assessment to benefitted landowners in ditches for the new Ditch Authority employee. She said there is a \$20.00 minimum to benefitted landowners in those ditch systems. **Javens** reported she attended the Governor's Summit where there were some protesters. Javens highlighted the statement from the Summit that "Access to Clean Water is a Civil Right." Javens said it was pretty powerful meeting. Javens said she attended the Blue Earth County Water Plan meeting, and she thought it was a decent meeting. Javens reported that the Area VI MASWCD meeting had discussion on shared services, buffers, and she presented about One Watershed One Plan. **Shanahan** reported that the Area VI MASWCD meeting was good, and he said Javens gave a superb presentation on One Watershed One Plan. **Gardner** announced that MPI purchased a parcel, and they donated funds toward the purchase of another parcel in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Gardner reported MPI is preparing for the banquet, and wondered how many people had heard the radio announcements for the banquet.

Adjourn: There being no further business Javens adjourned the meeting.

- Meeting adjourned 6:18 pm
- Next meeting will be held April 4, 2016
- Minutes submitted by John Billings, Assistant Manager

Approved Date: _____ Carol Krosch, Secretary _____

Approved Date: _____ Emily Javens, Chairman _____