



Blue Earth County

Soil & Water Conservation District

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Unapproved Minutes of May 5, 2016

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

Staff Present: District Manager: Jerad Bach and Conservation Specialist: Tina Warta

Guests: Commissioner: Will Purvis, Farmbill Biologist: Jeff Potts, and Area Certification Specialist: Bridgett Winkels.

Proceedings: Meeting called to order by Vice Chair: John Rollings at 4:06 p.m.

Pledge: All present said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Housekeeping:

Agenda: Bach made a revision to the agenda and added **2015 Audit Quote** to New Business. Krosch moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

Guests: Rollings welcomed Purvis, Potts, and Winkels to the meeting.

Minutes: Rollings moved to approve the April 7, 2016 minutes, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

Treasurer's Report: (See Attached) Bach presented a draft Treasurer's Report for review but did not recommend approval of the report as presented noting that next month when Billings was back both reports would be presented for approval. Supervisor monthly Per Diem/Expenses were read. Shanahan moved to pay Supervisors Per Diem/Expenses, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.

Open Communications:

Guest: Purvis gave an update regarding spring road/building projects that are currently underway. Some projects mentioned include: upgrades to County Road 1 turn back from Good Thunder to County Road 9, the work being done on Monks and Stadium Road, and the development of final construction plans for the \$2.4 million project at Rapidan Dam. Purvis also mentioned a few projects that are being planned, which include repaving County Road 1 from Good Thunder to County Road 40 and others on County Road 14, north of Lake Crystal, County Road 12, and potentially 3 bridge projects. The 3 bridge projects are contingent on receiving funds from the legislature to occur. Rollings asked if they are re-doing the corners on Highway 66 (now County Road 1). Purvis said those curves will not be changed, they are currently softening the curves on County Road 1 north of Good Thunder.

District Manager: Bach presented report. (See Attached).

New Business:

MN Ag Certification Program: Winkels introduced herself as the Area Certification Specialist for the new Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program that is administered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Winkels passed out brochures and gave a brief presentation on the program concept, benefits, passed out applications for the program, explained the assessment process, and described how producers receive priority for technical assistance and cost-share/incentive payments. Rollings asked about septic systems and if compliance is contingent upon getting certified. Winkels answered that most counties have rules in place to update septic and the point of the program is to not get producers in trouble. Krosch asked if a producer is tied to the program if they start

the application and assessment. Winkels replied that a producer can back out of the certification process at any time. Rollings asked Winkels what her background is for becoming certified, Winkels explained that she is not certified at the moment, however she was previously employed at the Watonwan SWCD and ISG. Winkels went on to explain that representatives from the MDA are reviewing her work and to become certified there are multiple NRCS trainings required.

Blue Earth County – Bray Park Project: Warta explained the project and requested payment of \$32,975.52 to Blue Earth County to pay for the 5 rock checks, 2 rock chutes, and 2 rip-rap basins constructed in the more than 1,000 foot ravine. Rollings moved to approve payment of \$32,975.52, seconded by Gardner. Motion adopted.

FY17 Farmbill Assistance Grant: Bach explained the Farmbill Assistance funds are administered by BWSR and help fund Potts' position in our office. At this time, the District is able to re-apply for funding to continue this position. The District provides office space, vehicles, and \$6,500.00 match (up from \$5,000.00 match required for the previous application) for the \$65,000.00 grant. Shanahan moved to re-apply for the funds, Krosch seconded. Motion adopted.

2015 Accomplishments Report: Bach explained the 2015 Accomplishments Report (See Attached).

Conservation Technician Equipment (Desk & Computer): Bach discussed the need for an additional computer and workstation for the Conservation Technician. Shanahan moved to give the District Manager authority to purchase office equipment as needed for the position with a cap of \$3,000.00, Krosch seconded. Motion adopted.

FY15 Easement Delivery – Close Out: Bach explained report describing how the District used the FY15 Easement Delivery Funds (See Attached). Krosch moved to accept the FY15 Easement Delivery – Close Out report, Shanahan seconded. Motion adopted.

FY16 Conservation Delivery – Close Out: Bach explained report describing how the District used the FY16 Conservation Delivery – Close Out and the inclusion of overhead costs such as rent and internet. (See Attached) Rollings moved to accept the FY16 Conservation Delivery – Close Out report, Krosch seconded. Motion adopted.

SWCD Supervisor Election Filing (May 17th – 31st): Bach wanted to make the board aware of the filing dates this year. Shanahan, Javens, and Krosch are all up for election.

2015 Audit Quote: Bach explained that the District will need to have an audit conducted for 2015. Bach received a quote from Michael Peterson for \$2,125.00. Krosch moved to contract Peterson to do the 2015 audit for \$2,125.00, Shanahan seconded. Motion adopted.

Farmbill Biologist: Potts presented report. (See Attached).

LeSueur Watershed Coordinator Position: Warta presented report (See Attached).

Supervisors and Chairman:

Supervisors: Shanahan mentioned he has been doing more farming this spring and has not had as much time to attend meetings in the area. Krosch noted nothing new from the County Board meetings. Krosch mentioned the new hire in the Drainage Department at the County, Ryan Hiniker. Krosch said he has been getting very involved with the ditch projects and inspections. Krosch also mentioned that folks are still confused about the ditch assessments; she has had to help a few residents and encouraged them to contact Craig Austinson or Ryan Hiniker for assistance.

Rollings did not have anything to add.

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

- Meeting adjourned 6:07 pm
- Next meeting will be held June 9, 2016
- Minutes submitted by Tina Warta, Conservation Specialist

Approved Date: _____ Carol Krosch, Secretary _____

Approved Date: _____ Emily Javens, Chairman _____