



## *Blue Earth County*

### *Soil & Water Conservation District*

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1160 South Victory Drive, Suite #3  
Mankato, MN 56001  
(507) 345-4744  
(507) 345-6036

Approved Minutes of October 6, 2016

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

**Staff Present:** Assistant Manager: John Billings,

**Guests:** County Commissioner: Will Purvis, County Commissioner Kip Bruender

**Proceedings:** Meeting called to order by Chairman Emily Javens at 4:00 p.m.

**Pledge:** All present said the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Housekeeping:**

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

**Guests:** Javens recognized Purvis and Bruender.

**Minutes:** Rollings moved to approve the September 8, 2016 minutes, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

**Treasurer's Report:** (See Attached)

Balance on hand	\$ 703,359.64
Receipts	\$ 245,460.84
Disbursements	<u>\$ 33,873.23</u>
Total	\$ 914,947.25

Billings presented the Treasurer's Report for September. Rollings moved to approve the September Treasurer's Report subject to audit, and pay Supervisors Per Diem/Expenses, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

#### **Open Communications Continued:**

**Guest: Bruender** presented report (See Attached). Rollings asked about the conditions on County Ditch 28. Purvis said there is talk between lawyers at this point, and the County issued a letter to the contractor informing them that the contractor had broken the contract. Javens discussed complaints about a Skyline ravine that had a shed built at the bottom. Krosch asked if the County has a wind turbine ordinance similar to the solar ordinance. Bruender said there are ordinances in place that are working, and he said a lot of time and effort was put into the development of the ordinances. Shanahan expressed that people are not very happy about the Cobb River overflow and the weir structure in Danville Township. Shanahan said the water went over the bridge, closed State Hwy 30, and blew out a Township road. Bruender said that he could get the Engineer from the project to review the elevations and investigate whether or not the weir structure worked properly. Shanahan further discussed the weir being the cause of flooding, and had more flooding concerns with County Rd 159. Shanahan said he had talked with the manager of a CREP easement that he has concerns with, and he said they are willing to work with BWSR and the County to remedy any situation with the easement. Bruender told Shanahan to let him know when he would like to meet. Rollings extended an invitation to the Commissioners to resume participation in the Daniel Boone Trail meetings now that rules have been set. Purvis said he plans to attend the Daniel Boone Trail meetings again now that other meeting obligation have lessened. Javens asked how the Danville Township can move forward and put the issues with the weir to bed. Javens suggested a study into the effectiveness of the structure. The Supervisors and

Commissioners agreed that this issue should be handled outside of the SWCD meetings going forward. Bruender said that he is in favor of a landowner meeting and possible second opinions on the structure. Krosch said she wanted to commend the Commissioners and County staff on the great job that they have done through the flooding event.

**Open Communications:**

**District Conservationist: Not Present**

**District Manager: Billings** explained that Bach could not be in attendance. Billings reported the workload and meetings that staff were involved in as a result of the flooding event. Billings expressed how much better the County's emergency system worked during this flood compared to the previous one in 2014. He said that everyone's roles between agencies were much more defined and efficient when dealing with inquiries from landowners. Billings reported the TSA had their quarterly meeting to introduce new staff to the TSA Board. Rollings asked if the District should develop a policy about allowing staff to help with emergency sandbagging during flooding events. Billings said that the staff was pretty busy handling calls during the flood event, but no one was prohibited from sandbagging. Javens said there might not need to be an actual policy in place for particular things like that, but she said it could be addressed as we go through policies. Javens explained that she wants to start the process of developing updated policy books and feels the District needs to plan conservation efforts better. Billings disagreed and felt that the recent Board approved prioritizing and grant applications have showed a very targeted plan for achieving water quality benefits in specific high profile and high nutrient load areas. Krosch and Shanahan agreed. Javens further explained she didn't feel the District was doing a bad job, she just wants to make sure we are working with our mission and policies, and wants the Board to have a more active role in planning priorities.

**New Business:**

**FY17 Buffer Implementation Funding: Billings** explained the funding the source of the grant and how it will again be used for staff time and equipment for Buffer Legislation implementation. Rollings moved to accept and have Bach sign the FY17 Buffer Implementation Grant, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.

**MASWCD Resolution Packet: Billings** explained the resolution packet and ballot process for the MASWCD Convention. Javens explained the Resolution Committee recommended votes. Billings said he would have to submit the final ballot to the MASWCD by November 1, and he would send out a reminder email.

**Supervisors and Chairman:**

**Supervisors: Rollings** asked to have the engineering staff reevaluate a conservation project because of the recent flood. **Krosch** said she is very sympathetic with the County Commissioners and staff, and said they did a great job during the flood. Krosch expressed her sympathies to Gardner for his loss. Everyone offered their sympathies. **Javens** said she had nothing further to report. **Shanahan** reported he attended the South Central TSA meeting and enjoyed being introduced to the new staff. Shanahan went on to compliment the District staff on the great job that they have done. Rollings noted this is the best staff that has been a part of the SWCD since he has been a Supervisor. Gardner and Krosch both complimented the staff as well. Javens also said she thinks the staff has been doing an excellent job. **Gardner** thanked everyone for the nice plant at his mother's funeral. Gardner said Pheasants Forever contact MPI about two different parcels. Gardner said a few members attended the Steele County Minnesota Pheasants Inc's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event. He also said a few members will attend the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for the Minnesota Valley Federal Wildlife Refuge.

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

- \* Meeting adjourned 5:25 pm
- \* Next meeting will be held November 10, 2016
- \* Minutes submitted by John Billings, Assistant Manager

Approved Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Carol Krosch, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Approved Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Emily Javens, Chairman \_\_\_\_\_