



# *Blue Earth County*

## *Soil & Water Conservation District*

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Approved Minutes of December 8, 2016

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

**Staff Present:** District Manager: Jerad Bach, Assistant Manager: John Billings, and NRCS District Conservationist: Reginald Liddell

**Guests:** County Commissioner: Will Purvis, Farmbill Biologist: Jeff Potts, and NRCS Soil Conservationist: Keith Feliciano-Cortes

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

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

### **Housekeeping:**

**Agenda:** Agenda was reviewed. Rollings added Bylaw Amendment under New Business. Krosch moved to approve the revised agenda, seconded by Rollings. Motion adopted.

**Guests:** Javens recognized Purvis, Potts and Feliciano-Cortes.

**Minutes:** Rollings moved to approve the November 10, 2016 minutes, seconded by Gardner. Motion adopted.

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

Balance on hand	\$ 789,413.43
Receipts	\$ 404,879.90
Disbursements	<u>\$ 21,697.54</u>
Total	\$1,172,595.79

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

### **Open Communications**

#### **Guests:**

**County Commissioner: Purvis** reported the County held a budget presentation for 2017. The Citizen Academy is now taking applications. A shred event was held. CD28 project has a new contractor and enough work was completed that the flood water is now drawing down. Javens asked if Purvis attended AMC and how it was. Purvis said it was a good event but very busy.

**Farmbill Biologist: Potts** presented report. (See attached) Krosch asked how they go about establishing pollinator habitat into an existing cover. Potts said in most cases they have to remove any existing cover and start over. Rollings asked if pollinator enhancement was available for older RIM contracts. Potts explained that older RIM contracts are eligible for pollinator enhancement if funds are available.

**District Conservationist: Liddell** reviewed site visits and project payment updates. He updated the Board that Feliciano-Cortes was now handling the 1026 requests. EQIP currently has 7 new applications. CSP has 1 new

application and 3 or 4 that were deferred. Liddell is planning to hold a CSP meeting with area agronomist sometime soon.

**District Manager: Bach** noted the 35 Middle Minnesota Watershed interviews were still in progress for the WRAPS report. Fall cost share projects were slow due to all the wet site conditions. Paperwork is getting wrapped up for FY15 cost share projects. There were 2 wetland violations the past month in the City of Mankato. One of Two fall seeding projects had been completed. Bach explained that FSA, NRCS and the SWCD had a CRP meeting. An agreement was reached that the SWCD would help work on the CRP Buffer practices and assist with other practices as workload allowed. Currently there are over 200 people on the CRP waiting list. Bach noted that RIM wetland construction projects had wrapped up and the cost share paperwork was being completed. There was a CD56 landowner meeting held November 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss a repair project. Bach noted that he had completed employee reviews for SWCD staff. Bach finished with an update of the MASWCD convention he attended.

#### **New Business:**

**Comprehensive Plan: Bach** gave an update on the County water plan and that they were still addressing BWSR comments before resubmitting the plan to BWSR. Bach explained that in order to remain eligible for BWSR funding the SWCD needs to approve a Comprehensive Plan before the end of December. Bach reviewed the current draft of the SWCD Comprehensive Plan. **Rollings moved to approve the SWCD Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Krosch. During discussion Javens noted that she had some concerns about section 14. All voted Opposed, Motion Denied. Rollings moved to hold a special meeting on December 15, 2016 at 3:30 to review and approve the SWCD Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.**

**MN Conservation Corps Apprentice Application: Bach** explained the program and that the SWCD could apply for a position. If funded the Corps Apprentice would work for the SWCD from mid-May until mid-August. **Krosch moved to authorize Bach to apply for MN Conservation Corps Apprentice, seconded by Rollings. Motion adopted.**

**GBERBA Contract – LeSueur River Grant: Bach** explained that the original grant agreement that GBERBA had for funding was extended another year until December 2017. The current contract for services between the SWCD and GBERBA expires on December 2016. Bach presented the contract for services amendment GBERBA had prepared extending services until December 2017. **Rollings moved to approve the contract amendment, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.**

**2017 Budget: Bach** reviewed the proposed budget for 2017. **Rollings moved to approve the 2017 Budget as presented, seconded by Gardner. Motion adopted**

**Pay Scale: Billings** presented a draft pay scale for the SWCD since the old scale is out of date and the board asked Billings to look into an update. **Rollings moved to approve the pay scale as presented, seconded by Krosch.** During discussion concerns came up about the new pay ranges needing some adjustments or further review. **All voted Opposed, Motion Denied. Rollings moved to send the pay scale to the Personnel Committee for further review and bring back in January, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.**

**Employee Reviews: Bach** presented an update of the SWCD staff reviews that were completed. Explained he would like to update the employee review evaluation sheets for next year. Bach noted once concern but overall staff were functioning at a high level. **Javens** presented the personnel committee review of Bach. Said he is currently exceeding the standards and had no concerns at this time. The board consensus was to have the personnel committee meet to review the employee reviews since they didn't get a chance before the meeting.

**Committee Assignment Review: Bach** reviewed the current committee assignment and appointment sheets. Discussion was held on the value of each assignment and appointment. Changes were made adding and removing assignments and appointments. Further review and final approval will occur in January.

**Bylaw Amendment: Rollings** discussed that currently the SWCD Policy is to allow a Supervisor to be chair for up to two years max. He noted that the current chair was coming to the end of her second year. Rollings said he would

like to see the max limit of consecutive years for chair to be four, but remain one year terms. **Rollings moved to change the max limit a Supervisor can consecutively be chair to four years, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.**

**Supervisors and Chairman:**

**Supervisors:** **Rollings** was sorry he had to leave the MASWCD convention early for medical reasons. He noted changes to the Metro SWCDs Supervisor districts. **Krosch** noted it was one of the better MASWCD conventions that she had attended. **Javens** said that she had attended both the MAWD and the MASWCD conventions and that the MASWCD convention is much better. She gave an update of NACD changes. **Shanahan** updated the board on the GBERBA and AreaVI meetings he attended. Both had a good speaker from Forever Green. **Gardner** stated that MPI was looking into buying a couple of tracts of land and that they were in constant talks to USFWS.

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

- \* Meeting adjourned 7:34 pm
- \* Special meeting to be held December 15, 2016
- \* Next regular meeting will be held January 5, 2017
- \* Minutes submitted by Jerad Bach, District Manager

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

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