



Blue Earth County

Soil & Water Conservation District

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Approved Minutes of January 5, 2017

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, Conservation Specialist: Tina Warta, and NRCS District Conservationist: Reginald Liddell

Guest: Commissioner: Kip Bruender, Farmbill Biologist: Jeff Potts

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

Pledge: All present said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Oath of Office: Vice Chair: Rollings lead Javens, Krosch, and Shanahan in the Oath of Office.

Election of Officers: Chairman: Javens called for nominations for the Officer designations. Rollings moved elect Javens as Chair, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted. Krosch moved to elect Rollings as Vice Chair, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted. Gardner moved to elect Shanahan as Treasurer, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted. Rollings moved to elect Gardner as Public Relations and Information, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted. Rollings moved to elect Krosch as Secretary, seconded Shanahan. Motion adopted.

Committee Assignments: Chairman: Javens called for the Board to make any changes to the Supervisor Assignments and SWCD Committees. Rollings moved to keep the Budget, Education & Promotion, and Personnel Committees the same as 2016; change the SWCD Policies Committee representatives to Rollings, Shanahan and the District Manager; and change the County Ditch Law/Administration Committee representatives to Krosch, Shanahan, and the District Manager. Seconded by Gardner. Motion Adopted. Rollings moved to keep the Blue Earth county Extension Liaison, Crystal/Loon Lake Association/Crystal Waters, County Commissioners Meeting, MN Pheasants Inc, Madison Lake Association, South Central Technical Service Area, USDA-FSA EQIP, County Ditch Projects Assignments the same as 2016; change the GBERBA representatives to Shanahan and Rollings; add the Ballantyne Lake Association Assignment with Javens and Rollings as the representatives; and add the County Water Plan Assignment with Javens and Shanahan as the representatives, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.

207 SWCD Board Meeting Schedule: Chairman: Javens called for discussion or changes to the Board Meeting schedule. Krosch moved to approve the 2017 SWCD Board Meeting and Holiday Schedule as presented, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

Per Diem/Mileage Rate: Chairman: Javens called for discussion or changes to the Per Diem and mileage reimbursement rates. Bach noted the mileage rate was set to change from \$0.54 to \$0.535 starting on January 1, 2017 if the Supervisors choose to accept the change. Bach also explained the District needs to official choose a newspaper for announcements and a bank for the District's finances. Rollings moved to approve the new mileage reimbursement rate of \$0.535; the Meal Reimbursement Rates (See attached); the Supervisor Per Diem Rates (See attached); keep the SWCD official Newspaper as the Maple River Messenger; and keep the SWCD Official Bank as U.S. Bank, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.

Housekeeping:

Agenda: Krosch moved to approve the revised agenda, seconded by Gardner. Motion adopted.

Guests: Javens thanked Bruender and Potts for attending.

Minutes: Krosch moved to approve the December 8, 2016 minutes, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

Rollings moved to approve the December 15, 2016 minutes, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

Treasurer's Report: (see attached)

Balance on hand	\$1,172,595.79
Receipts	\$ 30,202.97
Disbursements	<u>\$ 390,827.66</u>
Total	\$ 811,971.10

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

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

Open Communications:

Guest: Bruender reported the County's budget passed with a 5.9% levee. Bruender announced Commissioner Piepho was the new chair for 2017. There was discussion on the LeSueur River flood event funding.

Conservation Specialist: Warta announced she will be leaving for a new position with a New Ulm company in their environmental compliance division. Everyone expressed that she would be missed.

District Conservationist: Liddell presented report (See Attached). Liddell explained the informational handouts for volunteering with the NRCS.

Farmbill Biologist: Potts presented report (See Attached). Rollings mentioned potential issues involving Pheasants Forever in Renville County. Potts hadn't heard of any issues yet.

District Manager: Bach reported the Blue Earth SWCD Comprehensive Plan was approved by BWSR. Bach reviewed the map from the Comprehensive Plan that highlights the 2017 LeSueur CWF Grant area. Bach explained the initial buffer review was completed for BWSR, and noted that we will need to consider what Other Waters will be reported to BWSR. Rollings and Krosch asked about details with County enforcement and buffer widths.

Committees:

Personnel - Pay Scale: Javens explained the Personnel Committee reviewed through the proposed pay scale, salary ranges, and employee reviews. Javens reported that the Personnel Committee will be taking more time to review pay scale options, and will meet again in a couple months to do an in-depth assessment of positions and position descriptions.

Personnel – Employee Reviews: Javens discussed the employee reviews. Javens noted that Bach, Billings, and Warta had excellent performance reviews for the past year. Javens reported the assessment of Roser would be to extend probation two months to March. Javens presented wage increases for employees noting that Warta would have received an increase, if she wasn't moving on. Javens presented Bach's wage increase from \$29.00 to \$30.00 and Billings' wage increase from \$22.00 to 24.50. Javens noted there would not be an increase at this time for Roser. Rollings moved to accept the employee reviews, extend Roser's probation to March, and increased Bach's wage to \$30.00 and Billings' wage to 24.50 effective January 9th, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.

Cost-Share:

MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program-Application Payment, Caleb Amundson: Billings requested payment approval of \$100.00 for Caleb Amundson's Application Completion. Krosch moved to approve payment of \$100.00 for Caleb Amundson's Application Completions, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.

MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program-Application Payment, Blane Amundson: Billings requested payment approval of \$100.00 for Blane Amundson's Application Completion. Rollings moved to approve payment of \$100.00 for Blane Amundson's Application Completions, seconded by Gardner. Motion adopted.

New Business:

MASWCD Dues: **Billings** presented the invoice for the 2016-2017 dues and requested approval of payment. **Billings** noted the dues were less than the previous year. **Rollings** moved make payment of \$4,351.85 for the 2016-2017 MASWCD dues, seconded by **Gardner**. Motion adopted.

FY15 State Cost-Share Closeout: **Bach** reviewed the final report involving all the projects and payments made for the FY15 State Cost-Share grant.

Conservation Specialist Vacancy: **Bach** explained the need to replace the Conservation Specialist position as soon as possible. **Bach** asked the Boards advice on how to post the position considering the applications might fit better within the Conservation Technician description than the Conservation Specialist description. **Javens** said that many engineer job postings have two potential levels that that the applicant could be hired for depending on qualifications. Everyone agreed that a dual level employment posting would be the best fit for this situation. **Rollings** moved to have staff post the position as Conservation Specialist or Conservation Technician with pay ranges of \$18.00-\$21.00 and \$15.00-\$17.00 and have Management conduct the interviews and hiring, seconded by **Shanahan**. Motion adopted.

FY17 Local Capacity Grant Agreement: **Bach** presented the grant agreement for the FY17 Local Capacity Grant. **Bach** requested the Board sign and enter into the grant agreement and authorize the District Manager as the Authorized Representative. **Krosch** moved to accept and have the Chairman sign the grant agreement for the FY17 Local Capacity Grant, and authorize the District Manager as the Authorized Representative, seconded by **Gardner**. Motion adopted.

Supervisors and Chairman:

Supervisors: **Rollings** reported land prices in the area are steady, but other places are reacting quite weird. **Krosch** said she enjoyed the MASWCD Convention. **Krosch** wondered if the SWCD Board could offer suggestions on setback requirements to the County. She announced to make sure to have people visit the FEMA office if they have any questions about the recent flood. **Javens** announced she would be attending the North Central NACD meeting to bring 4 Minnesota Resolutions for discussions. **Javens** also said she will be attending the Denver NACD meeting. **Shanahan** said he had an uneventful month, but expressed that he has some concerns with the State Legislature. **Gardner** announced Mike Mauling would be attending the next MPI meeting. **Gardner** reported that MPI is full speed ahead on banquet planning.

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

- * Meeting adjourned 6:42 pm
- * Next regular meeting will be held February 9, 2017
- * Minutes submitted by John Billings, Assistant Manager

Approved Date: _____ **Carol Krosch, Secretary** _____

Approved Date: _____ **Emily Javens, Chairman** _____