



Blue Earth County

Soil & Water Conservation District

1160 South Victory Drive, Suite #3
Mankato, MN 56001
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Approved Minutes of Special Meeting November 16, 2017

Supervisors Present: Chairman: Emily Javens, Vice-Chairman: John Rollings, Treasurer: John Shanahan, and Secretary: Carol Krosch

Staff Present: District Manager: Jerad Bach, Assistant Manager: John Billings, Conservation Technician: Holly Kalbus

Guests: None

Proceedings: Meeting called to order by Chairman Emily Javens at 8:00 a.m.

Pledge: All present said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Housekeeping:

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

Guests: Javens acknowledged that no guests were in attendance.

Open Communications

Guests: None

New Business:

Outstanding Conservationist: Javens reviewed the official criminal complaint from Blue Earth County that detailed the incident involving the removal of Memorial Trees on State Highway 22 by Steve Trio. Shanahan felt we should take action. Kalbus said she had talked with the State about the Trio being the Area Finalist. The State had already printed the handouts, but chose to replace Trio with Horizon Farms. Kalbus relayed a message from Trio that he was very sorry, and very grateful that he was considered for the award, but understands the final decision of the board. Trio also told Kalbus he plans to continue his conservation efforts and projects. Rollings asked the SWCD needed to nominate another Outstanding Conservationist. Krosch said it is a conservation issue and a memorial. Billings said that although many people see just trees, those are memorials just like a statue or monument. He also said that the SWCD helped with supplying and planting of the trees, so it also bad from that aspect. Javens questioned from her compassionate side if everyone should punish Trio? Javens said after reading the complaint and the persistence involved with the incident that it does look bad for the SWCD. Bach noted the Outstanding Conservationist Award is reward for a body of work in conservation, but there is a second part of the award that involves conservation public relations with the community which would present a tough situation in this case. **Rollings moved to removed Steve Trio as the 2017 Outstanding Conservationist, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.**

Krosch started a discussion about verbiage when asked about the removal of the award. A discussion on the possible replacement was had but everyone agreed it might draw more attention and be unfair to the replacement. Javens said we might want to consider criteria for their public relations role in future Outstanding Conservationist Awards. Bach said we will keep up Krahling Farms on the website.

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

- * Meeting adjourned at 8:34 am
- * Next meeting will be held December 7, 2017
- * Minutes submitted by John Billings, Assistant Manager

Approved Date: _____ Carol Krosch, Secretary _____

Approved Date: _____ Emily Javens, Chairman _____