



Blue Earth County

Soil & Water Conservation District

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Approved Minutes of January 11, 2018

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, Conservatin Specialist: Jake Fritz

Guest: Farmbill Biologist: Jeff Potts

Proceedings: Meeting called to order by Vice-Chairman Rollings at 4:02 p.m.

Pledge: All present said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Since Javens was arriving late due to weather, **Shanahan moved to start the meeting with the Housekeeping portion of the agenda, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.**

Housekeeping:

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

Guests: Rollings acknowledged Potts.

Minutes: Shanahan moved to approve the December 7, 2017 minutes, seconded by Krosch. **Motion adopted.**

Treasurer's Report: (see attached)

Balance on hand	\$ 733,733.21
Receipts	\$ 20,318.16
Disbursements	<u>\$ 50,484.86</u>
Total	\$ 703,566.51

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

Billings presented the Treasurer's Report and reviewed and the Supervisor monthly Per Diem and expenses.

Shanahan moved to pay Supervisors Per Diem/Expenses including vouchers submitted by Javens and Gardner, and file the Treasurer's Report subject to audit, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.

Open Communications:

Farmbill Biologist: Potts presented report (See Attached).

District Conservatoinist: Liddell wished everyone a Happy New Year. Liddell reported that with the help of the SWCD approximately 130 CRP contracts were completed. Liddell said he is continuing to promote the other NRCS programs and asked the Board's opinion on him possibly holding a big sponsored outreach meeting similar to an event that he had done when he worked down in South Carolina. The Board agreed it sounded like a good idea. Rollings asked if Liddell had any updates on the door shooting from last month. Liddell reported the exterior building lights are now working and the door will be replaced.

Chairman Javens assumed control of the meeting.

District Manager: Bach presented report (See Attached).

New Business:

FY17 Buffer Law Grant Final Financial Report: Bach reviewed the closeout report for the FY17 Buffer Law Grant and explained the funding. Bach asked for motion to approve the closeout. **Krosch moved to approved the Final Financial Report for the FY17 Buffer Law Grant, seconded by Rollings. Motion adopted.**

MASWCD Dues: Billings reviewed the invoice from MASWCD for the 2018 Dues approved at the December MASWCD Business Meeting. **Rollings moved to approve and pay \$4,638.90 for the 2018 MASWCD Dues, seconded by Shanahan. Motion adopted.**

Buffer Law: Fritz gave an update on the progress of the Buffer Law compliance and enforcement process. (See attached report)

Election of Officers: Chairman: Javens said that it might be a better idea to approve the nominations for January and review to confirm any changes at the February meeting when all Supervisors can attend. Javens called for nominations for the Officer designations. **Krosch moved keep all Officers the same and review again in February, seconded by Rollings. Motion adopted.**

Committee Assignments: Chairman: Javens called for the Board to make any changes to the Supervisor Assignments and SWCD Committees. **Rollings moved to add Krosch as the Watonwan One Watershed One Plan alternate and keep the rest of the assignments the same, Seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.**

2018 SWCD Board Meeting Schedule: Chairman: Javens called for discussion or changes to the Board Meeting schedule. **Rollings moved to approve the 2018 SWCD Board Meeting and Holiday Schedule as presented, seconded by Krosch. Motion adopted.**

Per Diem/Mileage Rate: Chairman: Javens called for discussion or changes to the Per Diem, mileage reimbursement rates, official bank, and official newspaper. Javens suggested following the location based Federal meal rates of \$15.00 for Breakfast, \$16.00 for Lunch, and \$28.00 for supper with receipt documentation. **Rollings moved to approve the new mileage reimbursement rate of \$0.545; the location based Federal meal rates of \$15.00 for Breakfast, \$16.00 for Lunch, and \$28.00, 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.**

Supervisors and Chairman:

Supervisors: Rollings brought up the fact that Brown County and SWCD had turned down the nitrate testing of wells. Bach said that in Blue Earth County the SWCD chose to have the County oversee the testing program. Rollings asked if Bach could develop a report on the progress of septic updates by township. Rollings would like to know how many septic systems are left to upgrade. **Krosch** reported the Ditch 48 petition was presented at the County Board meeting which had discussion of the designated trout stream impacts. Krosch also noted that the drainage hearings seem to be going better now that there are additional informal informational meetings prior to the final meeting. **Javens** said she attend the Resolutions and Legislative Meeting where they decided to start moving forward on the ability for SWCDs to levee taxes. Javens said that unless the State is voting on a tax bill then the likelihood of an SWCD tax would be low. Javens reported a resolution about exchange of information with FSA and SWCDs was discussed at the Regional NACD meeting in Michigan. Bach and staff discussed the difficulties of getting information from FSA due to FOIA and other interpretations of FSA rules. **Shanahan** reported that there are a lot of good changes happening with the South Central TSA. Shanahan said he really likes to see the project report that lists all the projects the TSA works on in the area. Shanahan said the GBERBA meeting was poorly attended and noted how quickly one of the grants had expended at the end. Krosch asked if the SWCD was going to be doing some presentations of everything happening in the Lake Crystal area. Bach said the plan is to have information presented in conjunction with the GBERBA Joint meeting in the summer. Bach talked about the need for some of the projects to continue to do the cover crops, nutrient management, and no-till to have enough information to present. The Board and staff had a good discussion about the road blocks to starting no-till and cover crops. Bach ended by saying that soil health practices in his opinion are the greatest BMP because it can fix all the erosion and water issues.

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

- * Meeting adjourned 6:32 pm
- * Next regular meeting will be held February 8, 2018

* Minutes submitted by John Billings, Assistant Manager

Approved Date: _____ Carol Krosch, Secretary _____

Approved Date: _____ Emily Javens, Chairman _____