



# BLUE EARTH SOIL & WATER

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Approved Minutes of December 10, 2020

**Supervisors Present:** Chairman: Carol Krosch, Vice Chairman: John Rollings, Treasurer: John Shanahan, Secretary: Chris Hughes, PR&I: William Gardner

**Staff Present:** District Manager: Jerad Bach, Conservation Specialist: Jake Fritz, Administrative Specialist: Jillian Kuduk, CREP Technician: Jane Blomberg, District Conservationist: Ciara Ahrens

**Guests:** County Commissioners: Will Purvis, Kip Bruender, FarmBill Biologist: Jeff Potts

**Proceedings:** Meeting called to order by Chairman Krosch at 4:05 p.m. via virtual Webex platform and roll call was taken.

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

## HOUSEKEEPING

**Agenda:** Agenda was reviewed, Gardner moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Shanahan.

Rollings – Aye      Hughes – Aye      Shanahan – Aye      Gardner - Aye      Krosch – Aye

**Motion adopted.**

**Minutes:** Minutes were reviewed, Rollings moved to approve the November 5, 2020 minutes, seconded by Gardner.

Rollings – Aye      Hughes – Aye      Shanahan – Aye      Gardner - Aye      Krosch – Aye

**Motion adopted.**

## **Treasurer’s Report:** (see attached)

Balance on hand	\$ 644,012.13
Receipts	\$ 18,052.49
Disbursements	\$ 45,031.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 617,032.91</b>

**Kuduk** presented the Treasurer’s Report for November and requested to pay the Supervisor per diems, which were read by each Supervisor. Rollings moved to file the November Treasurer’s Report subject to audit and pay Supervisor per diems as read, seconded by Gardner.

Rollings – Aye      Hughes – Aye      Shanahan – Aye      Gardner - Aye      Krosch – Aye

**Motion adopted.**

## OPEN COMMUNICATIONS

**District Conservationist: Ahrens** gave the District Conservationist report. NRCS office has dialed back their in-office operations due to the increase in Covid-19 cases. NRCS has been working on EQIP contracts that include waterways and WASCObS. There were no CSP renewals for the Mankato office this time around. She held a meeting with the three SWCD District Managers of the counties she oversees and she’s looking forward to partnering with the SWCD’s in future projects.

**Ahrens left the meeting at 4:20 pm.**

**County Commissioner: Purvis** gave the County Commissioner’s report. This is his last meeting with the SWCD board before he retires as County Commissioner. The walk-up windows at the

driver's license office has allowed community members to complete simple transactions with ease. Blue Earth County has been able to disperse the majority of the CARES Act money for small business loans. Bruender added that the preliminary levy was set at 2.5% but now after some discussions they are hoping to lower it to 1.5-1.9%. He also stated that next year's budget will include community support in the amount of \$106,577.00 for the SWCD fiscal year 2021. Paap will be the replacement committee member for GBERBA and SWCD board meetings.

**FarmBill Biologist: Potts** gave the Pheasants Forever report (see attached).

**District Manager: Bach** gave the District Manager report. Continuing to monitor the Covid-19 pandemic and the current procedures in place for the office and staff. Our district Tree Program kicked off last month. We opened the program with a new edition of an online webstore. To date we have 48 orders for a total of 3,240 trees sold, which is ahead of last year's 20 orders for 1,000 trees in January. Cost Share projects are moving and we were able to get a lot more completed this past month with the fantastic weather we've had. Year end reporting will start after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year and Kuduk will be taking on a larger roll with this during my paternity leave. Watonwan 1W1P is currently in the process of creating their implementation plan. This 1W1P group is set to receive \$700,000 in funding and Blue Earth county has about 11% of the watershed within it. Le Sueur 1W1P is in the process of creating their workplan to send to BWSR for approval. Once the workplan is approved, Hughes will begin his role as the elected official from Blue Earth SWCD.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **GBERBA JPB Agreement:**

**Bach** presented the GBERBA JPB agreement. The last time this agreement was updated was in 2003 which makes a lot of the terms out of date. The biggest change is that GBERBA will be the financially responsible party for the Watonwan 1W1P. Shanahan moved to approve the GBERBA JPB agreement as presented, seconded by Gardner.

**Rollings left the meeting at 4:55 pm due to technical difficulties.**

Hughes – Aye      Shanahan – Aye      Gardner - Aye      Krosch – Aye

**Motion adopted.**

**Rollings joined the meeting at 5:00 pm**

##### **FY18 Local Capacity Grant Closeout:**

**Bach** presented the FY18 Local Capacity Grant closeout. As of December 4<sup>th</sup>, the funding for this grant has been spent and the grant can be closed out. The board will need to approve the financial report which will then be sent to BWSR. Gardner moved to approve the FY18 Local Capacity Grant closeout as presented, seconded by Rollings.

Rollings – Aye      Hughes – Aye      Shanahan – Aye      Gardner – Aye      Krosch – Aye

**Motion adopted.**

##### **FY21 Budget:**

**Kuduk** presented the FY21 budget to the board. The Supervisors discussed the details of the budget. Gardner moved to approve the FY21 budget as presented, seconded by Rollings.

Rollings – Aye      Hughes – Aye      Shanahan – Aye      Gardner – Aye      Krosch – Aye

**Motion adopted.**

**MASWCD Convention:**

**Bach** opened the floor for the Supervisors to discuss the 2020 Annual MASWCD Convention that took place on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Hughes gave the board an overview of the keynote speaker’s message and the issues discussed during the convention.

**Employee Reviews:** The personnel committee gave their recommendations to the rest of the board regarding pay raises based on employee reviews. A recommendation of a 3% step increase and a 1.3% cost of living adjustment for Bach, Fritz, and Blomberg and a 3.7% step increase and 1.3% cost of living adjustment for Kuduk. Rollings moved to approve the raises as presented by the personnel committee, seconded by Shanahan.

Rollings – Aye            Hughes – Aye            Shanahan – Aye            Gardner – Aye            Krosch – Aye

**Motion adopted.**

**SUPERVISOR REPORTS**

**Rollings** – Staying healthy and hoping everyone else is as well.

**Hughes** – Gave a legislative update and what the State budget could look like as we come into 2021. MASWCD recommends that the Clean Water Fund be used for SWCD capacity money to help offset the cuts to the general fund.

**Shanahan** – Gave an update on GBERBA and he’s happy to see the JPB agreement come through for approval.

**Gardner** – Gave an MPI update to the board.

**Krosch** – Gave an update on her fellow Blue Earth County co-worker Julie Conrad.

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

- \* Meeting adjourned 5:45 pm
- \* Next regular meeting will be held January 7, 2021
- \* Minutes submitted by Jillian Kuduk, Administrative Specialist

Approved Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Chris Hughes, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

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