



# BLUE EARTH SOIL & WATER

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Approved Minutes of March 4, 2021

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

**Supervisors Absent:** Secretary: Chris Hughes

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

**Guests:** County Commissioner: Kevin Paap, FarmBill Biologist: Jeff Potts

**Proceedings:** Meeting called to order by Chairman Krosch at 4:00 p.m. via virtual Webex platform and roll call was taken.

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

## HOUSEKEEPING

**Agenda:** Agenda was reviewed, Rollings moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Gardner. Rollings – Aye, Shanahan – Aye, Gardner – Aye, Krosch – Aye. **Motion adopted.**

**Minutes:** Minutes were reviewed, Rollings moved to approve the February 4, 2021 minutes, seconded by Shanahan.

Rollings – Aye, Shanahan – Aye, Gardner – Aye, Krosch – Aye. **Motion adopted.**

**Treasurer's Report:** (see attached)

Balance on hand	\$ 922,636.72
Receipts	\$ 30,993.37
Disbursements	\$ 34,213.94
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 919,416.15</b>

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

Rollings – Aye, Shanahan – Aye, Gardner – Aye, Krosch – Aye. **Motion adopted.**

## OPEN COMMUNICATIONS

**County Commissioner: Paap** presented the County Commissioner's report. He announced that Commissioner Bruender was not able to attend tonight due to the birth of his new granddaughter. The business assistance grants have been completed and the hope is that these grants helped all those in need. With the warmer weather on its way in, there have been a lot of judicial ditch system meetings and discussion for projects.

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

**District Conservationist: Ahrens** gave the District Conservationist report. NRCS has hired on a new Soil Conservationist for the Mankato office and who will be starting April 1, 2021. COVID-19 restrictions for the office have become stricter and currently only 1 staff member is permitted to be in the office at a time. Ranking is still being worked on as their CART system is currently being

updated. The deadline for classic CSP is March 26<sup>th</sup>. There will be a new program coming out called Conservation Incentive Contracts which is a mixture between the EQIP and CSP programs.

**District Manager: Bach** presented the District Manager report. ELink reporting for end of the year has been completed and 14 of 19 submitted grant reports have been approved. Each year we have to update our website by March 15<sup>th</sup> to meet state requirements which includes posting those approved grant reports. The Watonwan Watershed Base Implementation application has been accepted for funding by BWSR and the group is now working on creating the implementation plan. The Le Sueur 1W1P will begin their planning phase with the first policy meeting on Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup>. Legislative Days are coming up in a couple of weeks and the event will be virtual. This year's tree program has seen an increase in orders compared to years past. We have sold almost 3,000 trees more than this time last year. Pick-up days will be the week of April 19<sup>th</sup> and held at the Blue Earth County Fairgrounds. There is a pilot program in the works for a "Sonic Water Restoration System" which can be put in lakes or ponds. The hope is to starting gathering data on whether or not these systems work. This is still in the planning stages but the board will be kept informed as things move forward.

#### **COST SHARE CONTRACTS:**

##### **Dave Kregel – MAWQCP Assessment Incentive Payment**

**Bach** presented the request for a \$100 payment to Kregel as an incentive for completing the MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program Assessment. Rollings moved to encumber \$100 to be paid by the GBERBA MAWQCP grant for the Dave Kregel MAWQCP Assessment, seconded by Shanahan.

Rollings – Aye, Shanahan – Aye, Gardner – Aye, Krosch – Aye. **Motion adopted.**

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **SWCD Lease Agreement:**

**Bach** presented the updated lease agreement received from 1160 Investments LLC and requested the authority to sign the agreement to enter into a new 5-year lease at the current location. Gardner moved to approve the 2021 Lease Agreement with 1160 Investments LLC and give Bach the authority to sign the lease agreement, seconded by Shanahan.

Rollings – Aye, Shanahan – Aye, Gardner – Aye, Krosch – Aye. **Motion adopted.**

##### **Conservation Technician Vacancy:**

**Bach** requested for board approval of the posting and hiring of a new Conservation Technician. This position will replace the previous CREP Technician position. Shanahan moved to approve the posting and hiring of a new Conservation Technician with a starting pay range of \$16.00 - \$18.00, depending on experience, seconded by Rollings.

Rollings – Aye, Shanahan – Aye, Gardner – Aye, Krosch – Aye. **Motion adopted.**

#### **SUPERVISOR REPORTS**

**Rollings** – No Report.

**Shanahan** – No Report.

**Gardner** – Directed folks to the MPI website if they are interested in participating in the fundraising efforts.

**Krosch** – Welcomed input for the upcoming Legislative Briefing Day and the Area VI chairs meeting before attending these meetings later this month.

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

- \* Meeting adjourned 5:12 pm
- \* Next regular meeting will be held April 8, 2021
- \* Minutes submitted by Jillian Kuduk, Administrative Specialist

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

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