



# BLUE EARTH SOIL & WATER

1160 S. VICTORY DRIVE, STE #5  
MANKATO, MN 56001  
PHONE 507.345.4744  
FAX 507.345.6036

Approved Minutes of August 5, 2021

**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, District Conservationist: Ciara Ahrens

**Guests: BWSR BC:** Jill Sackett-Eberhart; County Commissioner: Kip Bruender & Kevin Paap

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

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

## HOUSEKEEPING

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

**Minutes:** Minutes were reviewed, Rollings moved to approve the July 8, 2021 minutes, seconded by Shanahan.

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

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

Balance on hand	\$ 824,238.96
Receipts	\$ 13,642.33
Disbursements	<u>\$ 36,078.26</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 801,803.03</b>

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

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

## OPEN COMMUNICATIONS

**County Commissioner: Bruender** presented the County Commissioner’s report (see attached). Commissioner Paap attended Farmfest and discussed the conversations he had with folks there.

### **Gardner joined the meeting at 4:16pm**

**District Conservationist: Ahrens** gave the District Conservationist report. Emergency haying and grazing for CRP is open and NRCS will continue to process through those applications. Work on regular CRP contracts continues. NRCS has dialed back on their Covid procedures including mask wearing of all employees and teleworking from home to reduce the number of staff in the office. We will see some EQIP contracts implemented this fall in Blue Earth County. No information has been released yet regarding FY22 EQIP funding and they are currently working on cleaning up backlog applications from the previous year.

**BWSR: Sackett-Eberhart** gave the BWSR update. On July 22, an email was sent out to Soil & Water District staff explaining the process of how to request for haying and grazing permission on RIM easements. Work continues alongside District Manager Bach on the comp plan as well as the upcoming FY22 grants that should be coming the next couple of weeks. The state hiring freeze has ended and BWSR is working on getting all of their departments adequately staffed so that work flow can continue in a timely fashion. The language and allocation have changed for FY22 Local Capacity grants and this topic will be on the next BWSR board agenda for discussion and action. BWSR did receive updated Covid-19 guidance that includes mandatory mask wearing for all employees.

**District Manager: Bach** presented the District Manager report (see attached).

### **COST SHARE CONTRACTS:**

#### **CWF-WWDW-21-07-02 Gilman – Well Sealing**

**Fritz** requested to encumber \$750.00 for the decommissioning of a water well, with an estimated total cost of \$1,300.00. Rollings moved to encumber \$750.00, encumbered from the GBERBA WWDW grant for the CWF-WWDW-21-07-02 (Gilman) contract, seconded by Shanahan.

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

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **2021 BWSR Academy**

**Bach** reviewed the estimated costs to send all staff to the three-day 2021 BWSR Academy on October 26, 27 & 28. Bach requested to send 4 staff to the BWSR Academy for three days and closing the office during that time. Shanahan moved to approve sending 4 staff to attend the 2021 BWSR Academy and to close the SWCD office on October 25, 26, 27 & 28, seconded by Rollings. Rollings – Aye, Hughes – Aye, Shanahan – Aye, Gardner – Aye, Krosch – Aye **Motion adopted.**

#### **Tree Planter Purchase**

**Bach** presented the proposed tree planter purchase with the board. The tree planter currently owned by the SWCD is in disrepair and needs to be replaced for safety reasons as we would still like to continue renting out the unit to tree program customers. Rollings made a motion to approve the purchase for a new tree planter with a budget of \$5,700 to be paid from the FY19 Local Capacity Grant, seconded by Hughes.

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

#### **Computer Upgrade Request**

**Bach** presented the computer purchase request to update two of the District's computers and the laptop. He explained that the SWCD has been on a plan to replace two computers each year but the schedule was altered last year due to Covid-19. This replacement of three total units will move us towards getting back on schedule. Mankato Computer Technology gave the recommendation for the computers which are adequate for our needs. Rollings made a motion to approve the purchase of the two computers and laptop from Mankato Computer Technology with a budget of \$6,300, seconded by Shanahan.

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

#### **SWCD Comp Plan Draft Review**

**Bach** reviewed the draft of the new Blue Earth SWCD's comp plan which will begin on January 1, 2022 and opened discussion to the Supervisors for feedback on the main objectives. Staff will continue work on the plan and bring updated pieces to the September board meeting for review.

**SUPERVISOR REPORTS**

**Rollings** – Discussed the large woodchip bioreactor project near the south end of the county.

**Hughes** – Gave an update on the last Le Sueur 1W1P policy meeting and informed the board of his resignation from the Legislative Committee Group.

**Shanahan** – Praised the staff on a job well done with the Blue Earth County Fair booth and discussed his experience at this year’s FarmFest.

**Gardner** – Gave an update on the last MPI meeting he attended.

**Krosch** – Discussed her experience at this year’s FarmFest and suggested the board discuss the new SWCD supervisor per diem rate maximum at a future meeting.

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

- Meeting adjourned 6:42 pm
- Next regular meeting will be held September 9, 2021
- Minutes submitted by Jillian Kuduk, Administrative Specialist

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

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