

DISTRICT REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, June 12, 2013

4:30 P.M.

USDA Service Center

SWCD Office

Preston, MN 55965

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Gossman, Brian Hazel, Leonard Leutink, Pam Mensink, Travis Willford

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Donna Rasmussen, Jeanette Serfling, Drew Bahl (MN Conservation Corps Apprentice), Jessica Bronson (NRCS), Tom Kaase (County Commissioner)

Willford called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. A quorum is present.

I. AGENDA

Motioned by Gossman seconded by Hazel to approve the agenda. Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Willford, Leutink. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

II. TREASURER'S REPORT

Motioned by Leutink seconded by Mensink to approve the May, 2013 Treasurer's report, subject to audit. Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Motioned by Mensink seconded by Gossman to approve the following consent agenda items:

1. Secretary's Report – May 16, 2013 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
2. Payment of State Cost Share Contract FY12-12 Matt Reiland, Farmstead Windbreak, in the amount of \$1,172.00
3. Payment of State Cost Share Contract FY12-17 Dan Marsden, Grassed Waterway, in the amount of \$4,311.00

Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

IV. REPORTS

1. Supervisor's activity report

Willford had nothing to report.

Hazel reported presenting the high school scholarship award.

Mensink had nothing to report.

Leutink reported attending the Hiawatha RC&D meeting.

Gossman reported working with the Conservation Corp on the Lost Creek Hiking trail, performing the statement opening and check review, attended a Root River Citizen's group meeting, and met with Tim Walz on a farm near Austin.

2. Staff reports

A written report was included in the board packets.

Rasmussen introduced Drew Bahl who is the Minnesota Conservation Corps summer intern. Bahl told a little about himself and what he has been working on.

Bahl left the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

3. Administrator's report

Kaase entered the meeting at 4:46 p.m.

a. Prevented planting information

Rasmussen reported on the conflicting information being received from various agencies regarding prevented planting. Thomas has been working with NRCS to change the harvest date from November 1st to September 1st. Insurance agencies say that conservation practices may not be installed on the prevented planting acres.

Rasmussen was asked to write a letter to elected officials to address the cover crop issue, the harvest date, and the conservation practice installation issue.

b. Root River Citizens' Group update

The Root River Citizens' group is interested in forming a non-profit organization. Extension will apply for the status. The group will focus on educational activities.

c. County Fair Ideas

The staff suggested offering water testing two times during the fair, getting the fuel containment structure back, showing examples of runoff water before and after cover crops, obtaining soil health materials from NRCS for display and possibly setting up a rain simulator to show runoff in various types of soil.

4. NRCS

Jessica Bronson introduced herself and told about her background with NRCS. She reported the signup period for CSP was ending as was the general CRP signup period. Staff is working to get practices installed. She will be wrapping up the Houston County compliance reviews.

5. County

Kaase reported the county was working through the frac sand mine issues and permitting process for the Rein sand quarry.

The Truth in Taxation meeting will be held next week. The Commissioners are considering eliminating the Rural Recycling bins due to all the junk being put into them.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Select Outstanding Conservationist

Motioned by Mensink seconded by Hazel to select Arden and Travis Willford as the 2013 Outstanding Conservationist. Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Leutink. Opposed: none. Abstained: Willford. Motion carried.

2. Consider signature of Farm Bill Assistance Grant application

Motioned by Gossman seconded by Leutink to approve the chair to sign the Farm Bill Assistance Grant Application to fund Ronnenberg at .50 FTE. Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

3. Discuss LSP STRIPS tour

The tour is scheduled for July 9th, 2013. A large van will be rented by LSP to take those interested to the tour site. It will be leaving from Winona, traveling to Albert Lea and then south to Ames. The cost for those wishing to attend will be \$10-\$20 per person depending on how many go. Board members discussed advertising methods, frequency, and costs involved.

Motioned by Hazel seconded by Leutink to donate \$250.00 to LSP to be used specifically for advertising in Fillmore County to publicize the STRIPS Tour. Affirmative: Hazel, Mensink, Leutink, Gossman, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

4. Consider revised Resolution 13-05 Local Ecotype Seed for CRP Plantings

Comments from Ronnenberg and Goodhue staff required changes to the previously approved resolution.

Motioned by Hazel seconded by Gossman to approve revised Resolution 13-05 Local Ecotype Seed for CRP Plantings as presented. Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

5. Consider termination of The Nature Conservancy Hayable Buffer Grant

Rasmussen reported Houston County has used all the funds and requested the grant be terminated.

Motioned by Hazel seconded by Mensink to approve the termination of The Nature Conservancy Hayable Buffer Grant due to Houston County using all the available funds. Affirmative: Hazel, Gossman, Mensink, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Consider Minnesota DNR Ground Water Level Monitoring Well Agreement for FY2014

Motioned by Mensink seconded by Gossman to approve the Minnesota DNR Ground Water Level Monitoring Well Agreement for FY2014. Affirmative: Hazel, Mensink, Gossman, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

2. Consider Midwest Value Added Conference sponsorship

No action taken.

3. Consider SE MN WRAP Nitrogen Planning Agreement with MPCA and approval for signature

This grant is a continuation of the Comprehensive Strategy and the nitrate monitoring efforts.

Motioned by Mensink seconded by Hazel to approve the SE MN WRAP Nitrogen Planning Agreement with MPCA in the amount of \$56,171.00 and approval for the board chair to sign. Affirmative: Hazel, Mensink, Gossman, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

4. Consider subcontract with Winona State University for MPCA SE MN WRAP Nitrogen Planning Agreement and approval of signature

Motioned by Leutink seconded by Mensink to approve the subcontract with Winona State University for the MPCA SE MN WRAP Nitrogen Planning Agreement and approval of signature by the board chair. Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

5. Consider Root River Field to Stream (FSP) Agreement with MDA and approval of signature

Motioned by Leutink seconded by Gossman to approve the Root River Field to Stream (FSP) Agreement with MDA and approval of the signature by the board chair. Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

6. Consider subcontract with Mower SWCD for MDA FSP for \$58,920 and approval of signature

Motioned by Mensink seconded by Hazel to approve the MDA FSP subcontract with the Mower SWCD in the amount of \$58,920.00 and grant approval for the board chair to sign. Affirmative: Hazel, Mensink, Gossman, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

7. Consider attendance and parking fee for Farm Progress Hay Expo at Waukon, IA

Motioned by Hazel seconded by Leutink to approve attendance at and the parking fee of \$10.00 for the Farm Progress Hay Expo at Waukon, IA. Affirmative: Hazel, Mensink, Gossman, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

8. Consider attendance and registration fee for SE Area VII Resolutions Meeting

Motioned by Hazel seconded by Mensink to approve the attendance at and registration fees for the SE Area VII Resolutions Meeting. Affirmative: Hazel, Mensink, Gossman, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

9. Review SWCD Fees

The fee schedule was reviewed by the board. Board consensus was to increase the amount charged for a bacteria test to \$25.00 and keep the reduced cost fee the same. Rasmussen was asked to talk to Bernau and have her make recommendations for increased fees for nutrient management plans based on the time involved to prepare. The fee schedule will be reviewed again next month.

10. Consider Revised 2013 Budget

Rasmussen reviewed the changes made to the revised 2013 budget due to the loss of one employee, increased insurance costs, and changes in grants.

Motioned by Gossman seconded by Leutink and Hazel to approve the revised 2013 budget as presented. Affirmative: Gossman, Hazel, Mensink, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

11. Review Proposed 2014 Budget

Rasmussen reviewed the 2014 budget with the board noting the county allocation request has been the same since 2008. Rasmussen will refine it and bring it back next month for review.

12. Discuss installation of WSU weather station at the Conservation Building

A request was received from Kevin Kuehner to install a WSU weather station at the conservation building. A wi-fi connection is required which will provide real-time data. There is no cost to the District as it will be maintained by WSU.

Motioned by Mensink seconded by Gossman to give approval to install a WSU weather station at the Conservation Building. Affirmative: Mensink, Hazel, Gossman, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

13. Discuss ways to encourage more conservation practices to control erosion

Ways discussed to encourage more conservation practices for erosion control were:

- using the media for outreach
- possibly purchasing a half or full page ad showing a good and bad example of erosion control
- creating statistics
- targeting landowners to get them mad and want to save the soil

Other ideas should be emailed to Rasmussen.

VII. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Motioned by Mensink seconded by Gossman to approve the June 2013 payables. Affirmative: Mensink, Hazel, Gossman, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Serfling asked for a volunteer for the statement opening and check review on Monday, July 1st. Willford volunteered.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Mensink seconded by Gossman to adjourn the meeting. Affirmative: Hazel, Mensink, Gossman, Leutink, Willford. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela Mensink