

**Becker Soil and Water Conservation District  
Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, January 16, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 16, 2013 in the Conference Room of the Ag Center Building, 809 8th St. S.E., Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Those present were supervisors Duane Grossman, Tony Beck, Don Lefebvre, Kathy Stenger, Jerome Flottesmesch, Dist. Administrative Asst. Ginger Flynn, newly hired Dist. Administrative Asst. Jen Wentz, NRCS Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, Dist. Technician Ed Clem, Dist. Administrator Brad Grant, Co. Ag Inspector/Shoreland Specialist Marsha Watland, Board Conservationist Chad Severts, and Area Conservationist Glen Kajewski.

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 a.m. by Vice-Chairman Flottesmesch.

**Oath of Office** – Administered to newly elected supervisors Tony Beck and Duane Grossman by supervisor Stenger. Supervisor Stenger had been sworn in earlier by Auditor/Treasurer Ryan Tangen.

**December Meeting Minutes** – Chairman Beck noted a correction to the December minutes concerning the second of a motion. The correction was noted and will be corrected in the final minutes.

Motion (Grossman, Lefebvre) to approve the December 19 regular meeting minutes as corrected. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**December Financial Reports and Bills for Approval** – presented for review.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Stenger) to approve the financial statements and payment of bills. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Audit** – Ginger handed out copies of the final audit for 2011 which was completed by Peterson Company Ltd. It was indicated that the final audit coincided with the 2011 yearend financial statements that were previously approved. The Board will review on their own time.

- Noted the mileage rate increased for 2013 to \$0.565
- 2011 final cost-share report noted payment approvals, draw-down balance on tree orders, and the well sealing set aside

**Organizational Dues** – The following 2013 organizational dues were presented for consideration:

- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) – \$775
- Minn. Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) – \$2,866.50
- MASWCD Area I – \$150
- Minn. Association of County Ag Inspectors – \$75. Statement not yet received.

Motion (Stenger, Lefebvre) to approve all organizational dues and include the MACAI Co. Ag Inspector dues as well. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Funding request for Ag-in-the-Classroom** – Ed Clem received a request from Mary Ann Jorgenson requesting \$125 toward the Ag-in-the-Classroom Program...this is a budgeted item. Dates for Ag-in-the-Classroom are March 11 & 12 in Detroit Lakes and March 19 in Frazee.

**Envirothon funding** – Ginger noted the funding request for the Jr. and Sr. Envirothon for 2013. The request is for \$150 and includes the north and south locations. \$100 will be used for the Senior competition, and \$50 for the Junior Envirothon competition. We're expected to solicit funds again this year.

Motion (Stenger, Grossman) to approve funding requests for the Ag-in-the-Classroom and Area I Envirothon programs. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **Reports**

**NRCS District Conservationist** – Ed Musielewicz reported on the following:

- Still processing CSP payments for 2012; completed 65 thus far
- WRP update on Brink and Rice Lake projects; met with BWSR and Burlington Township
- Rice Lake – Tera, Phil, and Ed M. met for outlet of upper structure. DNR will play large role; project is on city and DNR land. Tera has flowage easements with land owners; construction will begin this summer. District will assist in WCA permit requirements.
- Program signups: AWEP first round is due this Friday, January 18. EQIP is due on February 1. All EQIP programs are forestry related with grazing plans too. They must be entered by January 25.
- Ag wetland bank – BWSR is helping to get this project running. There are 3 sites to buy credits; 130 acres all together. Some sales have taken place. Price has varied.

**NRCS Area Conservationist** – Glen Kajewski reported on the following:

- Space needs were talked about at the Area I meeting. There is a maximum space allowed by NRCS, but here we don't have the flexibility, so we're looking for other ideas to combat the crowding issues in the office
- Discussed that the agency has a soft hiring freeze and all vacancies need to have Regional Conservationist approval; job openings were noted
- Budget is still in continuing resolution to the end of March; farm bill has gone nowhere yet; there are many unknowns for future planning
- There are no opportunities for contribution agreements at this point, but they're always open to that option
- Discussion regarding the streamlining initiative and field work

**Dist. Technician** – Dean Hendrickson reported on the following:

- Working with Jeff Haverland on sediment basin design; also completing some tree plans for spring planting
- Pointed out that there is no longer a 75% cost-share on EQIP projects, instead payments are based on flat rates
- We're just getting to the tree plans from fall and summer; interest should increase with any new snowfall. Ads will run promoting tree days next week.

**Dist. Technician** – Ed Clem reported on the following:

- Working on tree plans for cost-share
- Finishing entries into eLink; comments made regarding initiatives and Technical & Administrative spending; discussion on tracking landowner projects within grants and separating them for organizational purposes becomes confusing.
- SWCD cost-share and CWL funds need to have more upfront support for controlling grants as well as tracking the match to the specific project
- Additional discussion regarding CWL grant and the process for tracking percentages used

**BWSR Board Conservationist** – Chad Severts reported on the following:

- Handout given regarding the grant tracking policy and recent conversations with Grant and Flynn. There was discussion involving additional T&A money that was requested from the State cost-share funds for 2011. Procedure was mentioned, issues were clarified, and confirmation of the returned amount was made.
- To clarify: additional funds requested need to be adjusted off of the original grant amount. Then, 20% for T&A is taken from that new figure. In this case, \$1,000 needs to be returned to the State.

Motion (Flottemesch, Grossman) to approve the final 2011 cost-share report and issuance of a check to BWSR, in the amount of \$1,000 for Technical & Administrative amounts received in excess on the 2011 State cost-share program. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

- Chad handed out maps regarding the results of the CWL grant funds recently awarded. Also mentioned were Livestock Waste Management funding, SSTS Health Threat Abatement funds, Accelerated Implementation funds, Community Partners fund, and Conservation Drainage funds
- Clean Water Council recommendations have been for increased funding to BWSR
- Noted the future hiring of a Board Conservationist to the northern part of the state and the changes that will come. New area not yet determined.
- Discussed the updates to eLink and the one month shutdown for processing changes

**Lake Flora Restoration** – Brad Grant reported on the discussion taking place with the City of Lake Park on the Lake Flora restoration. The RRVCSA staff has given the city additional information on the watershed of Lake Flora. Concern has been raised if enough watershed is available to restore the lake to its original level as the south portion has been diverted by Burlington Northern when the railroad was put in and the lake originally drained.

**Minn. DNR Walk-In-Access (WIA) Program** – Brad presented information on the WIA program. The WIA pays landowners by the acre to allow hunting access. The program targets privately owned parcels of 40 acres or more that are already enrolled in a conservation program such as RIM or CRP. Landowners can receive annual payments between \$11 and \$13 per acre. SWCD's interested in participating in the WIA program would enter into a Joint Powers Agreement with DNR and would receive \$250 for every completed agreement between the landowner and DNR. All signing of the property is done by DNR. Our roll would be promotion and getting landowners to sign up.

Motion (Lefebvre, Stenger) to enter into a Joint Powers agreement with the DNR for the Minnesota Walk-In Access Program. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Wetland Conservation Act** – The following wetland activities were reported on:

- Will have two replacement plans that should be ready for public hearings at our February meeting. They are both access issues. They will be reviewed by the Technical Evaluation Panel on February 12.
- Ed reported on the Dennis Schurman access road project that has been in limbo for several years. Dennis now has an access plan and will be submitting a WCA replacement plan this spring.

**Ag BMP 2013 Applications** – Due February 7, 2013. Brad estimated we would have a carryover of \$70,000. A request of \$100,000 is normally adequate. If our local allocation runs out, additional funding requests can be made.

Motion (Grossman, Flottesmesch) to complete the 2013 Ag BMP Loan program application and request funding of \$100,000. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Shoreland Program Update** – Marsha reported on the following:

- County Ag Inspector District 1 meeting will be held January 23 in Mahnommen with all 18 counties invited to attend.
- Developed a survey of 10 questions with CWMA regarding recreational use; results should be presented at the next meeting
- Tansy weed training for townships was discussed
- Talked about her attendance at the Green Expo. Meetings she attended – Maintaining Natural Grass on Soils, Soil Workshop, and Implementing Green Infrastructure
- Bur Oak Blight is in Becker County – discussed options and costs of testing
- Referred to the AIS Committee, not in attendance but did receive minutes of the meeting, no sub-committees allowed
- Habitatatude handout was given to all regarding Aquatic Invasive Species; possibly work this into Ike Fischer Farms of releasing plants and animals into the wild
- A sample order form on the Native Flowers and Grasses program was presented; visited Morning Sky Nursery, they put together packets that would benefit landowners in this area; the finalized order form would be placed on our website just like the Tree Order form and would be pre-ordered with delivery around the third week of May; discussed landscaping materials and the benefits of working with area contractors on these shoreland projects; and possibly promote this program with our Tree Days radio spots next week

Motion (Flottesmesch, Stenger) to authorize the Administration to provide the service and develop a cost sheet and pricing order form for the Native Flowers and Grasses program. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Cost-share Contracts** –The following state cost-share contracts were presented for consideration:

Cont. #12-24 with Jeff Zeltigner, wdbk. Estimated cost \$1,160.75. Eligible cost-share \$815.00.  
Cont. #12-25 with Todd Holmer, wdbk. Estimated cost.\$797.75. Eligible cost-share \$598.00.  
Cont. #12-26 with Rich Jasken, wdbk. Estimated cost \$1,301.10. Eligible cost-share \$814.00.

Motion by (Grossman, Flottesmesch) to approve the above listed cost-share contracts as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Cost-share Contracts (cont.)** – The following cost-share contracts were presented for payment authorization:

Contract #12-14 with Dennis Schouviller, Ag waste system. Project cost \$133,043.20. Eligible state cost-share payment \$3,500. Eligible payment from Buffalo-Red River Watershed District funds \$3,500. This project also received EQIP funding.

Motion (Grossman, Lefebvre) to authorize payment of state cost-share contract #12-14 in the amount of \$3,500.00 and to request a \$3,500.00 from the Buffalo-Red Watershed District from allocated funds. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Clean Water Legacy Contract #CWF-2012-6 with Matt Bjerke was presented for payment authorization. Cost of project \$54,336.00. Eligible CWL fund payment \$2,109.00.

Motion (Lefebvre, Stenger) to authorize payment of contract #CWF-2012-6 in the amount of \$2,109.00. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Employee Handbook** – Handouts were given to all in attendance; some key changes were noted by Ginger for the Board members to discuss and confirm, especially the comment about mileage rate reimbursements to the employee for use of their own vehicle

#### **Other Areas of Business**

- Discovered 8 plat books with upside down pages, Rockford Map Publishers, Inc. will replace. Discussed possible next printing of a plat book. Have been contacted by the following publishers: Mapping Solutions, Farmer's Home, and Rockford Map. They would like to be considered in our next year's printing.
- Jen's computer has been ordered, 30 days or so before delivery.
- Discussed a possible shoreland, rain garden design training session. A conference call is set this afternoon with the Bemidji JPB staff, RRVCSA Engineer Jim Hest and technician Jeff Haverland, East Ottertail SWCD and Becker SWCD to discuss this idea further.
- RRVCSA Technician Jeff Haverland will have shoulder surgery next Friday, January 25 and will be in a sling 4-6 weeks. This may affect some projects moving forward.
- East Ottertail SWCD is interested in holding an irrigation meeting in eastern Becker County. They have been sponsoring and conducting these types of meetings in the irrigation areas with grant funds they received. The meeting will be sometime in February in the Osage area. We will be compiling a list of Becker County irrigators for them to invite.
- Tree Days has been set for January 29 and 30 with radio ads about our trees and shoreland projects to run the week before.
- Brad has been invited to attend a BWSR Academy review session January 24 in Baxter. The purpose will be to discuss how the academy can be improved in the future.

- Media Relations – Jack Ingstad, County Administrator, would like to improve communications with all County employees and departments. Training will be two hours to cover media effectiveness and County website use. Marsha Watland, Ed Clem, and Jennifer Wentz have taken an interest and would like to attend this free training, it's supposed to be in the next month or so.
- Area I - MACDE meeting to be held in Detroit Lakes at the Holiday Inn hosted by MACDE area staff. The registration fee is \$40. Marsha will make a 45 min. presentation on Aquatic Invasive Species; however, no one from the Becker SWCD office will be attending.
- District 1 County Ag Inspectors meeting will be held January 23 in Mahnomen. Watland plans on attending.
- There will be a Crow Wing Watershed meeting on January 23; Grant and Clem plan on attending.
- Supervisor Flottemesch noted the letter of resignation that has been received by the Board regarding Brad Grant's retirement on May 30, 2013. There was discussion about when the position should be advertised and when interviews should take place. A special meeting should be called and maybe incorporate the updated handbook also.

Chairman Beck scheduled a special meeting for January 31, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. to review the revised District Employee Handbook and to discuss the District Administrator's position.

Being no further business; motion (Grossman, Flottemesch) to adjourn at 12:22 p.m.  
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Approved: Don Lefebvre, Becker SWCD Secretary**

**Date: February 20, 2013**