

**Becker Soil & Water Conservation District
Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting
Wednesday, April 17, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, April 17, 2013 in the Conference Room of the Ag Center Building located at 809 8th Street SE, Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Those present were Supervisors Tony Beck, Duane Grossman, Kathy Stenger, Jerome Flottesmesch, and Don Lefebvre. Others present include County Commissioner Barry Nelson, District Administrator Brad Grant, District Administrative Assistant Jen Wentz, District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, and District Technicians Ed Clem, Marsha Watland, and Dean Hendrickson.

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. by Chairman Beck.

Minutes – March 20 regular meeting minutes were presented for approval. Jerome noted the following clarification: On page 3 under the heading *CWL Grants Amended for Floyd Lake*, only Big and Little Floyd Lake landowners were noted, but this should also include Middle Floyd as well.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Stenger) to approve the March minutes as corrected. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Financial Reports and Bills for Approval – The financial reports and bills for approval were presented.

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

Direct Deposit for employee's payroll was proposed by Wentz and a handout of costs was given to the Board. No action by the Board is necessary. The Administration is okay to move forward with this change.

Reports – District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz reported on the following:

- Alisa Wendt, the new office support person for NRCS and Becker SWCD started April 16, 2013. She will be working 32 hours with Ultima, contracted for NRCS, and 8 hours with the District.
- Program update – the scoring deadline for EQIP is this Friday. May 17 marks the 5th scoring period and there has been \$586,000 encumbered thus far.
- The State office felt there may be additional moneys for Minnesota from surpluses from other states. Otherwise, there will be \$70,000 in applications left unfunded but will hopefully be funded through AWEF.
- Cover crops and no till applications continue to be processed
- There is a WRP meeting next Tuesday, April 23 with County Commissioners for the Brink Lake County Ditch 17. Phil, Brad, and Ed M. will attend. Landowners around

Brink Lake are petitioning to have County Ditch 17 abandoned as part of the Brink Lake restoration project. The commissioners will be asked to accept the petition and set a public hearing to act on the abandonment.

- The Rice Lake partner and road authority meeting will be held next Wednesday, April 24. The DNR, Pelican River Watershed, Becker County, and local townships will be in attendance to discuss the engineering plans, and wetland impacts and permitting for the project.
- April 1 was the date for separation of duties for certified wetland determinations. Highly erodible determinations and field offices separated from that, thus Ed M. is no longer performing wetland determinations for NRCS. There are four other offices completing them now, and he has asked for maps and other items noted in processing these determinations which are currently completed in the area office.
- NRCS and MASWCD has two contribution agreements available:
 - Easement monitoring on WRP-RIM easements. A conference regarding this was held Tuesday. MASWCD is coordinating the contribution agreements and will make payments to the Districts that participate in the field reviews of WRP. The supervisors authorized entering into this agreement at the March meeting.
 - CRP contracts. SWCD's have been asked if they are interested in assisting with the upcoming CRP planning efforts as part of a contribution agreement. Fifty seven CRP contracts will expire this year and we expect most will re-enroll.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Grossman) to approve entering into a contribution agreement between NRCS and the District for CRP planning. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

- There will be a space needs meeting on May 7. Our building lease will expire in December 2013. Current staff and building size requirements will be discussed. Ed M, his supervisor, Brad, and Peter will attend this meeting.
- The newly hired District Administrator, Peter Mead, has requested access through the NRCS network. Becker SWCD would need to request the additional computer on the NRCS network which will cost \$3,500-\$3,600 but has never been charged to the District. This may change in the future with budget restraints. Peter Mead would like to be on the NRCS network also if it can be worked out. Currently, the NRCS network contains ArcMap tools that are required for Ed Clem to complete certain tasks. A shared computer was discussed; no decisions were made at this point.

Reports – District Technician Ed Clem reported on the following:

- Spring weather conditions are keeping projects short. A few sediment basins have been designed but no construction is scheduled as of yet. Most will probably be constructed in the fall due to the late spring.
- Tree sales are down some from last year.
- He and Marsha recently attended shoreland trainings in both Stearns County and Walker. They were informative and gave hands-on instruction to take back to the office.
- The TMDL meeting was attended for the Red Eye River Watershed in Becker County. Handouts were presented to the Board. E-coli readings based much of their studies with suspect to feed lot and cattle sediment entry upstream, not necessarily in Becker County. Those present were from the counties of Wadena, Becker, Ottertail, and Douglas, as well

as MPCA coordinators, biologists, insect specialists, fisheries, and water control. They discussed organized and non-organized watersheds and how they should proceed in a project such as this as well as many water plans that are coming to an end and need to be renewed and/or extended. Currently, each District cares for its part of each watershed.

- He attended a conference call with Houston Engineering and the Buffalo River TMDL. Their concerns are sediment, not E-coli. They will continue to monitor the effects of watersheds, buffer strips, and water and sediment control basins.

Reports – District Technician Dean Hendrickson reported on the following:

- He continues working on tree jobs that will be submitted for cost-share and windbreak plans. Windbreak plans have been slightly different this year with smaller tract owners requesting windbreak plans.
- Also working on plan reviews with Jeff Norby and Jeff Haverland for sediment control basins.

Reports – Co Ag Inspector/Shoreland Specialist Marsha Watland reported on the following:

- Annual Township weed inspector training went well. Noxious weed treatment was discussed at the meeting as well as the costs involved.
- Marsha inquired about charging a fee for administering commercial pesticide exams for private persons or businesses outside of Becker County. She's been getting more people from out of the county taking exams here because the county they are from does not administer the exams. Recently, Clay and Ottertail have begun using our services. Because of the additional time and costs involved in doing this, Marsha feels a fee would be appropriate. Extension services no longer perform the commercial exams. New applicator exams are administered here as well as lawn service providers, etc. Private landowner licensing is good for two years, and recertification is necessary to avoid additional fees before the expiration date. By adding this fee it may encourage other counties to provide testing services from their Ag Inspector.

Motion (Stenger, Grossman) to require a \$25 fee for anyone working for an out of county business or a private landowner from out of county that is requesting a pesticide exam in Becker County. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

- She plans to attend a bio-control webinar on April 30 with the DNR
- Gravel pit letters will be mailed by the second week of May
- DNR report – met April 1 at US Fish and Wildlife. Discussed weed issues with different DNR departments: water, fish, parks and trails, forestry, etc. She has put together a great deal of information from the meeting and is hoping that the offices will communicate better in the future.
- Partnership Legacy Grant – hopes to have it competed soon. If approved, it will provide funds for addressing weed issues on some of the public lands managed by the County and DNR.
- There will be an executive meeting on June 5 in Red Wing, MN. She is asking the Board to cover fuel costs as the hotel is furnished through the program.

- Continues working with her new software program – a shoreland, native planting example was presented to the Board.
- She recently met with Becker County Planning & Zoning regarding storm water issues.
- She received the Meadowlark Institute Grant used for compiling research on lake association meetings and presented her materials to the Board. She is working on this project with Moyria from RNB Labs. Her first meeting will be with Cotton, Toad, and Little Toad Lakes. The second meeting will be with Lake Eunice and Maud Lake. The funding for this grant comes from the Busch Foundation in Minneapolis; Marsha has been in contact with them as to the outcome of the project along with the results. Grant expenditures were discussed; the grant awarded is \$2,100. Expenses consist of meeting room rental, food, supplies, and fees charged by herself and Moyria. Lake associations will send out the flyer in their emails and mailings. It was also noted to post at local establishments near and around the lakes in question.

Brad Grant has asked the Board if they felt the new District Administrator, Peter Mead, should take the Ag Inspector training. The Board feels he has to be aware of the Ag Inspector program and responsibilities but not necessarily an Ag Inspector, as he is responsible for all District operations and programs.

Brad discussed with the Board some hand tools and materials the District will need for planting shoreland projects. This should not exceed \$500. The Board felt these could be purchased and presented with the bills for approval when completed.

MASWCD Area I meeting:

The meeting was held in March this year. It was very informative without political inferences. Highlights were noted and discussed.

JPB for the RRVCSA Executive Committee Meeting – Jerome Flottesch reported on the following:

- The 2014 budget was presented and reviewed
- The Board decided to increase employee salary by 2% with health insurance benefits remaining the same
- Haverland will have limited abilities with his back surgery scheduled for this fall
- The budget was approved with an increase in contractual agreements from the Area I counties and less money coming from the Fund Balance
- Also approved was the FY 2013 invoice for administrative, clerical, and accounting services as well as the new contract for FY 2014 which will be a fixed stipend for the host and secondary host district's fees for services provided
- Audit requirements were discussed and reviewed by all in attendance

Motion (Grossman, Flottesch) to approve the JPB for the RRVCSA administrative, clerical, and accounting services agreement for FY14 and the voucher for FY13 services. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

5th Grade Conservation Tour Sponsorship:

Grant noted that the tour will be held May 13 and 14 this year. We've added an invasive species station with presenters from Becker County and RMB Labs. Additional stations will be birding, water quality, logging, and forestry. Also, we will be providing Habitatitude handouts for the children.

Motion (Grossman, Stenger) to approve the sponsorship of the 5th Grade Conservation Tour.
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Cost-Share contracts –

The following cost-share contracts were presented for consideration:

Contract #13-6 with Dennis Steichen, windbreak. Estimated cost \$1,204.50. Eligible cost-share \$903.00.

Contract #13-7 with Nick Bowers, windbreak. Estimated cost \$1,000. Eligible cost-share \$640.00.

Contract #13-8 with Matt Bjerke, windbreak. Estimated cost \$1,017. Eligible cost-share \$762.00.

Contract #12-30 with Steve Anderson, windbreak. Estimated cost \$343.75. Eligible cost-share \$257.00 with \$240.00 from 2012 funds and \$17.00 from 2013 cost-share funds.

Contract #13-9 with Jason Askelson, windbreak. Estimated cost \$1,120.85. Eligible cost-share \$824.00.

Contract #13-10 with Ed Kava, windbreak. Estimated cost \$1,479.00. Eligible cost-share \$960.00.

Motion (Flottesch, Grossman) to approve the above listed cost-share contracts as presented and for the amounts listed. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Dean Hendrickson Letter of Resignation – Retirement:

Dean presented his reasons for retirement and best regards to all he has worked with over the years with special compliments to the Board, District Administrator Brad Grant, and District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz. The Board thanked him for his years of service.

Motion (Flottesch, Lefebvre) to accept Dean Hendrickson's resignation with extreme regret.
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

A retirement open house for both Brad Grant and Dean Hendrickson will be held in the office on Thursday, May 23 from 1:30–4:00 p.m.

Bank Signature Cards:

Grant presented the bank signature cards from First Security Bank to Don Lefebvre for his signature and identification.

Other:

Grant and Hendrickson have decided to continue their health insurance coverage and current premium rates with Becker County. The Continuation of Coverage election form must be completed. Becker SWCD must receive the premium payment due from the insured individuals by the 15th of each month.

The new Administrator may be adding himself and his children to the County health insurance plan.

Administrator evaluation forms will be sent to all Board members in the next few days to look over and designate one, universal form.

Upcoming Events:

April 29 – new Administrator, Peter Mead starts

May 1 – Senior Envirothon

May 2 – trees arrive from Schumacher's

May 11 – tree pick-up day

May 13 and 14 – 5th Grade Conservation Tour

May 21 – Audit of 2012 financial records

Being no further business, motion (Stenger, Flottemesch) to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 a.m.
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Approved: Don Lefebvre, Becker SWCD Secretary

Date: May 15, 2013