

***Becker Soil and Water Conservation District  
Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, March 19, 2014***

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, March 19, 2014 in the Conference Room of the Ag Center Building located at 809 8<sup>th</sup> Street SE, Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Those present were Supervisors Tony Beck, Duane Grossman, Kathy Stenger, Jerome Flottemesch and Eugene Pavelko. Others present include Becker County Commissioner Barry Nelson, District Administrator Peter Mead, District Admin Assistant Jen Wentz, District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, District Technician Ed Clem, District Technician Marsha Watland, and Pheasants Forever Biologist Adam Kleinschmidt.

**Call to Order** – meeting was called to order by Chairperson Stenger at 8:05 a.m.

**February Meeting Minutes –**

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to approve the February meeting minutes as written. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Financial Reports and Bills** – Peter Mead reviewed the February month end financial reports and bills for approval.

Motion (Grossman, Flottemesch) to approve the February month end reports. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Supervisor's Expenses and Payroll** – minor change noted to Flottemesch's meetings in March.

Motion (Grossman, Beck) to approve the Supervisor's Expenses and Payroll with changes noted. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**2013 Year End Statement** – presented to Board members in their packets.

Motion (Flottemesch, Grossman) to accept the 2013 Year End Statement. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Reports –**

*District Conservationist, Ed Musielewicz reported on the following:*

- Completed an annual review of the MOU with Civil Rights updates. He reviewed what the state office passed to him: Treat all clients and customers as well as our co-workers the way we want to be treated with fairness and respect. Non-compliance will carry consequences. He reviewed the major points.
  - Personal and confidential information is something we use every day. There are compliance statements from the state office that need to be signed by all employees.
  - Posters must be hung in the office and break rooms with anti-discrimination information.

- Field office appraisals continue. The Area office will be here next week to appraise our location. Ed will attend several meetings and interviews regarding this, as well as one Board supervisor, 3 landowners, and the District Administrator.
- Farm Bill update. He can now use contracting software and make entries for new applicants. We're still not able to obligate dollars. Contracts should be obligated in June or July.
- WRP Easements – the Glen Yliniemi WRP easement has been an issue in the past. Yliniemi didn't comply with standards and violations arose. We are proceeding with the restorations but with a new federal contract. We will hire the contractor and offer leadership in the project, but the landowner will not retain any rights to object in the process. This easement will cover 220 acres. There are 8-9 wetland restorations involved. This is in Evergreen Township.

*District Technician, Ed Clem reported on the following:*

- Continues working with tree orders and plans. Tree sales are starting to increase and we're getting close to projections.
- State C-S changes have turned down a few cost-share assistance dollars on tree plans. This has been a huge change for landowners this year.
- Wetland issues and objectives have been fairly quiet this month.
- We held Ag in the Classroom last week in Detroit Lakes and this week in Frazee. We visit with fourth graders about soil and water conservation, but they learn about a variety of topics surrounding farm to table.
- Attended the MECA in Prior Lake. This offers him certification in erosion and sediment control for construction installation.
- Noted that we have a big construction season ahead of us with several WASCOP projects prior to our tree sale date.

*Shoreland Specialist/County Ag Inspector, Marsha Watland reported on the following:*

County Ag

- Attended the District CAI meeting in Mahanomen at the end of February. Information is being compiled now and decisions will be made in July for \_\_\_\_\_
- New noxious weed list has been compiled for 2014. However, she still has concern over Wild Parsnip.
- CWMA meeting was held last week. Main goal was recreation trails and the process for 2014 township inventories.
- Secured a certified applicator that will help with recreation trail weed removal.
- MN CAI Executive meeting was canceled for today because of weather conditions in St. Cloud.
- Annual Township Weed Inspector training will be held in Callaway tomorrow.
- Attending the \_\_\_\_\_ on April 2 with MNDOT, USFW, and herself to work with \_\_\_\_\_.

Shoreland Specialist

- Completed the Lakeshore Landscaping Manual. This can be accessed through our webpage.
- Conservation Corps of Minnesota will be here at the end of May.
- Met with Cormorant Lakes Watershed regarding the Berg site shoreland mediation.
- Nature's Design has a new hydro-seeding unit for the shoreline. They have 3 units to help with this. They will follow AIS standards.

- Confirmed one shoreline buffer project from the shallow lakes landowner meeting held in Lake Park on March 6.
- Will speak at the Stakke Lake Association monthly board meeting
- Attending \_\_\_\_\_

*Farm Bill Biologist, Adam Kleinschmidt reported on the following:*

- Pushing CRP contracts for interest and focusing on the shallow lakes buffer strips. He's had a few interests with 36.1 acres proposed and a total of \$41,000 in funding with matching funds from CRP contracts just over \$48,000.
- Working on larger projects in the Lake Park area and hope they will move forward.

*District Administrator, Peter Mead reported on the following:*

#### Shallow Lakes Report

- Looking at match through Buffalo Red River Watershed District
- We're covering some crucial areas, but need to be choosy on some with our funding availability
- Reviewed the meeting for the nine shallow lakes that was held at the beginning of March. They concentrated their presentation efforts on excess nutrients and explained the problems with added algae bloom that is concerning.
- Covered top soil and its value to our future in various respects.
- Boyer Lake filters strips were presented with the reduction of phosphorus to reduce green algae.
- With the work already projected, this money will be completely spent with a need for additional funds from other local agencies.

#### Clerical Receptionist Applications

- He and Ed Musielewicz reviewed all applications and will be conducting interviews next Thursday.
- He listed the individuals to be interviewed for the Board members.

*Becker SWCD Board Vice-Chair, Jerome Flottemesch reported on the following:*

#### Zoning Ordinance Advisory Committee

- Was created a number of years ago as a review committee.
- He and Don Lefebvre are currently serving on this committee as well as representatives from many different interested parties.
- Over the years, Becker County has tried to reduce variances for each parcel and instead offer mitigation practices that can be used based on current restrictions while reducing a variance that is perpetual.
- Lake shore lot mitigation has been very time consuming with building obstructions, berms or natural enhancements.
- Committee has now allowed the landowner to make choices to treat the runoff before it affects the quality of the lake.
- Natural vegetation plans were clarified to the lake owners as an addition and not a hindrance to their views and use of the lake.
- Set-backs were discussed as well.

- Additional discussion of a possible undeveloped common area, while still allowing for a separate, buildable lot for each lakeshore owner.
- Overall, this has become a huge issue with mitigation efforts across several agencies.

**Execution of FY14 Grant Agreements** – Peter reviewed the recent applications that are ready for signature. We will need a contractual agreement to charge funds against RRVCSA for us to receive the funds for Peter’s work on the projects.

Motion (Grossman, Beck) to approve that Peter Mead acts as a \_\_\_\_ in the contractual agreement with \_\_\_\_\_. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**CY14 Ag BMP Loan Program Contract Amendment** – Peter clarified the funds available for this program. Our funds were reduced for this year. These funds allow for septic upgrade loans and storm water projects. He will get the agreement signed and back to the state.

**Prairie Plan Joint Powers Agreement** – Peter mentioned the two core areas: Agassiz Beach Ridge and Mahnomen \_\_\_\_\_. The DNR has received \$150,000 to fund the projects and are in need of a fiscal agent. If we decide to move forward, this would be a stipend to our District of 2% of the total funding. The Joint Powers agreement should be completed within the next two weeks.

Motion (Flottemesch, Grossman) to allow Becker SWCD to act as fiscal agent for the Prairie Plan Joint Powers Agreement. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**2014 State Cost Share Program Allocations** – Peter mentioned that proposals have been made against last year’s funds to be allocated for well sealings, shoreland, etc. He would like to do this again in 2014.

In addition, he would like to use most of the remaining shoreland funds that were set aside from the 2013 cost-share dollars for use on tree plan cost-share in this 2014 calendar year.

After some discussion, allocations for 2014 Cost-Share funds will be \$1,200 for well sealing and \$10,000 for shoreland restorations.

Motion (Flottemesch, Beck) to approve the allocations noted above for the 2014 State Cost-Share funds. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**2014 Annual Plan of Operations** – Peter reviewed the plan of operations to the board. Instead of conducting a special meeting of the Board, the District and NRCS staffs were able to draft through most of it at their monthly staff meeting last week. He pointed out the major changes and updates. Discussion. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Motion (Flottemesch, Grossman) to approve the 2014 Plan of Operations as presented and with changes noted. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Cost Share Applications** – the following contracts were presented for consideration and Board approval.

2013 State Cost-Share

Contract #13-26 with Mark Groth, shelterbelt establishment. Estimated project cost \$1,571; eligible cost-share \$1,178.

Contract #13-27 with Jeremy Roering, shelterbelt establishment. Estimated project cost \$873; eligible cost-share \$654.

Contract #13-28 with Brian Rubenstein, shelterbelt establishment. Estimated project cost \$1,090; eligible cost-share \$807.

#### 2014 State Cost-Share

Contract #14-1 with Todd Andresen, water and sediment control basins. Estimated project cost \$17,926 with additional EQIP and Buffalo Red River Watershed funding. The District will offer eligible cost-share of \$500.

Motion (Grossman, Flottemesch) to approve the state cost-share contracts as presented and for the amounts noted. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **Other –**

Grant deadline has surpassed for the Bush Foundation. This offers contractor education to allow for contractor certifications. We will hold four meetings or workshops for what we want to see of our contractors as well as offer information and break-out sessions.

Motion (Flottemesch, Grossman) to approve the Bush Foundation grant application for contractor certifications. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

MN Conservation Site agreement to bring someone in for help with this project .

Updates regarding the BWSR One Watershed, One Plan within the state. This is moving forward with Buffalo-Red and Crow Wing on board. Peter has entered his confirmation on the project as well. We may serve as a model for others in the state.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to approve of our interest in the BWSR One Watershed, One Plan approach. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Jen asked that administration be able to offer the MNDP Roth 457 (after-tax) option for employees MSRS Deferred Compensation benefits in addition to the pre-tax option currently available.

Jerome reviewed the TSA 1 meeting that was held on Monday of this week. Discussion surrounding the TSA Shared Services arrangement between areas 1 and 8 took place. This grant will cover the hiring of one full-time GIS specialist and two part-time assistants to offer more coverage for both areas and help with construction season.

Jen noted the election process and the recent mailings from MASWCD regarding the filing period deadlines for the general election to be held in November. Supervisor stipends were discussed as well. Because this is set-forth in state statute, there may need to be a resolution regarding amendments.

Being no further business, motion (Grossman, Flottemesch) to adjourn the meeting at 10:16 a.m.

**Approved: Duane Grossman, Becker SWCD Secretary      Date: April 16, 2014**