

Becker Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 21, 2015

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, January 21, 2015 in the Conference Room of the Ag Center Building located at 809 8th Street SE, Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Those present were Supervisors Tony Beck, Kathy Stenger and Eugene Pavelko. Others present include Becker County Commissioner Barry Nelson, District Administrator Peter Mead, District Admin Assistant Jen Wentz, District Office Assistant Leticia Kiehl, NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, District Technicians Ed Clem and Claire Olson as well as Wildlife Biologist Adam Kleinschmidt. In addition, our newest supervisor to be sworn into office, Travis Schauer was also in attendance.

Call to Order – Chairman Stenger called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

Oath of Office & Installation of new SWCD Supervisor, Travis Schauer – with in-house notary public, Joni Lunde in attendance, Travis recited his Oath of Office.

December Meeting Minutes – no changes to report.

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

Financial Reports and Bills – Peter reviewed the financial records for the month of December. Bills for January were noted with two small additions.

Motion (Pavelko, Beck) to approve the December financial reports and bills for January. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Reports –

District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz reported on the following:

- We still have not received the 2015 EQIP application. He expects it soon though.
- RCPP 2015 funding announcements were made last week. One for the Red River Basin using CSP, EQIP, etc. through USDA programs and PL566 proposals. This is a small watershed program that has recently been brought back in our program mix. All of these will be flood damage and water quality type projects. Regional Conservationist will be huge with money going directly into the Red River Basin. Sign-ups will hopefully come in July.
- He and Ray attended a 2015 EQIP program training in Walker last week. A large part of the discussion was initiatives for the Red River Basin of Minnesota. Reviews and approvals are currently taking place. He should have information shortly. Initiative dollars don't take away from state money, and payment rates are higher. This will be funded at \$50 million over the life of the Farm Bill. One of the major changes is a decrease to payment rates from 75% to 60% and they removed all foregone income.
- Prairie Pothole Initiative drafts are being established now.

- He's been working on CNMPs (Concentrated Nutrient Management Plan) and is sure that one will be approved. Plans are completed by professional engineers but still need to be approved by MPCA.
- Updates on Danny Weber, Ed's supervisor – he has been suffering from heart disease for the past twenty years. He's had issues recently with stomach, liver and other internal organs. He is currently in the hospital. In his absence, Area Engineer Dave Jones has been acting Area Conservationist.

District Technician Ed Clem reported on the following:

- He's almost completed with eLINK reports for Clean Water projects and cost-share.
- Planning meeting summary – over 50 WASCBs installed with 5 wetland restorations and a few grade stabilization projects. All of these take time with survey, design, layout and installation at about three weeks per site. We were working on 15-20 sites at any one time. We already have 40 basins for this year. There are many shallow lakes projects yet to complete.
- We have a Shoreland Contractor Training sponsored by our office on February 19th. Our hopes are to have most contractors in the area trained on shoreland projects and potentially leading into a certification process with the help of Becker County Planning & Zoning. Cormorant Lakes, Buffalo-Red River and Pelican River watersheds will be in attendance. The tough part of this process will be enforcement of the shoreland impact zone. We hope to have Planning & Zoning take the leader on this. They will discuss mitigation requirements too. Follow-up in this area will be a key topic of discussion.

District Engineering Technician Claire Olson reported on the following:

- She and Marsha attended the Green Expo in the Twin Cities last week. They made many contacts and some of the highlights include landscape management sessions, team building, pruning for young trees, etc. She also learned new measures for residential stormwater control using special drainage forms from ProForm.
- Some sites have already been completed for next year. Many designs have been started or finished.
- They're trying to streamline the shoreland process for this year from initial contact to installation and final payment.
- The native plant list for 2015 has been updated. It now includes the depth that roots will grow. Rain gardens were added as well as maintenance options.
- The native plant order form was mailed with the tree order form. MN Native Landscape and Morning Sky Greenery are supplying the materials for our kits.
- Shoreland Contractor Training next month.
- Marsha finished the McLaughlin design; the owners will now move ahead with the project.
- Claire has assisted with Marsha's shoreland projects and has made the process much more achievable for this year.

Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Adam Kleinschmidt reported on the following:

- New RIM Wetlands program clarifications. They will accept most CRP practices other than trees and grassland CP25s. This will still run the life of the contract but easement payments will be made upfront.
- The sign-up period expires February 13th.
- This program pays 90% of the average assessed value and allows for restoration of wetlands on the property.
- Some contracts are \$3,300 per acre on cropland.

- Ranking has been discussed with John Voz from BWSR.
- With CRP payments on top of these RIM Wetland payments, landowners could see close to \$5,500 per acre enlisted.
- This is not a working lands program.
- Many sites are in or near the Lake Park area.

The Governor's latest announcement regarding 50' buffers around all water in the state has surprised many but from a conservation perspective it will be a great accomplishment. DNR is the proposed enforcement officer on this new law. Discussion.

2015 RIM Title Services MOU – Peter reviewed our previous discussions on this RIM-title connection. His only set-back is soliciting reimbursement from the Districts that we assist. He and John Voz have worked on drafting the MOU. The amendment is paid to Districts once per year which would be the reimbursement to our office. He's willing to try this with Norman SWCD. If the workload becomes too large for the income, we would step down. We've discussed working on this from here to the Canadian border. This is looking at straight RIM not easement projects.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to approve administration move forward with the RIM Title MOU and trial of the project. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Ag in the Classroom Annual Donation – this is an event for all Detroit Lakes area fourth graders including Lake Park-Audubon and White Earth. The event is held at M-State in Detroit Lakes. Lessons regarding geology and soil are among the featured topics. We could include clean water and pollinator properties as well. A donation of \$150 was given in 2014.

Motion (Pavelko, Schauer) to approve the \$150 donation to Ag in the Classroom for 2015. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

2015 Tree & Native Plant Open House – in the past we've held a promotion for sales and would like to offer it again this year. Our Hodge Podge program this week will concentrate on trees and our new native plant kits. Tree sales have started slow thus far with only 21 orders received as of today. We need to contact lake associations to volunteer and represent our open house to offer materials for their organizations.

2013 Clean Water Legacy Amendment – grade stabilization costs are running consistently higher than anticipated. The following amendment is submitted for approval:

Contract #CWL-19-2013 with Kevin Lunde. Project costs have increased from previous estimates. Total project costs \$66,045; EQIP \$36,020.3 and CWL funds of \$23,421. This is an increase of \$15,430 from original estimates.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to amend the contract as noted above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

2013 Clean Water Legacy Applications – the following contracts were submitted for approval:

Contract #CWL-28-2013 with Darwin Hendrickson, WASCBS. Total projects costs \$27,947; eligible cost-share \$15,934 and EQIP funds of \$12,022.

Contract #CWL-29-2013 with Bruce Hein, WASCBS. Total project costs \$24,234; eligible cost-share \$8,896 and EQIP funds of \$15,338.

Contract #CWL-30-2013 with Bruce Hein, filter strip incentive. Total project costs \$5,510; eligible cost-share \$2,700 and CRP funds of \$2,810.

Motion (Pavelko, Schauer) to accept the 2013 Clean Water Legacy applications as noted above.
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Being no further business, motion (Pavelko, Beck) to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

Approved: Gene Pavelko, Becker SWCD Secretary Date: February 18, 2015