

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room of the USDA Ag Center Building located at 809 8<sup>th</sup> Street SE, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Those present were Supervisors Tony Beck, Kathy Stenger, Jerome Flottesmesch, Travis Schauer and Eugene Pavelko. Others present include Becker County Commissioner Barry Nelson, District Administrator Peter Mead, Admin Assistant Jen Wentz, NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, Soil Conservationist Ray Hummel, District Technician Ed Clem, AIS/Water Quality Coordinator Karl Koenig, seasonal technician Brandon Dahring and BWSR Board Conservationist Brett Arne.

**Call to Order** – Chairperson Stenger called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

**Approval of June Meeting Minutes** – no changes to report.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to approve as written. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Financial Reports and Bills for Approval** – reviewed by Peter Mead.

Motion (Beck, Schauer) to approve June financial reports and July bills for approval. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **District Reports**

#### *District Conservationist – Ed Musielewicz*

- New contracts are complete. CSP reenrolls may have additional Prairie Pothole and Mississippi River Basin funding.
- 26 CSP contracts of which there are 18 state forestry. Approximately \$548,000 encumbrances this year.
  - A total of 10% of the Red River Basin contracts were funded.
  - We were the most competitive in the state for CSP contract scoring. This is based on stewardship and additional enhancements.
  - He and Ray are working on reenrolls for 2016.
- 29 EQIP contracts for \$690,500. Some are pending approval.
  - Currently, there are ten 2015 unfunded applications totaling approximately \$1,000,000.
  - Jeff has been assisting with I&E's and preliminary surveys.
- Busy installing sediment basins and grade stabilization projects.
- He worked with Tera on the RCCP proposal for upper Rice Lake wetland restoration project. \$1.9 million is the pre-proposal. Once accepted, a full, final proposal is needed.
- Cathee Pullman, NRCS State Conservationist will be in TRF Area 1 this Friday and will tour DL on her way back to the Twin Cities. Discussion topics planned:
  - Ultima position; contract is currently through December 25, 2015.
  - Office space needs.
  - District operations.
- July 21<sup>st</sup> Local Work Group meeting at USDA Service Center in Detroit Lakes.

#### *District Administrator – Peter Mead*

- Our last month's meeting referenced the lack of Farm Bill Assistance funding. However, in part to Mead's recent email, our District received a fully-funded grant agreement for Farm Bill assistance. We chose to move forward with filling this position permanently and have no need to hire a temporary technician as discussed during June's meeting. Aaron Salo will be joining the district as our new farm bill technician beginning July 27<sup>th</sup>.

- Managers from Becker, Hubbard, Todd, Clearwater, Wadena, East & West Otter Tail all met with Clean Water and BWSR staff to talk about potential CWL grant applications for groundwater activities.
- BWSR Leadership meeting was held last week in Moorhead. He attended along with 4-5 additional LGUs that met with John Jaschke, BWSR Executive Director. Discussion topics included:
  - Technical training and certification efforts for TSAs and Districts.
  - 1W1P approach is moving from pilot to permanent.
  - CWL and general fund budgets. Farm Bill conservation programs with mainly CREP.
  - Base grants will remain the same.
  - New RFP for CWL is conservation drainage.
- Storage space needs – Mead reviewed the rate of \$1,000 per month quoted for available warehouse space. This is amenable, but he will continue to look at additional options. A decision will be made in mid-late September.
- We have our first violation of a shoreland cost-share contract. The landowner is cooperating and has ordered materials to remedy the situation yet this month.
- Kvasgar-Oslund WCA / Public Waters violation, White Earth Lake. We've been working on this since late 2013 for resolution. DNR has given the landowners until 4:30 p.m. today to voluntarily remove all fill or submit an after the –fact permit application that will require removal of all but 400 square feet of the water-ward fill material, otherwise be served with a restoration order directing him to return the area to its original state. Peter will keep the board informed of any changes.

## **Program Updates**

### *District Programs – Ed Clem*

- Active restoration order with Winton Johnson. Mr. Johnson and his contractor have been more than willing to comply and will remove the fill in the coming week.
- H-O-L Township has been working with him re: Hubble Pond Rd slope maintenance. BWSR and ACOE need more documentation to prove that impacts are accurate. More projects such as this will come from Highway Dept. Our recent TEP has approved the Hubble Pond Rd project.
- Delaney-Bachman-Christiansen access issues have gone to court and mediation. There was a verbal agreement in place years ago which was argued recently do to property owner changes. There is now open water but historical photos show a ridge. Not considered wetland impact because it wasn't a typical wetland. Ed will work with landowners on a mitigation plan. ACOE has full authority in this case. We will propose to the State that this is an incidental wetland.
- Last fall, the District received a grant for inventory of remaining county ditches which are not under watershed district management. Because of our work on this, landowners have shown interest in maintenance issues. He's been coordinating with the County Auditor and Engineer. There are county funds set aside for ditch maintenance. However, benefited landowners may be responsible.
- He distributed photos and plan information for the Bejou Lake Public Access Storm Water Management Plan, which is under construction at this time. Next, they will move a dock and construct a rain garden filtering area for the outlet.

### *Shoreland and Ag Inspector – seasonal technician Brandon Dahring spoke in her absence*

- June was our month for shoreland installs and rain garden projects. The following sites were briefly discussed:
  - Hwy 10 Overlook
  - Little Toad Lake & Big Toad Lake
  - Turtle Lake
  - Elbow Lake, 3 sites
  - Maud Lake

- USDA Service Center parking lot
- Starting to take weed inventories. Wild Parsnip has been a major concern for the county. Mowing in the spring or late fall is best; although, it can be clipped now and sprayed to control seed spread. Hand cutting with proper protection works too. Audubon Township is definitely a hotspot. Other agencies have been lacking proper control measures. Ditch cleanup efforts will be discouraged until the invasive is reduced and controlled.
- Leticia has been attending short course CAI training this week and will be a certified weed inspector when completed.
- We've been blessed to have Brandon and Lauren in the office to assist with a variety of projects this spring/summer season.

#### *Aquatic Invasive Species – Karl Koenig*

- He compared numbers with last month's. As of July 4, his staff of 30 inspectors paid out 6,144 hours. He lost one inspector who took another job but overall he's pleased with the recruitments this year.
- As of July 12<sup>th</sup> there were 9,400 inspections completed. This computes to 1.48 inspections per hour. DNR reported 1.7 last year for the same program. Busier accesses see 2-3 per hour. These numbers are based on weekly staff hour uploads to the state's website.
- DNR has developed a website that lists decontamination sites throughout the state. Schedules can be uploaded with points for location, days and hours that units are available for boaters.
- He would like to see our decontamination units used more often. They're currently housed on Detroit, Melissa, Sallie and Bad Medicine Lakes. We will receive a retrofit kit for the initial decontamination unit purchased by Becker County in 2013. This will allow the unit to reclaim water usage and become a bit more mobile friendly; currently it is not.
- Big Cormorant Lake holds the top position for the most boat traffic. Big Detroit, with three access locations, is a close second and Sallie is third.
- We have contracted with RMB Labs to perform Zebra Mussel veliger monitoring with the five busiest lakes: Big & Little Detroit, Big Cormorant, Ida, Sallie and Floyd. Pickerel Lake was the first to receive monitoring at the request of their lake association. The testing is not completely inclusive but is fairly inexpensive. However, it is more effective when lake water reaches a certain temperature. July-August is the most appropriate time. The best efforts for monitoring are to inspect docks and lifts in the fall. Complete accuracy is not there; false positives are minimal.
- He has been conducting research into watercraft inspector program surveys. A proposal has been requested with the DNR. He will check with other county level managers to process and split costs for the survey. He would like to see more public education which would in turn decrease incident rates. Public support is the key. He hopes to increase public awareness through enhanced information and outreach such as the Becker County fair.

**Records Retention – Statutes and Policy** – scanning and destroying of original documents such as meeting minutes, agendas, financial reports and such is allowable under Minnesota state statute 15.17 Official Records, Subdivision 1: Section 138.17.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to authorize administration to scan and destroy all allowable public records of the District. The electronic version will serve as original documentation in any and all legal and/or informational proceedings.  
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **Discussion Items**

*Becker County Fair Booth – Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 30 – August 1.*

- We missed the fair meeting but Mead has been in contact with Mandy from USFW and Brent from Pelican River Watershed.
- We will focus on AIS outreach efforts.
- No water test this year.
- Schauer noted the need for information regarding our tree program. A tree order form sign-up will be on hand.

*2015 Outstanding Conservationist – we have three candidates and will contact them for acceptance.*

Motion (Flottemesch, Beck) to accept administration's recommendation and contact the individuals for acceptance.

Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

*SWCD Funding Developments, BWSR Board Conservationist Brett Arne*

- Becker SWCD will receive a huge chunk of money for District funding. The state has been granted \$22 million dollars for this fiscal year's biennium from Clean Water funds. All Districts will receive \$100,000 per year in addition to annual funds from County allocations. The first two years will be Clean Water fund money. It is stressed that this be used to supplement, not supplant District needs for infrastructure and technical capacity.
- Request forms will be distributed in November.
- During the second round (FY2018-2020) the money will shift from Clean Water to BWSRs general fund. For now, this should also supplement District efforts. Office space improvements are eligible.
- Counties will not reduce their funding to Districts because of the additional operation funds.

*Budget Committee – Chairperson Stenger has appointed Treasurer Beck and board member Travis Schauer. A date will be established later but should be towards the end of July.*

*Buffers, Buffers, Buffers – BWSR Board Conservationist Brett Arne*

- The 50' Buffer Initiative was a huge compromise. DNR was leading the enforcement, but statutory rules changed this legislation with shoreland ordinance state-wide. Counties will continue leading the enforcement. SWCD's will not enforce but will be program administrators who work with landowners on compliance. The SWCD role will remain the same but requirements have been confirmed. Redetermination rule requirements have changed somewhat. Private ditches within assessed areas will be impacted. Wider buffer requirements are the main factor of this initiative. The full buffer requirement will take effect November 1, 2017.
- 50' buffer exemptions are alfalfa, seed grass, lawns, hay-land and approved alternative practices. Making these identifications should be on a case-by-case basis.
- CCRP practices require a 30' buffer minimum. As of now, new buffer legislation can be interpreted as a qualification.
- The Soil Loss Ordinance took effect July 2013. Many agencies have neglected to follow this. According to legislation, SWCDs are first responders for reporting and follow-up. Action plans will be established and penalties will be placed on landowners for non-compliance. The District must provide 50% cost-share to reduce soil loss and be in compliance.

*Water Plan Update – Mead requested a resolution update of the Becker County Water Plan. As delegated, the Becker SWCD will conduct, report and implement this update.*

Motion (Flottemesch, Pavelko) to move forward with Resolution #07-15-2A and submit to County commissioners regarding the water plan update. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

County Water Plan Advisory Committee – Local government officials and technical members have been chosen.

Laker Gymnastics has asked for sponsorship this season. It was cited government entities are not obligated nor allowed to participate in sponsorship activities such as this. Board declined.

We've been asked to support the EOT and Wadena counties Irrigation Scheduler program and see this as part of our budget for next year. They are asking for \$5,000.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to authorize an appropriation of \$5,000 for the EOT and Wadena County Irrigation Scheduler. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

A domain name has been established for the District for about one year. We have put this off for a variety of reasons but would like to complete it and develop an AIS specific website as well. Mead estimates that \$2,500 is needed to update our District website and a remaining \$2,000 is necessary for AIS. This should be completed in one month. We would still keep our Becker County website presence by offering a redirect using our current path. The District would be responsible for updates and accuracy. Having our own website will lead to easier online credit card payments and Facebook uploads.

Motion (Flottemesch, Schauer) to authorize administration move forward with these website updates and additions.  
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **Contracts, Amendments & Vouchers for Payment**

#### **Contract Amendments**

#14-9 with Curtis Briggs. Project costs are more than projected; changing from \$4,000 to \$5,188. Cost-share assistance increased from \$2,000 to \$2,594.

#14-14 with Lezlee Franke. Project costs are less than projected; changing from \$5,450 to \$4,497. Cost-share assistance decreased from \$2,725 to \$2,249.

#CWL13-18 with Kevin Lunde. Reduction of buffer area and grade stabilization by 0.19 acres has led to a final project cost reduction of \$283.40.

#DNR-06 with Nancy McLaughlin. Project costs are less than projected; changing from \$6,204 to \$6,162. Cost-share was incorrectly figured at 50%, this project is eligible for 75% cost-share. Cost-share assistance increased from \$3,102 to \$4,622.

#DNR-07 with Mark Fogelson. Project costs are less than projected; changing from \$4,438 to \$4,319. Cost-share assistance decreased from \$3,328 to \$3,239.

Motion (Flottemesch, Pavelko) to approve the amendments as listed. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **2014 Cost-Share Vouchers for Payment**

#14-14 with Lezlee Franke, Shoreland Protection on Toad Lake. Total project cost \$4,497; eligible cost-share funding \$2,249.

#14-9 with Curtis Briggs, Rain Garden Installation. Total project costs \$5,188; eligible cost-share funding \$2,594.

Motion (Pavelko, Schauer) to approve payments as listed. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **2015 Cost-Share Vouchers for Payment**

#15-2 with Sara Jennen (North), Shoreland Protection on Elbow Lake. Total project costs \$8,381; eligible cost-share funding \$3,755.

#15-3 with Sara Jennen (South), Rain Garden on Elbow Lake. Total project costs \$4,234; eligible cost-share funding \$1,987.

#15-4 with Duane Trostad, Shoreland Stabilization on Lake Maud. Total project costs \$6,766; eligible cost-share funding \$3,375.

#15-5 with Dawn Morgan, Shoreland Stabilization on Turtle Lake. Total project costs \$5,523; eligible cost-share funding \$2,632.

Motion (Schauer, Flottemesch) to authorize payment of the above as listed. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**MN DNR Aquatic Habitat Grant Vouchers for Payment**

#DNR-06 with Nancy McLaughlin, Shoreland Protection on Little Toad Lake. Total project costs \$6,162; eligible cost-share funding \$4,622.

#DNR-07 with Mark Fogelson, Shoreland Protection on Elbow Lake. Total project costs \$4,319, eligible cost-share funding \$3,239.

Motion (Flottemesch, Pavelko) to authorize payment on the above as listed. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**MN DNR Aquatic Habitat Grant Contracts for Approval**

#DNR-08 with Deb Trautner, Shoreland Protection / Stabilization on Eagle Lake. Estimated project costs \$6,854 with cost-share not to exceed \$5,141.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to approve the above MN DNR Aquatic Habitat Grant contract. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**2015 Clean Water Legacy Grant Contracts for Approval**

#CWL-5-WR with Tom Bergren, Water & Sediment Control Basins. Estimated project costs \$59,810 with eligible 2015 Wild Rice Clean Water funding of \$53,829.

#CWL-7-BR with Kevin Lunde, Grade Stabilization. Estimated project costs \$63,869 with eligible 2015 Buffalo Red Clean Water funding of \$34,064 and 2013 Clean Water funding of \$23,421 not to exceed \$57,485.

#CWL-8-BR with Darwin Hendrickson, Water and Sediment Control Basins. Estimated project costs \$58,748 with eligible EQIP funding of \$28,676 and Buffalo Red Clean Water funding of \$30,072.

#CWL-9-BR with Darwin Hendrickson, Filter Strip/CAP. Estimated project costs \$3,420 with eligible 2015 Buffalo-Red Clean Water funding of \$3,420.

Motion (Flottemesch, Schauer) to approve the above listed contracts. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**2013 Clean Water Legacy Vouchers for Payment**

#CWL13-18 with Kevin Lunde, Filter Strip. Total project costs \$10,945 with partial payment \$2,715.

#CWL13-22 with Clint Felker, Filter Strip. Total project costs \$4,650 with eligible cost-share funding \$4,650.

#CWL13-23 with Sean Felker, Filter Strip. Total project costs \$3,150 with eligible cost-share funding \$3,150.

#CWL13-24 with Ruth Lumb, Filter Strip. Total project costs \$21,000 with eligible cost-share funding \$21,000.

#CWL13-26 with Barry Nelson, Filter Strip. Total project costs \$13,050; eligible cost-share funding \$13,050.

#CWL13-27 with Darwin Hendrickson, Filter Strip. Total project costs \$3,150 with eligible cost-share funding \$3,150.

Motion (Beck, Flottemesch) to approve payments as listed above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**2015 Clean Water Legacy Vouchers for Payment**

#CWL-1-BR with Loren Jetvig, Filter Strip. Total project cost \$27,585; with eligible cost-share funding \$27,585.

Motion (Pavelko, Flottemesch) to approve payment as listed. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Other**

MASWCD Governance 101 Training, held in St. Cloud on September 16 & 17 for staff and supervisor's to attend. This would be beneficial for Travis Schauer, Gene Pavelko and Claire Olson. Peter Mead may attend as well; however, this coincides with September's board meeting. We will confirm attendees and possibly look at changing our September board date.

Todd County water planner will be conducting a symposium regarding the Red Eye WRAPS. Preliminary materials have been disbursed via email. Peter hopes that other area agencies will attend.

Administration proposes that we adjust board meeting start time from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Motion (Flottesch, Pavelko) to authorize administration to change board meeting start time to 8:30 a.m. and make all necessary posting adjustments. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Space concerns with the building – a good point was made by Dan Labatt from Rural Development. Allow the District & NRCS to swap office space with FSA which would allow for easier expansion into the conference room with minimal costs and building changes on Briggs' part. We would be responsible for carrying the brunt of the costs involved, but this would be a better alternative to what we've found thus far.

**Adjourn**

Motion (Pavelko, Schauer) to adjourn meeting at 11:20 a.m. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Approved: Gene Pavelko, Becker SWCD Secretary**

**Date: August 26, 2015**