



Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday January 18, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, January 18th in the Conference Room of the USDA Ag Center Building located at 809 8th Street SE, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Those present were Supervisors Tony Beck, Jerome Flottesmesch, Travis Schauer, Chairman Eugene Pavelko and Kathy Stenger. Others present include Becker County Commissioner Barry Nelson, District Administrator Peter Mead, Office Manager Jen Wentz, NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, District Soil & Water Resource Technician Ed Clem and Ag Inspector/Shoreland Specialist Marsha Watland.

Call to Order

Chairman Pavelko called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

Realignment of the Board and Recognition of Officers

We are on an even year schedule and will realign board members in 2018, but we did recognize officers for 2017.

- Chairman Eugene Pavelko
- Secretary Kathy Stenger
- Treasurer Tony Beck
- Board member Jerome Flottesmesch
- Board member Travis Schauer

Committee Appointments

- Budget Committee – Schauer, Beck with alternate Stenger
- Personnel Committee – Pavelko, Schauer with alternate Beck
- TSA Representative – Flottesmesch with all remaining board members as alternate
- AIS Committee – Stenger with Schauer as alternate

Motion (Beck, Schauer) to approve committee appointments as listed above. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Oath of Office

Travis Schauer took the official Oath of Office at the Becker County courthouse on Friday, January 13th but we do confirm this oath at the first board meeting of the new year.

Recognition of Authorized Representative(s)

- Official Financial Institution continues as Bremer Bank.

Motion (Stenger, Beck) to approve Bremer Bank as the official financial institution for 2017. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

- Official Publication continues as Detroit Lakes Tribune.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Stenger) to approve Detroit Lakes Tribune as the official publication for 2017. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

- Signature Authority for all grant agreements, financial reports and final reports continues as District Administrator, Office Manager and District Soil & Water Resource Technician with board Chairman as alternate.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Stenger) to approve signature authority for the District Administrator, Office Manager, District Soil & Water Resource Technician or board Chairman. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Approval of December 2016 Meeting Minutes

Reviewed prior to meeting. Corrections to note: Remove approval comment from WCA section, bullet item #2 on page 3.

Motion (Schauer, Beck) to approve December meeting minutes as amended. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Financial Reports

Reviewed December 2016 Treasurer's Report and January Bills for Approval.

Motion (Flottesch, Schauer) approve December TR and corrected list of bills for January.

Audit

Bound copies of the audited December 31, 2015 financial statements were presented to all board members. Wentz reviewed the notable changes regarding PERAs underfunding and the new GASB 68 requirements.

Motion (Flottesch, Stenger) to accept the audit of December 31, 2015 financial statements as completed by Peterson Company, Ltd. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

District Reports

District Conservationist - Ed Musielewicz

- We have 32 active EQIP applications that must be signed by next Friday.
- Adam Wolter, Tribal Liason assisting the White Earth Reservation, resigned his position as of January 16th and has since started with the White Earth Indian Reservation as their Ag-land manager. Wadena counterpart has also resigned. Mark Kulik is leaving as well and took a position in WI.
- Ray Hummel has been asked to assist with Baudette NRCS as their DC is currently on a part-time basis. 20% of his time will be spent in Baudette.
- Payments for CSP and EQIP have been assisted by Alisa Bentley whom the District has employed on a temporary and part-time basis.
- We have 27 CRP applications for 2017. None have been approved due to CRP acreage cap.

District Administrator - Peter Mead

- Met in Hubbard Co for a Straight River GWM interested parties and practices meeting.
- BWSR to discuss Prairie Plan funding changes. Funding is ending in June 2017.
- USFWS meeting for the PTM application. Spent time to look at small scale options for watershed challenges. International Waters Institute will add interns to assist with this.
- He and Wentz attended the BWSR Grants Reporting seminar at M State.
- Dan Labatt from RD retired on January 6th. Mike Monson has been appointed his replacement
- Funding from Straight River GWM technical budget. Adding field saver functions for irrigation and farmer data.
- Attended County Commissioners meeting yesterday. Koenig gave the 2016 AIS report, Watland gave the 2016 CAI report and Becker County approved the resolution to provide \$14,500 in matching funds to our District through assistance with BWSR and the Local Capacity grant.
- Attending the Targeted Implementation of Conservation Practices in Becker County.
- Attending leadership conference next week.
- SWCD Board annual planning session is scheduled for 9 a.m. at USFWS on January 26th.

Program Reports

AIS Prevention

Koenig will review 2016 reports at the planning session next week. He has been in touch with many lake associations regarding state aid received and accomplishments toward lake protection. Update on AIS records request: Fishberg-Halbakken has been contacted by the county's attorney office. Large data requests will be paid for by AIS state aid funds.

Buffer Initiative

Mead has been invited and is traveling to St. Paul for the Joint Committee meeting to represent conservation

agencies in the Buffer Bill and discuss the pros and cons for legislation. Many see this law as the taking of landowner's rights, especially productive cropland, with no CRP program or other benefit in its place. Looking for alternative ideas in hopes of pleasing the majority of interested parties.

Wetland Conservation Act

- We were involved in an exemption last spring with the town of Cormorant to excavate open water areas within the mill pond, next to the community center. Subsequently, town officials constructed a foot bridge over the mill pond to connect the Community Center to the new Kiddie Land area. They should have obtained a DNR Public Waters Permit for this activity. DNR has taken over and is handling the issue.
- Received call from airport consultants Mead & Hunt asking for the application to withdraw wetland credits from the County's wetland bank. They were hoping to use credits from the county bank and perform some taxi-way work. Clem pointed them towards the Joint State/Federal application process. The Becker TEP committee will likely recommend completion of the federal Army Corp permitting of the entire project before allowing early stages or parts of the project to proceed. With regards to the Army Corps, once the NEPA process and concurrent point process is complete, it will assist with the purpose, need, avoidance, and alternatives analysis that is also required for WCA permitting.
- Wetland impacts on county road projects. Becker County is one of the few counties in the area that hold its own wetland bank. We will have projects coming in the next year or so that will need wetland banking credits. Becker County's credits are quite valuable due to the closing of the State Road bank for this portion of the state.
- Working with Harvey Harvala, P.E. in Forensic Engineering and Property Investigations. Would like to install a driveway over a bog and eliminate an existing easement. He has designed some detailed plans to float the road across wetland using timbers and fabric.
- Recent eLINK payments made in 2016 need to be entered but his mapping and indicators have been added. We are set to be finished with all reporting requirements by the end of the month.
- Gully into the Buffalo River. We are requesting an In-kind contribution from BRRWD to assist with Army Corps permitting to construct a grade stabilization structure with water and sediment control basins, funded through Clean Water Legacy.

Engineering

Wes Drake has been working mostly with WOT SWCD engineering their preliminary projects. He will soon begin to assist Becker and EOT a bit further.

Local Water Management

- Priority Concerns Scoping document approval is set for February 11th.
- Local Water Plan Scoping document discussion was held in Brainerd. Suggested content for the plan.

CAI & Shoreland

Annual Township & City Weed Inspector training is set for March 23rd in Callaway. Tony Cortilet is set to speak about Amaranth and other major updates in the state. Marsha will report further at the planning session next week.

NRCS / SWCD Operational Agreement Pilot

We've been selected as the pilot for this operational agreement. Mead and Musielewicz have now begun to research this. SWCD personnel have developed a dollar amount of what NRCS provides the SWCD and vice versa. Shared Resources Worksheet Results were reviewed by Mead. NRCS provides 1 computer on the USDA environment, held by Aaron Salo. 150 square feet worth of office space. NRCS VoiP phone system with each phone amounting to the cost of one computer seat. Miscellaneous office supplies but have removed the copier and paper allowance supplied by NRCS. This amounts to \$39,344 in total NRCS contributions. SWCD provides admin assistance and clerical support at 24 hours per week. Outreach events. Miscellaneous storage. CRP plans. Tool kit planning. Per engineered practice all implemented, designed and inspected by SWCD as well as a portion covered by NRCS staff. This amounts to \$137,008 in total SWCD contributions.

As of a couple years ago, NRCS contribution agreements amounted to upwards of \$60,000 per year but since that time, agreements have decreased and other agencies have taken over previously held partnerships. Without District assistance, many of these projects would not be possible.

Motion (Stenger, Flottemesch) to approve the fact that we are comfortable with our current MOU but our District does not support the signing of an annual operations agreement. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

2017 Supervisor Retreat & Planning Session

The following agenda items will be discussed: 2016 accomplishments, Cost-Share policies and CWL grant work plan requirements and Upper Buffalo-Red policies for funding. We will walk through each program and breakdown the workload. We will also discuss the status of the 1W1P.

Education & Outreach

During December's meeting we discussed the costly quote received by an outreach agency for promotional materials. Since that time, we had Claire Olson develop some amazing options with a more feasible cost. We now have an AIS, Shoreline, and Ag Practices flyer that will be printed on full-standing, retractable canvas.

Landowner's Soil Health Summit to be held in Fergus Falls on the 15th & 16th of February. DNR is providing a \$100 scholarship for attendance. Tuition cost is \$150 per person. We would like to send one landowner, possibly two.

Motion (Flottemesch, Stenger) to fund two scholarships for \$50 each to cover the costs over and above the DNR scholarship for the Landowner's Soil Health Summit. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Cover Crop Summit to be held in Detroit Lakes in March with a small group of landowners and agencies to discuss the pros and cons of the program. Brandon Defoe, Soil Health Scientist from Clay has also given his confirmation to offer detailed soil studies and demonstrations.

Motion (Schauer, Stenger) to donate \$350 for sponsorship of a cover crop demonstration and discussion in Detroit Lakes. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

2017 Fees for Service

We will review and approve program fee schedules at the planning session and take action on them in February.

Grants and Agreements

Becker County Resolution 01-17-2B

Becker County has pledged \$14,500 in additional funding in order to leverage the same from BWSR through Local Capacity requirements. Commissioner Nelson and Mead have discussed the possibilities of this additional funding. We're hoping for additional work through BMPs and Buffalo River sediment reduction.

FY 2017 BWSR Local Capacity Services

Grant agreement has been signed and forwarded to BWSR.

Motion (Stenger, Flottemesch) to approve the FY17 Local Capacity grant agreement. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Updated Technical Approval Authority for Aaron Salo was received last month.

Motion (Schauer, Beck) to approve TAA for Aaron Salo. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Adjourn

Chairman Pavelko adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.