



## **Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday February 21, 2018**

### **Meeting Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, February 21, 2018 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 Chairman Tony Beck, Jerome Flottemesch, Eugene Pavelko, Travis Schauer and Kathy Stenger. Staff members include District Administrator Peter Mead, Office Manager Jen Wentz and NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz. Barry Nelson, Becker County Commissioner, also attended.

#### **Call to Order**

Chairman Beck called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

#### **Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda Items**

January 17, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes; Employee Program Reports

Motion (Pavelko, Flottemesch) to approve the February agenda and consent agenda as well as the January meeting minutes as written. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **Financials**

Treasurers Report and Bills for Approval

Motion (Schauer, Pavelko) to approve January Treasurer's Report and pay the list of bills for February. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Update Signature Cards. Kathy Stenger will sign the Bremer Bank signature cards which will remove previous treasurer Tony Beck.

#### **District Reports**

*Administrator's Report, given by Peter Mead*

Claire Olson has decided to make the change from Engineering Technician to Shoreland Technician. She has been in contact with Gabe Dretsch upon his departure and is working diligently to learn all areas of shoreland restoration.

Mead has posted job openings for Engineering Technician and Conservation Planning Technician. The District's personnel committee will need to meet soon for interviews.

The Red River Valley Conservation Service Area has also posted notice for an Engineering Technician. Position location will be determined between a six county area. Pennington Co. Soil & Water staff are accepting applications.

Tree sale advertising is on our local radio stations of KRCQ and KDLM.

Mead attended the Freshwater Society meeting in Osage. That was the third of three meetings. The others were located in Parkers Prairie and Perham. The final meeting will be held March 7<sup>th</sup>.

The work plans of our phase II grants for Clean Water Legacy have been completed with Brett Arne.

Mead, Watland and Koenig attended the County Commissioners meeting last week to report on 2017 CAI & AIS Activities and plans for the coming year.

Mead met with Dane Erickson from Red Canoe Creative regarding consistent media services for the TSA.

Mead and Musielewicz attended the NRCS all-employee teleconference. The theme going forward is, do more with less. They will plan to make funds available for other parties involving CRP, restoration, grazing and basic engineering projects. EQIP and CSP will continue as normal. They hope to make larger and fewer grants available.

NRCS Area changes have been gaining momentum. This will further consolidate Areas in MN.

Mead met with Todd from Nature Conservancy to discuss support of outreach efforts for "RIM in the Trees" program dollars.

Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> Mead will attend and present at the Izaak Walton League, 2018 Watershed Summit at Normandale Community College in Bloomington, MN.

March 22<sup>nd</sup> Mead will travel to St Paul meet with National USDA staff and 9 colleagues from around the state to participate in the National Planning Partnership Listening Session.

Word has emerged that LCCMR is pulling 2 million in funding from the FBA program.

### **Open Forum**

Legislative Briefing Day at the Capitol is March 12-14. No board members will be in attendance.

MASWCD Area 1 meeting in Crookston March 20. Mead has a conflict and will not attend. Wentz and Bentley along with all five board members will be in attendance.

Other conflicts to our March board meeting have caused us to change the meeting date to March 14<sup>th</sup>.

Musielewicz announced that Cathee Pullman has resigned as NRCS MN State Conservationist. Curt Elke has been appointed as acting Minnesota State Conservationist.

### **Discover the Prairie**

Phil Doll and colleagues have decided to recreate an event and exhibit held last year in Moorhead at the Rourke Museum. *Discover the Prairie* is their campaign and mission. They want to take the concept of highlighting native prairies, incorporate it statewide and distribute maps of how to find various locations. Budget numbers have come in close to \$100,000 for website development, media applications and hiring of a 0.2 FTE. *Discover the Prairie* will allow people to share digitally. Some challenges have been with sharing ownerships. All land shared via *Discover the Prairie* will be publicly owned. DNR, USFWS and the Nature Conservancy have been at the forefront of the campaign. Much of the focus will be on native prairies, those that have never been turned over by the plow. Some restored prairies will be made available for viewing but most will be untouched. They are still in the concept stage. Recommendations will come from the LCCMR panel. This will be a unique situation for Becker County.

Resolution 18-1 in Support of LCCMR Application was submitted for approval. This is needed as part of the grant application.

Motion (Flottesch, Stenger) to approve Resolution 18-1 in support of the LCCMR application and adopt the idea to bring *Discover the Prairie* into Becker County. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **Buffalo Red River Watershed 1W1P**

Memorandum of Agreement was presented to the board. This is just a formality in the process to start the planning process. The memorandum sites all state statues to watershed and local planning as well as their roles. Authorized representatives for Becker County will be Barry Nelson and Jerome Flottesch.

Motion (Schauer, Pavelko) to join into partnership with the Buffalo Red River Watershed District, area SWCDs including Clay, West Otter Tail, Wilkin and Becker and the counties of Becker, Clay, Otter Tail and Wilkin for the 1W1P Memorandum of Agreement. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

### **Non-Structural Land Management Practices (State Cost Share)**

Our district board has the opportunity to set policy for state cost share dollars to be used for nonstructural land mgmt. practices, ie: cover crops.

Becker SWCD will provide flat rate payments from state cost-share program dollars. We will provide planning and technical assistance for producers enrolling in the program. Funding is applicable for one year but the producer is required to adhere to the policies for a three year commitment, not to exceed 150% of the NRCS EQIP payment

rates. Depending on the plan, different fields can be planted into cover crop but need to remain the same acreage and commit to three years of compliance.

Suggestions were made to make EQIP payment rates more simplified. Those changes will be updated prior to submission and approval.

Motion (Stenger, Flottemesch) to approve the Non-Structural Land Management Practices program policy after EQIP payment rate changes are made. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **Commercial Pesticide Applicator Testing**

Out-of-County Testing Fee. Watland approached Mead with the concern that many of our applicator tests are for individuals outside our county. Other counties have begun using a similar system. We are asking to charge \$25 per out-of-state commercial applicator test.

Motion (Pavelko, Stenger) to approve a \$25 commercial pesticide applicator testing fee. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **Local EQIP Workgroup**

Annual workgroup meetings have been held in the past except for last year. The Local Workgroup is chaired by the district. This is an advisory group to provide recommendations on how to prioritize and rank our programs. Anyone can be a member. Requests need to be written and submitted to SWCD and NRCS for approval. Anyone with knowledge of local resources in our county can be a member.

The next meeting date must be held by May 1<sup>st</sup>. All board members will be invited and presented with an application for membership. Our Local EQIP Workgroup will be held on Thursday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

#### **Clean Water Legacy Contracts for Approval**

#CWL-44-LP, Justin Scallon, Raingardens. Estimated project costs \$4,213; eligible for 90% cost-share of \$3,160.

Motion (Flottemesch, Pavelko) to approve the above CWL-Lake Protection contract. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **Clean Water Legacy Vouchers for Payment**

#CWL-4-GWP, Leonard Holmer, Cover Crop. Total PARTIAL project costs \$969.50; partial payment of \$969.50.

Motion (Schauer, Stenger) to approve payment of the above Groundwater Protection project. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

#### **March Board Meeting**

Because of various conflicts to our normal scheduled date, the alternate date for our next board meeting will be March 14.

#### **Adjourn**

Chairman Beck adjourned the meeting at 9:52 a.m. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.