

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alger Conservation District Board

Tuesday, November 9th, 2021, at 6:15 pm

MSU Research and Extension Center, Chatham, MI

The regular meeting of ACD was held on the above date. The meeting was called to order at 6:15 by Chairman Highlen. Board members present at roll call: John Highlen, Rowan Bunce, Mike Saberniak, Diane Kay-Hougaboom. Board members absent: Liz Wiener. Staff present: Teri Grout, Matt Watkeys, Sara Kelso, Kelly Sippl. Staff absent: Holly Moss, Landen Tetil, Christy Foye, Misa Cady.

Guests: County Commissioner Mick Rondeau arrived 6:25 pm.

Public comment: None.

Motion to accept agenda made by Bunce; Kay-Hougaboom seconded; MCUC.

Highlen asked that minutes be corrected to show that Foye was not present as shown in draft minutes and Kelso was present but not listed. Motion to approve minutes of the October 2021 regular meeting as corrected was made by Bunce; seconded by Saberniak; MCUC.

PRESENTATION FROM MICHAEL PALING, ABC FORESTER: Tabled; Paling unable to attend due to COVID-19.

STAFF REPORTS: Written reports reviewed by board, highlighted by staff present.

- a. NRCS DC: Written report received and reviewed.
- b. NRCS SC: Sippl highlighted written report; CSP contracts currently being reviewed.
- c. FAP FORESTER: Kelso reviewed written report and noted that she was familiarizing herself with Alger County and its landowners. She plans to continue Watkey's practice of holding Alger office hours the last Friday of every month.
- d. ED: Grout highlighted written report.
- e. DM: Watkeys went over written report, noting tree sale prep and QuickBooks training among many activities.
- f. CONSERVATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Written report received and reviewed.
- g. MDARD REGIONAL REP: Written report received and reviewed.
- h. PRODUCE SAFETY: Written report received and reviewed
- i. MAEAP: No report received.

MEETING REPORTS: Watkeys noted that he has been attending the MACD conference QuickBooks sessions.

Old Business:

- a. INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM:
 - RC&D*: Grout reported that phragmites treatment was completed in mid-October and has been billed out.
 - DISTRICT*: All other treatment has been completed for season.
- b. MISG/LAKE-TO-LAKE CISMA:
 - HWA*: Crew training has been set up. Surveys will begin after that. Money has been written into Survey and Treatment proposal to MISG for the 2022 season; if obtained, this will fund winter 2022 surveys.
 - MISG 2019 Survey & Treatment*: Subaward funding has been spent as planned and billed to MCCC.
 - MISG Knotweed*: Grout reported that knotweed treatments have been completed for season. She will be working with MTRI and KISMA over the winter on the GIS risk analysis and concomitant prioritization and treatment planning for 2022 field season.
- c. SOGL 2019 – Grout reported that NFWF requested an additional compliance document, which she had originally submitted in December 2020 but which had not been received. The document has been resubmitted, which should speed up receipt of the pay request.
- d. FISHERIES HABITAT GRANT(FHG) – Grout reported ACD has received the executed amendment extending period of performance until January 8, 2022. All field work has been completed, and the extension will allow reporting to be completed with remaining staff funds.
- e. NEW GRANTS & FUNDING UPDATE: Watkeys reported that John Dollard from USFS asked whether ACD might be able to do contract work with USFS funds next season, specifically on flowering rush. Grout notes that we have residual SOGL money and should have new MISG S & T money for 2022, so should be able to

accommodate contract work if we know requirements prior to spring hiring. PIRO has not contacted her yet about 2022 contract. 2021 MISGP awards for 2022 S & T should be announced in early 2022. Watkeys is working with Paul Steen from MiCorps program to revise QAPP in preparation for next funding round. Clean Boats, Clean Waters just announced new outreach funding. This year funding is competitive, and proposals are due December 17 instead of being first come, first served; Watkeys and Grout will retool last year's proposal with Burt Township and resubmit.

- f. DISTRICT EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS: Watkeys reported that tree sale pickup will be May 7th; Birds, Bees, Critters and Trees will be March 24th, location TBD; and pruning workshop will be April 16, location TBD. Suggestion was made to hold an event in Mathias Township, as few events have been held there recently.
- g. RESOURCE ASSESSMENT OUTREACH/SURVEY: Foye will compile results over winter. Deadline for completion will be July 7th, 2022, to meet requirements of MDARD CD Operations Grant.

New Business:

- a. QUICKBOOKS/SQUARE RECONCILIATION: Watkeys discussed method for reconciling accounting for credit card fees in QuickBooks. Recommendation is to record fees as a single disbursement (or in future, a periodic disbursement) to Square, deducted from gross tree sale revenues. Kay-Hougaboom moved to approve proposed method; Bunce seconded; MCUC.
- b. ACD GRANTS SPREADSHEET: Watkeys distributed a master grants spreadsheet developed by MCCD, to be modified and used as a template for ACD grants. Grout and Watkeys will compile individual grant files into a master over the winter, which should aid staff and board understanding grant status.
- c. SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: Board and staff discussed legal requirements for seasonal employer designation and its ramifications for unemployment claims and rates. Grout noted that ACD's permanent and winter staffing as well as the extended fall treatment season have made it impossible to qualify for seasonal status for the past two seasons, but if that changes, ACD can again be a seasonal employer.
- d. PURCHASE OF DISTRICT VEHICLE: Watkeys presented information on purchase of a District vehicle through MiDeals and discussed the potential benefits in grant mileage savings, avoidance of wear and tear on personal vehicles, and in-season equipment access. Rondeau mentioned the possibility that ACD might qualify for vehicle savings through USDA similar to those the County receives, suggesting that Watkeys speak with Steve Webber.
- e. QUICKBOOKS TRAINING NEEDS: Watkeys noted that this was discussed earlier under Meetings.
- f. REVISED ED WORK AGREEMENT: Board reviewed revised agreement incorporating changes made at previous board meeting. Motion to approve made by Bunce, seconded by Kay-Hougaboom; MCUC.
- g. REVISED DM WORK AGREEMENT: Board reviewed revised agreement incorporating changes made at previous board meeting and addressed addition of a 457 account for Watkeys with a 5% contribution rate and the option for pretax employee contributions (same as current policy for other employees). Watkeys noted that his pay package at MCCD included a 15% health stipend as well as a 5% contribution, so this would match his previous benefit package. Motion to approve made by Kay-Hougaboom, seconded by Bunce; MCUC.
- h. REVISED FOYE WORK AGREEMENT: Board reviewed revised agreement incorporating changes made at previous board meeting. Motion to approve made by Bunce, seconded by Kay-Hougaboom; MCUC.
- i. WATKEYS 457 ACCOUNT: Addressed and approved in section g above.
- j. PLANNING FOR FY22 ANNUAL MEETING: Kay-Hougaboom agreed to run for balance of term; replacement for Saberniak will need to be recruited. Thursday, March 31 will be the annual meeting date. Venue options and speaker will need to be explored. Potential topics suggested: Great Lakes water levels (Gerig); tourism impacts.
- k. MEETING DATES FOR FY2022: By consensus, board agreed to retain meeting date of second Tuesday of the month and same location. Watkeys suggested setting meeting time earlier; board agreed to 6:00 pm meeting time beginning in December.


ACCEPT TREASURERS REPORT/PAY BILLS: Nothing out of the ordinary. Motion to approve the Treasurers report was made by Bunce; Kay-Hougaboom seconded; MCUC.

CORRESPONDENCE: Watkeys distributed correspondence. Received and entered into records.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Rondeau noted retirement of District judge and redistricting of county commission territories.
Motion to adjourn made by Saberniak; seconded by Bunce at 7:47 pm; MCUC.

Submitted by Teri Grout, Executive Director

These Minutes are subject to approval until signed below.

APPROVED:  _____ Date: 12/14/21
John Highlen, Chairman OR Rowan Bunce, Secretary