

East Polk Soil & Water Conservation District December 19th, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

Board members present: Dave Kiecker, Ken Pederson, Kory Sonstelie and Scott Balstad

Other's present: Rachel Klein, Jenna Simonson, Marea Gryskiewicz, & Laura Schnapp (NRCS)

Meeting called to order at 8:32 am by Chairman Pederson

Motion to approve December 19th, 2023 Agenda. Motion by Sonstelie, Second by Kiecker.

Secretary's Report:

Approve November 16th, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes. Motion by Sonstelie, Second by Kiecker.

Financials:

Approve the November 2023 Treasurer's Report subject to revision. Motion by Sonstelie, Second by Kiecker.

Old Business:

New Business:

Approve the Sand Hill River 1W1P Resolution to adopt, submit, and implement the Sand Hill River 1W1P. Fiscal Agent and Coordinator will be West Polk. Motion to by Balstad, Second By Kiecker.

Approve the SWCD Aid Resolution. Motion by Sonstelie, Second by Kiecker.

CD's Updates: Dave Kiecker reported that he renewed one of the CDs for 5.25% interest. The other CD's renewal date is June 1, 2024.

Approve payment of \$49,081.96 (see breakdown below) for Cost Share Contract, CS-23-05, for Dave Kiecker's WASCOD. Total project cost is \$54,535.51, encumbered total was \$49,521.12.

- State Cost Share 2021: \$3,451.19
- RLWD: \$20,314.36
- Clearwater 1W1P: \$25,316.41

Motion by Balstad, Second by Sonstelie. Kiecker abstained from voting.

Approve payment of \$10,329.79 for Cost Share Contract, CS-23-08, for Shayne Munter's WASCOD from the Clearwater 1W1P. Total project cost is \$11,477.54, encumbered total was \$10,739.44. Motion by Kiecker, Second by Sonstelie.

Approve payment of \$500.00 for Cost Share Contract, CS-23-09, for Kevin Hanson's well sealing from State Cost Share 2022. Total cost is \$1000.00, encumber total was \$500.00. Motion by Balstad, Second by Sonstelie.

Scott Lundberg Contract (CS-23-01) – Expiring. Discussion was had that Scott Lundberg halted the process on his shoreline restoration and rain garden right before construction this fall. The contract

expires at the end of the year. Approve the amendment to extend the contract to July 1, 2024. Motion by Balstad, Second by Sonsteliie.

Employee Reviews and Recommendations

- Meeting Will be Closed under MN State Statute Chapter 13D.03 (Labor Negotiations) to Review 2023 Raises brought forward by the Personnel Committee

Motion to Close the Meeting for Labor Negotiations at 10:12 am by Balstad, Second by Sonsteliie.

Closed meeting adjourned at 10:23am. Electronic

- Discussion from the closed labor negotiations meeting: (Recording available upon request.)
 - o Rachel: \$3/hour increase. 2024 rate: \$31.25/hour.
 - o Marea: \$3/hour increase. 2024 rate: \$25.80/hour.
 - o Jenna: \$3.50/hour increase. 2024 rate: \$24.00/hour.

Motion to approve the above raises by Balstad, Second by Kory. Discussion: Rachel asked the board to consider increasing Jenna's raise. Jenna came to the district with 4 years of experience and although she only has 2.5 years of experience with the district her previous experience should be considered. Rachel would like to see Jenna within a dollar per hour of Marea. Kiecker proposed increasing Jenna to an increase of \$4/hour for a 2024 rate of \$24.50. Balstad rescinded the motion.

Motion to approve raises as listed below by Balstad, Second by Sonteliie.

- Rachel: \$3/hour increase. 2024 rate: \$31.25/hour.
- Marea: \$3/hour increase. 2024 rate: \$25.80/hour.
- Jenna: \$4/hour increase. 2024 rate: \$24.50/hour.

Reports:

NRCS Report: EQIP- Working on practice certifications and payments. There are 35 applications that will be evaluated for the 1st round of FY24 funding. Ranking deadline 1-19-24. CSP- Working on practice certifications and payments. Application cutoff is 1-12-24. FY24 program funding is double that of FY23 mostly b/c of the Inflation Reduction Act. There are several new fund pools. Payment caps and the number of annual payments that can be made on certain practices have increased. I attended the MASWCD annual convention. The experience and ability to see how things work at the statewide level was great. I enjoyed the opportunity.

Member Reports

Kiecker: CD Report

Pederson: SHRWD Policy Meeting, Area 1 Meeting, & Personnel Committee Meeting.

Sonsteliie: No Report

Balstad: Personnel Committee Meeting. Also talked to Ultima Bank and there may be a new funding source available to producers that is similar to the AgBMP Loan Program. Rachel will reach out to Ron Lemer and see if he has any additional information on this program.

Staff Reports

Rachel:

Meetings/Training:

- SHRWD 1W1P Public Hearing & Policy Meeting
- Area 1 Meeting
- County Board Meeting for Feedlot Workplan Approval

- Clearwater 1W1P Work Group Meeting

Admin:

- Payroll, month end, board meeting prep
- Employee Reviews
- Personnel Committee Meeting for Reviews
- Started eLink reporting
- Fall newsletters
- Final SWAG Invoice Submitted
- 2023 Lake Monitoring Invoices Submitted to watershed districts

WCA:

- WCA Site Visit on Maple Lake
- Tax Forfeit: Wetland Certificates
- Tiling Setback Follow Up
- Assistance given on two upcoming applications

Feedlots:

- Feedlot Inspections Completed
- Year end reporting

Marea:

Meetings/Training:

- Area 1 Meeting

WASCOB:

- 4 survey and design
 - o Kiecker, King Township, Sec-24
 - o Theis, Brandsvold Township, Sec-35
 - o Olson, Brandsvold Township, Sec-15
 - o Olson, Brandsvold Township, Sec 22
 - o Roed, Brandsvold Township, Sec-6
 - o Roed, Hill River Township, Sec-25
- 2 complete
 - o Kiecker, King Township, Sec-23
 - o Munter, Hill River Township, Sec-21

SWI:

- 1 survey
 - o Vettleson, Chester Township, Sec-14

Other:

- 2023 Newsletter

Jenna:

Meetings/Trainings:

Buffers:

Trees:

- Tree Sales

Feedlots:

- CFO Webinar
- Newsletter
- Feedlot Inspections Completed
- Year-end reporting

SWAG:

- Data Submission
- Progress report

Other:

- Rainfall Data
- Data Review – Stream / Lakes
- Lake Levels
- Fall Newsletter
- WCA Site Visit on Maple Lake

AgBMP Report: No longer accepting applications. There is a waitlist to submit an application. Bridge loans may not be used at this time.


Other: Rachel reported that she received a letter from the MN Campaign and Finance Board that all board members will need to review their economic interests in January 2024.

Next Meeting January 18th, 2024 at 8:30am

Motion to adjourn at 10:26 am. Motion by Sonstelie, Second by Kiecker.



Secretary



Date