

**East Polk Soil & Water Conservation District
February 20th, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes**

Board members present: Al Bauer, Ken Pederson, Dave Kiecker, and Scott Balstad

Other's present: Marea Schommer, Nicole Bernd, Rachel Klein, Joan Lee, Jenny Burrack, Robert Guetter, and Brett Arne

Meeting called to order at 8:30 am by Chairman Pederson

Motion to Approve the February 20th, 2020 Agenda: Bauer, Second: Kiecker.

Secretary's Report:

Approve January 15th, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes. Motion by Kiecker and seconded by Bauer to approve the minutes from the regular board meeting held on January 15th, 2020.

Discussion to reorganize board member positions: Kiecker- Treasurer, Bauer- Vice Chairman, Vettleson- PR & I, AIS Taskforce – Pederson added, Bauer moved to an alternate.

The January 2020 financial reports were reviewed. Motion by Bauer and seconded by Balstad to approve the financial reports, subject to audits and revisions.

Treasurer's Report:

Approve the January 2020 Treasurer Reports. Motion by Balstad and seconded by Bauer to approve the treasurers report.

Old Business:

New Business:

Motion by Balstad and second by Bauer to approve payment to the City of McIntosh for \$2,773.80 office space lease.

Motion by Balstad and Seconded by Bauer to approve Wayne Kolden's WCA Joint Application which is a replacement plan for a driveway project that will impact .7 acres of wetland. At a 2:1 ratio he will be purchasing .14 credits.

Motion by Kiecker and seconded by Bauer to approve Personnel Committee recommendations after employee evaluations:

- Rachel: \$2/hour raise back dated to January 1st, 2020 to bring her salary up to \$24/hour
- Marea: \$2/hour raise back dated to January 1st, 2020 to bring her salary up to \$19/hour

Motion by Balstad and seconded by Bauer to approve Marea's merit bonus of \$1000.

Staff presented the board with a grievance letter. The letter explained how the closed meeting following last month's board meeting violated open meeting law and the District's Policy Manual. The grievance was with the process and how laws and policies need to be followed to promote a healthy and

productive work environment for staff. A PowerPoint from MCIT about open meeting law was also handed out for the board members to review.

Discussion to schedule the Annual Planning Meeting which will be held on March 19th, 2020 at 10 am following the regular board meeting.

Discussion to schedule the Local Work Group Meeting which will be held on March 24th, 2020 at 8:30 am.

Discussion for the Clearwater WASCOD Grant. The East Polk SWCD did not receive funding for our grant proposal this year. Discussion was had with Brett Arne, BWSR, about what we can do to improve our funding chances in the future.

Reports:

NRCS Report:

Staffing – A Soil Con Technician Job has not been opened yet. Still supposed to be coming.

Bob Guetter, Team Lead-Crookston accepted a Team Lead job in Detroit Lakes and will start in DL 3/29/2020. The Team Lead position is a priority in the state and will be offered ASAP.

MN NRCS has a FTE staffing level of 304 employees, we are currently around 235. MN is a hiring priority for the national office, and we now have our own Human Resource staff member to work on advertising and filling our positions.

Programs – EQIP-2020 sign-up ends March 13th, 2020. Funds are down from last year. It will be busy and competitive. We still don't have all the information for the ranking of the program yet.

CSP-2020 don't know when the sign up ends yet. Funds are limited. The state office came up with a prioritization worksheet that will narrow down the workload.

There is a state NRCS all employees meeting Feb 25-27th at Cragun's resort

NRCS and SWCD will hold the 2020 LWG meeting soon.

BWSR Report:

No report

Member Reports:

Balstad: East Polk County Crop Improvement Association Annual Meeting is coming up February 25, 2020. There will be three topics presented on, alternative buffer practices, solar energy, and allocating limited resources.

Bauer: Personnel committee held employee evaluations. Attended AIS Meeting.

Pederson: Personal committee held employee evaluations.

Kiecker: No Report

Staff Reports:

Rachel:

Returned to work February 10, 2020.

- In the process of planning the East Polk SWCD Annual Planning Meeting and the Local Work Group Meeting with NRCS.

- Sent out Summer Intern position announcement to area colleges with a deadline of Friday, March 6th
- Envirothon Prep
- Working on reporting

Marea:

Meetings

- February AIS meeting: by a unanimous vote the AIS taskforce will be purchasing a cleaning machine this year from one of our local welders. The next phase will be to have a decision on whether to purchase a cleaning machine from Sorenson Welding or Lindholm Welding.
- Employee Evaluations

Geologic Atlas Survey

- Majority of the Geologic Atlas Survey project is finished but there were a few wells I could not locate. Therefore, Nicole from West Polk will try to get in contact with the landowners so we can find their well location.

Other

- Rainfall Monitoring
- Tree Orders
- Scanning old records (tree order forms, rainfall monitoring, grant applications)

Other/Open Discussion

Discussion about the Carlson Coulee project and how invoicing worked for the Targeted Watershed Grant

Joan Lee reported that there has been some movement on the Vesedahl project. The SHRWD met with MnDOT to try and allow easements.

Discussion was had on the Wild Rice Marsh 1W1P and how they will be structuring the money and they are looking for recommendations. The board supports a MOA and Scott Balstad will bring that to their next meeting.

Motion to adjourn at 10:10am by Bauer and Seconded by Kiecker



Secretary

5-21
2020

Date