

East Polk Soil & Water Conservation District February 13th, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: David Kiecker, Kory Sontelie, Scott Balstad and Ken Pederson

Other's Present: Rachel Klein, Jenna Simonson, Gabby Rodriguez, & Laura Schnapp

Meeting called to order at 8:38 am by Chairman Pederson

Approve the February 13, 2025 Agenda. Motion by Kiecker, Seconded by Sonstelie.

Secretary's Report:

Approve the January 16, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes. Motion by Sonstelie, Seconded by Kiecker.

Financials:

Approve the January 2025 Financial & Tresure Reports, subject to revisions. Motion by Sonstelie, Seconded by Kiecker.

Old Business:

New Business:

Approve the Pederson Company Audit Engagement Letter for 2024. Motion by Balstad, Seconded by Sonstelie.

Cover Crop/No Till Policy. Rachel reviewed the new Soil Health Practices Grant (RCPP) Maximum Payment Rates and reported that a funding request was sent for \$180,000. Out of that \$180,000, \$150,000 can be used for projects and \$30,000 can be used for technical assistance. Additional funding can be requested as often as monthly. Discussion was had on payment rates and maximum contract amounts as the District's Soil Health Policy was and Priorities were reviewed.

- Approve the maximum payment rate for practice standard 329: Residue and Tillage Management, No Till at \$50/acre. Motion by Balstad, Seconded by Kiecker.
- Approve the maximum contract amount for Soil Health Practices to be \$15,000. Motion by Balstad, Seconded by Kiecker.
- Approve the maximum payment rate for practice standard 345: Residue and Tillage Management, Reduce Till at \$30/acre. Motion by Balstad, Seconded by Kiecker.
- Approve the maximum payment rates for all other practices approved for the Soil Health Practices Grant to follow the rates provided by BWSR. Motion by Balstad, Seconded by Sonstelie.

Approve partnering on a SWAG (surface water assessment grant) Agreement with the RLWD. Motion by Balstad, Seconded by Sonstelie.

Reports:**NRCS Report:**

- EQIP FY25- 10 applications were selected during 1st round of preapprovals: 1 high tunnel system, 5 CPA/DIAs (forest management plans), 1 in monarch fund pool (wildlife planting), 1 in Farmstead fund pool, & 2 in the IRA cropland fund pool. Funding the IRA fund pools have been paused. Several selected applicants have already gone to contract and building plans is almost complete for the others.
- CSP FY25 Classic- 16 application on file to be assessed and ranked by 3-21-25. I am starting to set appts to review maps and select activities with producers.
- I spent some time working with Gabby and making sure I am up to date on the soil health RCPP. There are a few trainings coming up. If it works with my schedule, I'll attend. The next one on my radar is a virtual training to learn about programmatic requirements of the grant (2-19-25).
- It was announced in January that the CREP program will be expanded to include 12 additional counties and increase the enrollment goal to 75,000 ac. This expansion includes Polk County.
- There will be a MN state training on the expanded agreement on 2-20-25. The SWCDs should have gotten an invite to this training from BWSR

Member Reports

Kiecker: No Report

Pederson: Attended the February 12th SHR 1W1P Meeting

Sonsteli: No Report

Balstad: No Report

Staff Reports**Rachel:****Meetings/Training:**

- NRCS/BWSR Soil Health Leadership Kickoff
- Soil Health Meeting with Gabe (Red Lake SWCD)
- Soil Health Meeting with Laura
- SOS BWSR Training
- Soil Health Practices Grant Training
- Envirothon Meeting
- SHR 1W1P Meeting

Admin:

- Payroll, month end, bills, and board meeting prep
- 4th Quarter Supervisor Pay
- 4th Quarter Invoices
- eLink Reporting Completed
- Feedlot Reporting Completed.

WCA:

- Inquires
- Reporting Completed

Jenna:**Meetings/Trainings:**

- Feedlot CFO Webex
- AIS Detectors (U of M) Webinars
- SOS BWSR Training

Trees:

- Taking Orders
- Invoices & Sale Tracking

Water Quality:

Other:

- Website Update – tree page
- Spring Newsletter Design draft
- CISMA Planning

Gabby:

Meetings/Training:

- TTCP Onboarding Meeting
- NRCS/BWSR Soil Health Leadership Kickoff
- Soil Health Meeting with Gabe (Red Lake SWCD)
- Soil Health Meeting with Laura
- SOS BWSR Training
- Soil Health Practices Grant Training
- Envirothon Meeting

Other:

- AgLearn training: Working on Planner Certification Level 1
- Training Videos
- Updated Newsletter Mailing List with the returned

AgBMP Report: Accepting Applications!

Other Discussion: Discussion was had on the Envirothon and fundraising. East Polk has not had any teams from schools in our district in years. Currently expenses are covered by fundraising activities by districts. If expenses are not covered by the amount raised the East Polk SWCD is willing to provide funding and will not be fundraising.

Next Meeting March 20, 2025 at 8:30am

Motion to adjourn at 11:03 am by Kiecker, Second by Sonsteli.

Secretary

Date