

Clearwater Soil & Water Conservation District

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REGULAR MEETING November 19th, 2020

MEETING MINUTES

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Board Members Present:

Harlan Strandlien and Alroy Lewis. With Jackie Ulrich and Paul Rydeen via Zoom.

SWCD Staff: Lori Buell, Chester Powell and Brielle Prokosch

NRCS Staff: Jody Peek via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. by Chair Strandlien at the Bagley USDA Service Center while on Zoom. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda: Chair Strandlien called for additions or corrections to the agenda. Buell requested adding an office cell phone upgrade. Rydeen made a motion to add the item. Seconded by Lewis. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Minutes: Minutes of the October meeting were reviewed by the board. Strandlein noted two errors to be corrected. Lewis made a motion to approve the October minutes with corrected errors. Seconded by Ulrich. **Motion carried 4-0.**

NRCS

CSP: The sign-up deadline for CSP-GCI was October 16th with no new application from Clearwater County. Regular CSP payments were made by November 6th with 25 payments in Clearwater County. Clearwater has 8 applications ready for renewal.

EQIP: FY2021 sign-up deadline is November 20th. Currently Clearwater has 7 pending applications.

Other: The current staff member in the Bagley NRCS office will be teleworking due to COVID-19 concerns. Peek noted she will cover the Bagley office 2-3 days a week. Due to rising COVID-19 cases NRCS has been instructed to alternate teleworking beginning November 16th to limit staff in office.

WATER PLAN COORDINATOR/TECHNICIAN REPORT

Water Planning: Powell reported that the Mississippi 1W1P had a policy meeting on October 16th to approve financials. The Wild Rice 1W1P had a policy meeting on November 4th to be sent to the BSWR board for approval. The Wild Rice 1W1P wanted a motion of support from all local governments involved when sent to the BSWR board. Ulrich made the motion to give the District's support. Seconded by Lewis. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

Soil Health:

Soil Test: Powell reported that Ricky Marsh had submitted 11 soil tests, but since the program can only cover 10 tests, 10 soil tests were accepted for cost share in the total amount of \$250.00 with each test costing \$25.00. Rydeen made the motion to approve cost share to Marsh in the amount of \$250.00. Seconded by Lewis. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

Aerator: Powell reported that Sam Nordlund used the aerator yesterday even though it was unusually late in the year to be using the soil health equipment. Powell confirmed that the soil was still soft enough to use the aerator and that the District did not have a specific cutoff date for the aerator. Powell requested a verbal agreement from the board that there was no cutoff date, the board granted confirmation.

Equipment: Powell noted that besides the recently used aerator the rest of the District's equipment has been or will be temporarily stored for the winter. Powell noted that the storage unit's arrival will be in about 2 weeks.

Cost Share: Powell reported that the Nordlund stock farm had completed their extensive fencing and well project and is eligible for 75% cost share in the total amount of \$11,799.13 which falls under the \$12,000 cost share cap. Rydeen made the motion to approve cost share to Nordlund in the total amount of 11,799.13. Seconded by Lewis. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

Conservation Farm: Powell reported that the parking lot has been cleared and finished by Brady. Powell also noted that 36 hunting permits has been given out for 2020.

Trainings: Powell noted he attended BSWR training virtually.

Trees: Powell reported that the 2021 trees have been ordered. Powell noted he could not order some species due to COVID-19 disrupting tree farms.

Equipment: Powell suggested purchasing a new utility trailer instead of borrowing a board member's to move equipment. The board suggested Powell look into an aluminum, tandem 16-foot trailer and come back with a quote for the next meeting. Powell suggested that to spend down the District's funds a new sprayer motor could be purchased this year for \$689.75. Powell also suggested purchasing a pull behind harrow for the ATV to level out trails and to be used for buffer equipment for \$199.00. Ulrich suggested that the harrow could also be rented out. Lewis made the motion to purchase both a harrow and the sprayer motor for a total of \$888.75. Seconded by Ulrich. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

2021 Platbooks: Powell reported that the Platbooks had been updated to 2021 information and are ready to be purchased. Powell noted that the previous payment of \$14.00 per book had been locked in so the District could purchase 300 platbooks for \$4,200.00. Lewis made the motion to purchase the 2021 platbooks for \$4,200.00. Seconded by Rydeen.

PROGRAM TECHNICIAN REPORT

AIS Program: Prokosch reported that the 2021 AIS had been approved by the Clearwater County board. Prokosch noted that the AIS inspectors next year will receive a wage increase next year which will hopefully entice more people to seek the positions.

Education/Outreach: Prokosch reported that she has been continuously working on the district website and facebook keeping the public updated on multiple programs. Prokosch reported that she had created a 6-page newsletter and that it will be ready for delivery before the end of the year. Prokosch asked for the board to approve for mailing costs for the

newsletter. Lewis made the motion to approve all mailing casts for the newsletter. Seconded by Ulrich. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

Conservation Farm: Prokosch noted that she had created a hunting and suggestion survey and boxes for the public to fill out when visiting the Conservation Farm. Prokosch noted that boxes were placed in front of the new parking lot at the farm.

Trainings: Prokosch attended the virtual BWSR academy. Prokosch had also attended a virtual Stream Protection Workshop online.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT

Financial Reports: Financial statements showing revenue and expenditures for the month of October were presented to the Board for review.

Profit & Loss:

Income: Buell reported that in the month of October there was a No-till Drill payment (Line 5-No-Till Drill), payment from the Long Lake Association (Line 15- AIS), and 4th Quarter County Appropriations (Line 16- County Appropriations).

Expenses: Buell noted that Solid Bottom will be reimbursed (Line 78- AIS Expenses) and expenses were claimed to close out the grant (Line 100-106- Increased Capacity).

Monthly Treasurer's Report: Buell noted that for the month of October, outside of normal transactions, was the payment for use of the tree shed (Line 8- Clearwater-Polk), the ad in the Beef Producers Magazine (Line 9- Farmers Independent), Soil Health (Line 15 and 16- Huges and Lewis) and a Forest Stewardship Plan (Line 17- O'Brien).

Deposit Detail: Buell noted that in the month of October there were 4th quarter County Appropriations, No-till Drill down payment, Soil Health payments, Cost Share reimbursement, RLWD, WCA payments from the County, AIS reimbursements and interest earned on checking and saving accounts.

Balance Sheet: Buell reported that at the end of October the Checking Account balance was \$401,330.68 (Line 4). Buell noted that the Savings account is up \$103,830.80 with interest earned (Line 10) Buell also noted the AIS billing in Accounts Receivable (Line 14) and that the 2019 Conservation Delivery funds have been claimed and the grant closed out (Line 30).

A motion to accept the October financial report was made by Lewis. Seconded by Ulrich. **Motion carried 4-0.**

DISTRICT OPERATION-Board Action Items:

Budget: The board discussed the budget as laid out with options by Buell. Lewis made the motion to approve a \$1.00 per hour wage increase. Seconded by Rydeen. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

Flex Schedule: Buell noted that the District staff had been working on a rotating schedule between working from home and working from the office due to the COVID-19 cases rising. Buell suggested to continue with this rotating schedule,

while always keeping at least 1 staff member in the office, until January. The board confirmed that the rotating schedule was appropriate.

Other Reports:

Jury Duty: Buell noted that both she and Powell were on call for jury duty.

New Phone: Buell commented that while using rotating schedule it would be best to look into purchasing an upgraded cell phone so that staff could call customers while working from home without having to use personal phones. The board considered a new phone to be practical. Buell noted that she will bring a quote for a new cell phone to the December meeting.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:08 a.m. was made by Rydeen. Seconded by Ulrich. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Jackie Ulrich, District Secretary

Date

"Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more so that we may fear less" –Marie Curie

Our mission is simple - to promote the wise use and improvement of our county resources, in order that future generations will inherit an economically viable county that has made wise choices in resource management.