

Clearwater Soil & Water Conservation District

312 Main Avenue North, Suite 3, Bagley MN 56621 • (218)694-6845 • www.clearwaterswcd.com

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REGULAR MEETING MAY 120th, 2020

MEETING MINUTES

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Board Members Present:

Harlan Strandlien, Alroy Lewis, Jackie Ulrich and John Gunvalson.

SWCD Staff: Lori Buell, Chester Powell and Brielle Prokosch

NRCS Staff: Cari Roepke and Jody Peek

Guests: John Nelson-via phone

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chair Strandlien in the Bagley City Park. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda: Chair Strandlien called for additions or corrections to the agenda. Powell asked for Action item, Gebhardt-Soil Health, be added to the agenda. Lewis made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition as requested by Powell. Second by Gunvalson. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Minutes: Buell noted that there wasn't formal April meeting Minutes and that the last minutes that needed approval were from March. Lewis made a motion to approve the March minutes as previously submitted. Second by Ulrich. **Motion carried. 4-0.**

NRCS: Jody Peek distributed NRCS report. Roepke's last day.

COVID-19- Peek reported that the agency activated its COOP plan for COVID.

CSP- Peek reported she recently finished 1 CSP renewal and there is a general sign-up ending on May 29th.

EQIP- Peek reported that there was a March 13th deadline and Clearwater currently has 9 applicants.

MOA with Districts- Peek went through a copy of MOA. Buell has a couple questions, Peek said she will inquire and get back to her.

Other- Peek reported that a date needs to be set for the Local Work Group Meeting.

WATER PLAN COORDINATOR/TECHNICIAN REPORT

Water Planning: Powell attended a Mississippi Headwaters Steering meeting and a Wild Rice-March River 1W1P meeting.

1W1P Clearwater: Powell Needs a board member to be a representative for the Clearwater MOA planning group. Gunvalson makes a motion that he and Ulrich will be the representatives for the Clearwater Planning group. Second by Ulrich. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

Trees: Powell reported that the tree pick up dates were April 30th -May 2nd. Powell noted that all sales went smoothly and most of the leftover trees have been sold.

Soil Health: Powell reported that he had three producers use the No-Till Drill so far this year.

Powell reported that he has two producers eligible for soil health incentives. Powell noted that Gebhardt is eligible for an incentive for running the drill on 16 acres eligible for 75% incentive in the amount of \$640.

Powell noted that Oraskovich took 6 soil tests and is eligible for \$25 per test in the total of \$150.00.

Gunvalson made a motion to approve soil health payments in the amount of \$640 to Gebhardt's for use of the No-Till-Drill and to Oraschovich for soil tests in the amount of \$150. Second by Lewis. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Sprayer: Powell recommended that the district use the same Soil Health guidelines as the No-Till-Drill. Powell noted that the rental rate being \$7.00 per acre with a 10-acre minimum. Lewis made a motion to approve using the same Soil Health policy as the No-Till Drill with the rental rate being \$7.00 per acre with a \$70.00 minimum. Second by Ulrich. **Motion Carried. 4-0.**

No-Till-Drill: Powell reported that the Red Lake Tribe is interested in using the No-Till-Drill to plant Hemp. Powell noted that Hemp can be invasive and may be difficult to clean out of the drill after use. Lewis made a motion to deny the use of hemp in the No-Till-Drill since it can be invasive. Second by Ulrich. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Forestry Cost Share:

Powell reported that Kittleson completed a Forest Stewardship plan on 196.7 acres and is eligible for 75% Cost Share in the amount of \$894.99.

Powell reported that Norley completed a Forest Stewardship plan on 105 acres and is eligible for 75% Cost Share in the amount of \$776.25.

Lewis made a motion to pay the Kittleson 75% Cost Share in the amount of \$894.99 and Norley 75% Cost Share in the amount of \$776.25 out of Local Capacity-Forest Stewardship. Second by Ulrich. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Cost Share: Powell noted that due to uncontrollable circumstance the dates need to be amended on the Pine Lake Ditch project. Gunvalson made a motion to approve the amendment as recommended by Powell. **Second by Ulrich. Motion Carried 4-0.**

Conservation Farm: Powell reported that the County Land Department is asking for 7% stumpage price as payment. Lewis made a motion to accept the plan as submitted second by Gunvalson. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

PROGRAM TECHNICIAN REPORT

AIS Program: Prokosch reported that the County signed the staffing agreement with Always There Staffing for 2020 and the income contract with MN DNR to fund Itasca State Park. Prokosch reported that she attended a Spiny Water flea webinar on 3/24 and a recreationist willingness to pay webinar on 4/10.

Prokosch noted that all AIS kits have been picked up by inspectors and orange DNR alert signs have been hung at Lomond's access and swimming beach.

Trees: Prokosch reported that tree pick-up was 4/30-5/2. Prokosch noted that the sale was ran like a drive through with people remaining in their vehicles and SWCD staff bringing their orders to them. Prokosch noted that the left-over trees are being sold on-line and have been marked down. Prokosch noted that she put up a tree pamphlet rack in the USDA building.

Education/Outreach: Prokosch reported that she has been working on the district website keeping people updated on SWCD COVID policy, tree sales and AIS.

Lake Monitoring: Prokosch reported that volunteers will pick up their equipment first week of June and testing will begin the second week of June. Prokosch noted that the 2019 data has been finalized by the PCA.

Prokosch attended a Sonde training on 3/2.

Other: Prokosch attended a Silvopasture Webinar on 4/16.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT

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

Profit & Loss: Income: Buell reported that in the month of April that tree sales are up and may reach the budget. Tree Accessories up from sales of tree flags and tree tubes. **(Line 27-RIM Easement)** \$150 BWSR RIM Easement payment, **Expenses:** Buell noted that outside of regular expenses for the month of April **(MISC expenses)** reimbursement for trees, **(Line 60-Vehicle Maintenance)** the DVS for registration renewal **(Line 80-AIS)** AIS expenses that will be reimbursed.

Monthly Treasurer's Report: Buell noted that for the month of April, outside of normal transactions, there was a payment made to Ag Spray for the new sprayer and a voided check to Larson for reimbursement on trees.

Deposit Detail: Buell noted that in the month of April there was a deposit for the 2020 RIM Easement payment, the 2nd Qtr. County Appropriations, Envirothon Donations, Tree Sales and Interest earned on accounts.

Balance Sheet: Buell reported that at the end of April the Checking Account balance was \$448,556.84. Buell noted that the Accounts Receivable balance in April was \$2822.71. Buell noted that this amount was mostly invoices for tree sales. Buell noted that Envirothon will be cancelled for 2020 and the donations will either roll over to 2021 or will be returned.

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

DISTRICT OPERATION-Board Action Items

SWCD Covid Policy: Buell handed out a copy of the NRCS COVID-19 emergency policy, Buell recommended that the SWCD follow the same policy. Lewis made a motion to approve the SWCD using the same policy as the NRCS for COVID-19 procedure. Second by Gunvalson. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

Emergency sick leave: Buell reported that the board previously discussed emergency leave for COVID-19 issues. Buell noted that the consensus at the time was to allow each staff up to 80hrs emergency sick leave if needed due to COVID related emergencies. Above the 80 hours leave the staff would be allowed to use their current sick and leave time. The staff would also be allowed to use an additional 80 hrs. of sick leave and to be earned back. Ulrich made a motion to approve up to 80 hours of emergency sick leave and additional leave as explained by Buell Second by Gunvalson. **Motion Carries 4-0.**

Buell noted that she would write up a policy to add to the policy handbook for the board to review.

District Computer. Buell reported that all three of the district's computers are passed their warranty. Buell recommended that the district try purchase a laptop. Buell noted that they are more expensive but would be much easier to work from home if needed during the pandemic. Lewis made a motion to purchase one Laptop for the district to see if the employees like it. Second by Gunvalson. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

District Truck: Buell reported that there were two bids for the truck Buell noted that the highest bid was from Dale Bellefy in the amount of \$4800. Lewis made a motion to accept the bid from Bellefy. Lewis noted that if Bellefy is no longer interested to re-run the bid. Second by Gunvalson **Motion Carried 4-0.**

Upcoming: Buell reported that District elections are coming up and Lewis, Gunvalson and Strandlien are up for term. Buell noted that they must register by June 2nd.

Buell reported that Envirothon and the Clearwater county fair have been cancelled due to COVID-19.

Buell asked for recommendations on where to conduct the June SWCD meeting if the USDA building is still locked to the public. Lewis suggested the fairground or possibly finding a different board room.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:23p.m. was made by Lewis. Second by Gunvalson. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Jackie Ulrich, District Secretary

Date

"Leadership is the art of giving people a platform for spreading ideas that work." --Seth Godin

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.