



St, Joseph County Conservation District
693 E. Main Street
November
20, 2024
Centreville, MI 49032
(269)467-6336 x5

November 20, 2024
Board Minutes

3:00 pm Call to order Howard Avildsen

Directors Present:

Howard Avildsen, Board chair

Chad Clark, Treasurer

Carol Higgins

Dan Blasius

Board members absent

Todd Hironimus, vice chair

Staff Present:

Kaitlin Renehan, Eric Pretzlav, Ashley Waltke, Harlie Miller, and Charles Ronk

Introductions/Visitors: Anna Roberts, and Lilly Roberts

Additions or Deletions to agenda: One addition to the agenda. Clark motioned to approve the agenda. Higgins Second. Motion passed

Public Comment: Charles Ronk gave his presentation to the board about EEO Policies. The board was asked to sign and date the documentation that Ronk needed for the State office. He also spoke about the status of EQIP application deadline, which is November 22, 2024. He also explained that the CSP is still open.

Anna Roberts, a Three Rivers Homeschooler, gave a brief overview of her mission on edible landscapes. She welcomed the suggestions given by the board and staff about other entities she could contact to achieve her goals of planting a community garden in three location is St. Joseph. Renehan offered her help to Roberts with grant writing and proofreading. The presentation was well received and well done.

Approval of October board meeting minutes. Higgins motioned to accept the October board minutes Clark second. Motion passed.

Treasurer Report:

Clark motioned to table the October financials until the audit is completed and changes made. Higgins second. Motion passed.

Correspondence Reports:

Administrator: spoken and written.

MAEAP: written. Miller discussed her report. Exciting things happening around the county and she has been doing a number of site visits. Along with her work load the new title will be CTAP instead of MAEAP as new duties and responsibilities were added. Grace recognized Miller as she received an outstanding 1st year award from MDARD.

NRCS: Charles spoke about his contracts and payments he is making for the producers that completed their contracts this past year. See above.

CISMA: S. Grace included a picture of himself and the new arrival of Halec Grace.

MDARD: written.

CTAI: written.

Board: Higgins discussed the information from the MACD state council meeting she attended during the MACD Fall Conference. The structure of the dues for MACD changed from a 4 tier to a 2 tier. Higgins hopes the District will continue to support at the top level as Rivka Hodgkinson, the new President, has made some great changes, including updates to webpage to include all MACD information instead of hunting for the store, conference registrations, treasurer help, and capitol day information. With all the information in one web site it should be a much more user friendly page. Also, Higgins addressed the fact that in 2025 Region 8 will be holding elections and the host will be Kalamazoo District.

Grant Traverse Bay CD has luminaries that could be checked out and used for an event.

Avildsen would like to donate his stick shift Ford Escape to the District to use for field work. Grace will investigate the process and discuss it with him

Rick Schaffer stopped in the office to inquire about his board liaison status. He would like to request to be an associate board member. Grace will discuss with him how we can proceed.

Old Business:

- **Conflict of interest:**
- **Audit:** All paperwork is in and waiting on the final audit results
- **Michigan Class:** This was once again tabled until next month

New Business:

- **Wages 2025:** A list of 7 grants were presented and 4 of which needed attention. Grace went through the structure of each of the grants that have been awarded to the District, what changes she proposes for the 2025 season and a lengthy discussion was had. Higgins then motioned to retroactively to October 1, 2024 give the Administrator, Grace, a \$2.50 raise to bring her wage to \$32.50 per hour. The CTAI, CTAP and GLFT grants were also discussed and with the use of some administrative monies Higgins made a motion to increase the 2025 wage to \$24.00 per hour. The CTAI wage increased from 22.50 to \$24.00, the CTAP

wage increased from \$21.00 to \$24.00 and the GLFT technician increased from \$22.50 to \$24.00.

- **Grants:** A quick update was given and the boards attention directed to the board display of the work that was written on the white board.

PA116: Premium Poultry 2 sent to Mendon Township

Adjournment: Blasius motioned to adjourn at 5:22 pm Clark second. Motion passed.

Next Meeting: December 18, 2024, at 3pm at the St. Joseph County Conservation District Offices.

Board Chair Signature:



Date Dec. 18, 2024