

- **Minutes of the Pipestone Soil and Water Conservation District Meeting**
March 13th, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
Pipestone County Government Center Southwest
1016 8th Ave SW Pipestone, Minnesota

Board Members Present:

Bill Folger, Chairman
Brad Kruisselbrink, Vice-Chair
Cal Spronk, Secretary/Treasurer
Ken Christensen, Programs
Mike Fruechte, PR&I

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present:

Luke Johnson, Doug Nagel, Nathan Blankers, Kyle Krier, Shannon Bootsma, and Nicole Schwebach.

Chairman Folger called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

A. Approve Agenda

Spronk made a motion to approve the March agenda as presented. Kruisselbrink seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.

B. Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Spronk, seconded by Fruechte to approve the minutes of the February board meeting. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.

C. Financial Report and Approval of Bills

Spronk made a motion to file the financial reports and approve the payment of bills. Kruisselbrink seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.

New Business:

D. RCPP Funding Grant

- a. Schwebach reviewed the RCPP Funding Grant practices and discussion was had on grant implementation. Schwebach and Bootsma will draft a RCPP policy for board to review and approve next month. Recommendation from board was to increase cap for cover crop to \$50,000 for three year contract but also allow one and two year contracts with a caps reduced accordingly.

E. Employee Review – Shannon Bootsma

- a. Bootsma agreed to keep the meeting open during her review. Krier presented her review to the board as needing improvements that are addressed with a performance plan. Bootsma's work anniversary date is 3-6-25. Christensen made a motion to accept the review. Spronk seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.

F. AgBMP Loan Program Priorities

- a. Board discussed the AgBMP program discussion was held on if funding should be limited to strip-till and no-till practices only and not fund manure related practices. Board suggested Krier discuss with Rosendahl the possibility of limiting funding to \$75,000 due to demand to allow funds to reach more people

G. Monument SSTS Program

- a. Krier proposed \$50,000.00 from the 2025 district aid be allocated towards updating septic's along the drainage ditch emptying into the National Monument. Spronk made a motion to approve \$50,000.00 be allocated to updating these systems. Kruisselbrink seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.

H. Vehicle Purchase

- a. Krier discussed Terrain replacement, last meeting it was recommended to see if Dahl's would offer better deal. Following discussion the Board directed Krier to go with the dealership which offers the Low Bid.

I. Soil Health Team/Mentors

- a. Krier discussed if SWCD Board supported staff coordinating a soil health team made up of county producers who are implementing soil health practices. This team could also serve as our county mentors to assist others with implementing these practices. Following discussion, the board felt it would be difficult to create a team with random producers and expect them to work as a team. They did think that it may be worth asking producers if they would be willing to have their name given out to allow others to contact them if they had questions on a specific practice type. Staff will touch base with some producers to see if there is interest.

J. Cost-Share Contracts

- a. Krier presented a cost share contract for Ken Christensen, KC Land LLLP, contract #25-Christensen-01 in Grange township section 19 to install a waterway along with mulching and seeding. The project cost estimate is \$11,599.50 with 90% cost share the authorized contract amount is \$10,439.55 paid out of the 24/25 cost share fund. The second cost share contract presented was an amendment for Bryan Etrheim, contract #23-Etrheim-9 amending the amount from \$28,024.08 to \$27,274.08 an increase of \$150/acre with 5 acres for a \$750 increase. Christesen abstained from voting on these contracts. Spronk made a motion to approve the contract and amendment. Kruisselbrink seconded the motion. Approve: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.

Reports:

County Commissioner Report:

Johnson – Attended drainage conference and AMC Environmental Committee. MPCA has a 900 million dollar budget with 800 employees and receives 200 million in federal funding which is unknown if it will continue to receive going forward. Redwood River 1W1P is moving long.

Nagel – New Extension Ag Ed Coordinator has not been announced yet. Kyle Evans has accepted the Building Grounds Supervisor position. The cannabis ordinance was adopted.

Supervisor Reports:

Fruechte - Nothing.

Spronk – Attended the Area V meeting Feb 20th via zoom. Gave a Legislative Day recap, it went well with a good attendance. Discussed clean water funding with Weber and felt it would be beneficial if we educated the metro politicians on some of our rural concerns and programs.

Christensen – Working on getting a couple waterways that are in need of repair ready for construction this spring.

Kruisselbrink – Attended Redwood 1W1P meeting with Fruechte where plan policies and procedures were reviewed.

Folger – Busy with county dispatch project.

NRCS Report: Within the last month let go some of the newer staff members but they may be returning. Ranking CSP applications. FSA has had 3 employees leave recently so short staffed there.

Manager's Report: Krier reported that last week he and staff had a meeting with Caleb Rempel the new Conservation Agronomist hired by New Vision. Caleb will be available to assist Pipestone County producers with any questions they might have about soil health practices. Staff are planning to get Caleb introduced to local agronomists so they can hopefully work together in future. Discussion was held on if the board supported having an area Local Work Group meeting rather than each County having their own. Meeting would be with Rock, Nobles, Murray, and Pipestone. The board supported this idea, thinking it would be nice to hear what others area concerns and have discussions on them.

Adjournment:

There being no further business Chairman Folger declared the meeting adjourned at 11:15.

Cal Spronk, Secretary