* **Minutes of the Pipestone Soil and Water Conservation District Meeting**

**October 14th, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. at EMS Building Pipestone, Minnesota**

**Board Members Present:**

Bill Folger, Chairman

Ian Cunningham, Vice-Chairman

Larry Fenicle, Secretary/Treasurer

Cal Spronk, Programs

Ken Christensen, PR&I

**Board Members Absent:**

None

**Others Present:**

Les Nath, Luke Johnson, Melissa Rosendahl, Levi Campion, Laura DeBeer, Danielle Evers

Chairman Folger called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

1. **Approve Agenda**

Motion made by Christensen, seconded by Fenicle to approve the agenda as presented. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

Motion made by Cunningham, seconded by Christensen to approve the minutes of the September board meeting. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.

1. **Approval of Financial Report & Bills**

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

**New Business:**

1. **Capacity, Buffer Law and Buffer Implementation Grant Agreements**
   1. Rosendahl presented the FY 2022 Buffer Implementation Supplemental Program Grant for $20,000.00 along with the FY 2022 SWCD Local Capacity Services Grant for $124,930.00 and FY 2022 Buffer Law Grant for $21,500.00. Spronk made a motion to approve and sign the grant agreements. Cunningham seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.
2. **Health Insurance Premiums**
   1. Rosendahl presented the 2022 health insurance premium rates. Single person premiums will be $507.62 per month and family premiums will be $1,311.86 per month which is about a 10% increase from 2021. Currently the SWCD does contribution amounts of $575/single and $1,000/family. After some discussion Spronk made a motion to increase the SWCD contributions by $25 for both single and family. The motion died for lack of a second. Cunningham made a motion to increase both the single and family SWCD contributions by $50.00. Spronk seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.
3. **Office Lease**
   1. Cunningham shared that he and Folger toured the SW Mental Health Building recently. The county owns the building and is considering renovating it to accommodate the SWCD and Extension offices. Discussion entailed what renovations needed to happen, approximated costs and time frames. The current tenant will be vacating on October 29th and we will try to set up a tour for the November board meeting to view the property.
4. **SRAM Modification**
   1. Rosendahl presented a note from Schwebach who could not attend the meeting in regards to the proposed modification. With some producers needing to move their livestock out of these watershed areas there may be an opportunity for them to convert some cropland, that is outside of the watershed area, into pasture land. The modification change was to add a 50% cost-share option with a not to exceed amount on areas of land that are part of the project area but not part of the contracted SRAM area. Cunningham made a motion to approve the modification. Spronk seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.
5. **NACD Renewal**
   1. Rosendahl presented the NACD renewal form. We are currently Platinum members with a $3,001.00 contribution. Cunnigham made a motion to continue with a Platinum donation of $3,001.00 for 2022. Spronk seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.
6. **Resolutions Ballots Due November 1st**
   1. Rosendahl reminded the board to get these to the office by November 1st as the voting will be done on a single ballot as it was last year.
7. **Clean Water Grant Cover Crop Contract**
   1. DeBeer presented a contract for Merle Zeinstra, contract #01-23, for 62 acres of cover crops in Fountain Prairie in the amount of $7,440.00. Fenicle made a motion to approve the contract. Cunningham seconded the motion. Affirmative: all. Oppose: none. Motion carried.
8. **Dept of Ag Cover Crop Initiative Pilot Program**
   1. DeBeer is working with the MN Depart of Ag on a pilot program for producers to section off plots of land to see the soil health differences with a cover crop and no cover crop. The idea is to have approximately 22 plots which consists of 20-30 acres each to participate in the program for 3 years. The available funds would be $140,000.00 with a portion going to the producer, the agronomist, soil tests and administrative costs. This will be a shared project with Rock County. Pipestone county at this time has a goal to get 11 producers to participate.
   2. DeBeer also updated the board on a future contract with the MN Office of Soil Health for $1,200.00 to take pictures of cover crops in the area and download the info into the green cover crop app.
9. **Hwy 14 Tour**
   1. Evers gave an overview of the Hwy 14 tour that will be happening the first week of March in 2022. The tour stops will be Lake Benton, Lamberton, New Ulm and Waseca and will consist of different speakers and a panel of producers.

**County Commissioner Report:**

Nath – Working on future plans for the SW Mental Health Building.

Johnson – Lake Redwood dredging project should start laying pipe next week. Through the AMC Johnson met with some DNR staff that manage 5.6 million acres of land in MN. The preliminary levy is set at 8.62%. The AMC conference will be Thursday October 28th to set legislative priorities.

**Supervisor Reports:**

Cunningham – Toured the SW Mental Health Building. Met with Danielle to receive his endorsements through the MAWQCP program.

Christensen – Shared some successful cover crop ideas.

Spronk – Attended the TSA meeting last month instead of the SWCD board meeting being held at the same time. There are lots of projects being done and lots of funding coming in for them.

Fenicle – Attended the RCRCA meeting virtually this month. Noted the Legislative Day for them will be November 4th in New Ulm.

Folger – County will be moving to a .gov email address. The website and email addresses will both be changing.

**NRCS Report:** CSP payments and renewals are happening now and EQIP payments.

**Manager’s Report:** None

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business; Chairman Folger declared the meeting adjourned.

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Larry Fenicle, Secretary