

**FARIBAULT COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
FARIBAULT COUNTY AG CENTER
SWCD AG CENTER CONFERENCE ROOM
BLUE EARTH, MN 56013
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 9th, 2020**

Chairman Bell called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN – JEFF BELL
VICE-CHAIRMAN – RANDY FEIST
TREASURER – DAVE MATHEWS
SECRETARY – NEAL MENSING
P/R – BILL ANDERSON

SUPERVISORS ABSENT:

NONE

STAFF & OTHERS PRESENT:

Ciara Ahrens, Jill Hooper, Nate Carr, Myles Elsen, Amy Huber, Shane Johnson, Merissa Lore, Hadley Mensing, and Michele Stindtman.

I. APPROVALS

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDITIONS

Motion by Feist to approve the Agenda with the addition of the following items: 1W1P/LeSueur Update; approval of Brush Creek letter prepared by Michele; and a follow-up discussion on a SWCD billboard sign. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Anderson to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2020 SWCD Board meeting. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

Motion by Feist to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2020 SWCD Special Board meeting. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

Motion by Mathews to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented and to file it subject to audit. Seconded by Feist. Motion carried.

4. PAYMENT OF BILLS

Motion by Anderson to pay all outstanding bills. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

5. TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO PAY BILLS

Motion by Mathews to approve the Transfer of Funds in the amount of \$46,500.00 from Savings to Checking to pay the bills. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. GRIEVANCES/OTHER – None

III. NEW BUSINESS –

1. FSA – Nicki Miranowski met regarding FSA business.

NRCS – Ciara Ahrens, Myles Elsen, and Jill Hooper met regarding NRCS business. Scott Haase is having a field day next week and Myles stated he will forward a copy of the flyer to the SWCD Board once he receives it.

FARIBAULT COUNTY DRAINAGE DEPT. – Merissa Lore met regarding Drainage Dept. business. She provided a handout on the various SWCD related projects they are working on which are funded by Capacity and GBERBA funds.

2. COST-SHARE CONTRACT/VOUCHER SPREADSHEET/PROJECT LOG

Shane Johnson and Nate Carr briefed the Board on the Cost-Share Requests & Payments.

ENCUMBERING –

Motion by Feist to approve the Cost Share Encumbering Requests as presented for a total of \$24,981.30. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried. Board member Mensing abstained.

VOUCHER PAYMENTS –

Motion by Mensing to approve the Cost Share Payments as presented for a total of \$600.00. Seconded by Mathews. Motion Carried.

The complete and detailed list of Encumbering and Payment requests are attached to the official minutes and are available in the SWCD office.

PROJECT LOG –

Shane Johnson provided an updated Project Log for the Board to review. The Program Technician also provided a copy of the County Rainfall data to date.

3. PROGRAM UPDATES –

Raingarden Project: Hadley Mensing passed out some data she put together regarding the raingarden project she has been working on. She discussed her information gathering, site visits, and inspection process.

Weir Well Sealing: Michele put together a follow-up letter to Mr. Weir regarding the Well Sealing issue on his property. She read the letter to the board and asked the Board Chair to sign it on behalf of the SWCD. She copied the Drainage department and Commissioner Loveall on the letter. Michele said she contacted Mr. Weir yesterday and explained that there was no available funding for this after-the-fact situation. She said Mr. Weir requested a letter for recourse with the Drainage Department.

There was board discussion on Well Sealing cost-share. Board member Feist inquired if the cost-share amount is set by state statute or regulation or if it was a local decision and wondered if consideration could be made to adjust the cost-share based on a sliding scale or percentage of the cost of the Well Sealing. It was pointed out that \$400.00 cost-share for a \$20,000.00 project does not seem appropriate. The Board Chair asked Michele to look into the regulations on the cost-share and report back to the Board on what she finds out.

Motion by Feist to approve the letter to Mr. Weir. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

10:48 a.m. The Board took a short recess.

11:08 a.m. The Board resumed the regular meeting.

1W1P/LeSueur: Michele gave the Board an update on the next steps for the LeSueur 1W1P. She said her next meeting will be on September 16th.

4. GRANTS, POLICY, CONTRACT UPDATES –

Brush Creek Letter: Michele prepared a letter for the Board to review and approve to send out to land owners in the Brush Creek watershed regarding conservation funding available to them.

Motion by Anderson to approve the Brush Creek letter as presented. Seconded by Feist. Motion carried.

5. SUPERVISOR UPDATES -

The Board Chairman and Vice-chairman mentioned the newly formed SWCD & County Board committee met for the first-time last week. They provided the Commissioners with updates on progress to the joint organizational review to include the implementation of the two SWCD Administrators. They felt the Commissioners were on the same page with them on suggested changes. They all agreed that the current break room door needs to be shut if it is to remain in the current location. They also said the white board calendar should not be used for privacy and security reasons and that we need to use an electronic shared calendar, which is currently in use. They were also in favor of an emergency exit door to be installed to the back of the office, a wall installed in the old conference room to make that into two offices, and adding signage once staff are located in their designated offices/locations.

Board member Mensing mentioned he attended a GBERBA meeting. They extended a grant and he has another upcoming meeting on September 11th, which will again be held virtually.

Board member Anderson mentioned he was unable to make the last TSA meeting, but there is another one coming up on September 22nd. He said the TSA has hired one of two people for the open engineer positions.

Michele mentioned that she has spoke with Ashley from Martin County and Kevin from Nicollet County about advertising and hosting a TSA engineer out of Faribault and or Martin County. It appears there is difficulty getting Engineers in the Mankato area and then when they do, it seems like they don't stay long. She wondered if there was someone in this area that might be qualified and interested in the position in our area. The Board Chairman strongly encouraged Michele and Bill to contact Jared to add this idea of discussion to their next TSA meeting agenda.

A list of upcoming meetings Board members could consider attending were reviewed:

September 11	GBERBA Policy Meeting via Zoom (Neal)
September 22	TSA Board Meeting via Zoom (Bill)

Motion by Mathews to approve the upcoming meetings/trainings for Board Supervisors. Seconded by Feist. Motion carried.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Follow-up Discussion on SWCD Billboard/Sign

Michele had a couple handouts of suggested Billboard Signs to be used. She said Mr. Stauffer, from Winnebago, could probably put together the signs for us. If we placed them on County Road 16, the County can put them up and charge us. She did say that due to our County Ordinance, we cannot put up a sign along I-90, however we could along highway 169. She will continue to work on implementing this. The Board Chairman suggested that if we had a sign up along the border of another County, i.e. Martin or Freeborn for example, perhaps the other County would like to have their SWCD information on the opposite side or ours and encouraged Michele to reach out to them.

2. Approve Final Job Descriptions for Administrator of Program Development/Outreach & Administrator of Finance & Management

Copies of the final job descriptions for the Administrator of Program Development/Outreach & Administrator of Finance & Management were available. Michele made some suggested changes and Dr. Mulder also reviewed the final copies. Amy suggested all staff job descriptions be reviewed routinely as tasks continuously change.

Motion by Mensing to approve the job descriptions for the Administrator of Program Development/Outreach & Administrator of Finance & Management. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

The Board Chairman mentioned an evaluation of the positions should be done in about 3 months.

3. Organizational Review Progress

A copy of the most recent recap of the County/SWCD Directors meeting was provided to the Board. Michele and Amy mentioned the County has looked at potentially utilizing office space located near the Extension Office and they showed Amy & Michele the layout. It would take a lot of work and resources to renovate the space, but there is a lot more space. Michele said the County would have to renovate the space and charge the SWCD rent if that was something they wanted to pursue. Michele had United Builders provide a quote to install an emergency exit door to the back of the office and construct a wall in Nate and Amy's current shared office space. Michele will reach out to the city to get permission to make these changes and find out any specific criteria that must be met prior to construction. The Board also asked that a couple more cost estimates be obtained for these projects as they felt the cost was high. Amy mentioned that MOU's are due later next week, so staff are working to finish these up.

4. October Board Meeting

The next SWCD Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7th, at 8:30 a.m.

V. MEETINGS/EVENTS/TRAININGS FOR STAFF -

Motion by Feist to approve attendance to the following:

September 8	Huntley Sewer District Mtg., Winnebago - Chad
September 9	Payroll Tax Deferral Guidance, 3:30 p.m. via Zoom - Amy
September 14	Bass Lake In-person Meeting, Delavan - Michele
September 15	LeSueur Network Public Meeting, Zoom - Michele
September 16	LeSueur 1W1P - Michele
September 16	Septic Regulators Meeting, Owatonna – Chad
September 22	TSA, Zoom – Shane & Michele
September 23	MACDE, Zoom – Michele

September 29 GBERBA JPA, Zoom – Michele
September 30 GBERBA Tech. Meeting, Zoom - Michele
Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

VI. ADJOURNMENT –

Motion by Anderson to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Feist. Motion carried.
Chairman Bell adjourned the meeting at 12:46 p.m.