

**FARIBAULT COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
FARIBAULT COUNTY AG. CENTER
415 SOUTH GROVE ST., SUITE 8
BLUE EARTH, MN 56013
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 13, 2019**

Chairman Bell calls the Regular Board Meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT:

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

SUPERVISORS ABSENT:

NONE

STAFF & OTHERS PRESENT:

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR – MICHELE STINDTMAN
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT – AMY HUBER
CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN – NATE CARR
ASSISTANT PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR – BRANDEE DOUGLAS
NRCS – JOSIAH OLSON
FSA – NICKI MIRANOWSKI
DRAINAGE DEPT. – DUSTY ANDERSON

I. APPROVALS

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDITIONS

Motion by Mensing to approve the Agenda with the addition of item I.6, approve the Transfer of Funds from Regular Savings to SL Savings to fund Compensated Absences. Seconded by Feist. Motion carried.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Anderson to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2019 SWCD Board Meeting with the addition of listing Bill Anderson as the newly elected Public Relations Board Officer. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

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

4. PAYMENT OF BILLS

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

5. TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO PAY BILLS

Motion by Feist to approve the transfer of \$18,000.00 from the district savings account to the district checking account to pay current expenses. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

6. TRANSFER OF FUNDS FOR COMPENSATED ABSENCES

Motion by Feist to approve the transfer of \$5000.00 from Regular Savings to SL Savings to fund Compensated Absences. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. GRIEVANCES – None

III. NEW BUSINESS –

1. NRCS/Josiah –

Updates/Reports: hopes to do a joint work group meeting with NRCS and SWCD – will post a notice. Has 15 active EQIP applications – last year only had 4 approved. Discussed the CSP program and mentioned he would like to see 20-30 applications in this year. The CSP program favors a smaller diverse farm operation and there is no cut-off date yet for this program. He also mentioned they are still learning about the new Farm Bill.

FSA/Nicki –

Updates/Reports: mentioned they lost 20 work days with the government shut-down. Their priority is executing the MFP payments and so far there have been 18.2 million dollars in MFP payments in Faribault County. Says she has not heard much about the details of the Farm Bill yet because of the government shut-down. There will be some upcoming town hall meetings regarding the Farm Bill. Passed out a Livestock Indemnity Program Fact Sheet and highlighted some of the components of that program. She also mentioned they will be hiring another staff person to replace Norma Cartwright who will soon be retiring. Said it is the first time in 20 years they have hired someone full-time. The application process will be done online. Benefits are good and wage is based on experience and or education.

2. COST-SHARE CONTRACT and VOUCHER SPREADSHEET

ENCUMBERING –

None this month.

VOUCHER PAYMENTS -

None this month.

3. GRANTS UPDATE/OTHER -

Existing Grants: Brandee mentioned some of the Capacity funds were used for online mapping and she provided a demonstration of some of the work in progress for the online mapping. Stated she hoped to be live with it by next month.

Future Grants: Brandee and Dusty went through the details of the application for Federal Section 319 Grant for the Brush Creek Watershed and Soil Health practices in the Blue Earth Watershed. This grant application would be in partnership with the County Drainage Department. They would find out in April if the Grant is approved. If they don't receive this grant, they could apply for Clean Water funds.

Motion by Anderson to approve the submission of application for Federal Section 319 Grant for the Brush Creek Watershed and Soil Health practices in the Blue Earth Watershed. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

4. STAFF PROGRAM UPDATES -

Website Discussion - Brandee – Discussed the possibility of a website upgrade as we are currently a subsite of the County. The County got RFP's this past year to upgrade their website and has awarded the bid to CivicPlus, Inc. This means we need to go out on our own or continue to be a subsite of the County for \$3500.00 initially and \$500.00 annually thereafter for hosting, support, and maintenance. She

mentioned that we would save about half the cost if we continue to partner with the county as a web subsite. Brandee also showed the Board a preview of the work that has been done so far on the web-site upgrades and the options available with this web-design change.

Motion by Feist to engage in a contract with CivicPlus, Inc., for the primary SWCD Website services as a subsite of Faribault County at an initial cost of \$3500.00 and \$500.00 a year thereafter. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

Buffer Compliance - Brandee/Dusty/Nate – Brandee mentioned there are 2200 total Parcels that need to be compliant with the Buffer Law and 217 Parcels remain out of compliance of that number and 21 of those have been turned over to Dusty at the County level for enforcement. There was discussion about the next steps the staff should take for those landowners that are not in compliant. It was decided another letter should go out that identifies the parcel number, township, and section on it with a check box indicating whether the landowner is in compliant or not. A draft letter will be brought to the Board at the March meeting for final approval and their signatures. Radio ads with reminders of Buffer Law Compliance will also be done.

Cover Crop Policy - Nate - Nate gave the Board a copy of the Cover Crop Policy. Mentioned everything remained the same except his notations in red print.

Motion by Feist to approve the Cover Crop Policy. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

Soil Health Plan – Nate – Provided the Board with a copy of the Soil Health Plan to review. Mentioned he has another meeting in March about Soil Health. Also mentioned he still intends to meet with Seneca Foods.

5. SUPERVISOR UPDATE -

Board Member Anderson updated the Board on the TSA meeting he recently attended. Said they interviewed 3 people for the Tech position and ended up hiring a young gentlemen from Wisconsin that recently graduated from college

Board Member Mensing said he recently attended the GBERBA meeting and is now the new Chairman.

A list of upcoming meetings for Board Supervisors to Consider Attending was reviewed.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

1. 2019 SWCD BUDGET

Michele went through her proposed Budget for 2019.

Motion by Mensing to approve the Faribault County SWCD 2019 Budget. Seconded by Feist. Motion carried.

2. 2019 FEE SCHEDULE

The proposed list of Fees were provided to the Board.

Motion by Mensing to approve the 2019 Fee Schedule. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

3. LINDA BERNDT SEVERANCE PAY

Motion by Feist to approve the Retirement Severance Pay in the amount of \$5000.00 to Linda Berndt's VEBA account. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

4. AUDIT ENGAGEMENT CONTRACT WITH PETERSON COMPANY LTD

Motion by Mathews to approve the audit engagement contract with Peterson Company LTD. Seconded by Feist. Motion carried.

5. MISCELLANEOUS – OTHER

Michele mentioned the Board is eligible for Dental Insurance. She will email information to them in regards to this. She also mentioned she will check into Life Insurance benefit options for them. Michele checked with the Public Employees Insurance Plan to see if the board could enroll in Medical Health Insurance, but they said it is only available to employees who work 32 hours or more per week.

The next SWCD Board meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2019 at 8:30 in the SWCD Conference room.

V. UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS/TRAININGS FOR STAFF -

Motion by Anderson to approve attendance to the following:

February 19	County Commissioner Meeting, Courthouse
February 20	Strip Till Meeting, Frost - Nate
February 21	TAP Meeting, St Paul - Chad
February 26-27	MACDE Director Meeting, St. Cloud - Michele
February 27	GBERBA Technical Meeting, Mankato
March 4	SSTS Training, Belle Plaine - Chad
March 5	County Commissioner Meeting, Courthouse
March 5	CREP Meeting, Mankato - Shane
March 5-6	MASWCD Legislative Day(s) at the Capitol – Michele, Nate
March 11	Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment, Ag Center - Amy
March 12	Midwest Soil Health Summit, St. Peter - Nate

Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

VI. ADJOURNMENT –

Motion by Anderson to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mensing.

Chairman Bell adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.