

**FARIBAULT COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BLUE EARTH AG CENTER
415 SOUTH GROVE ST.
BLUE EARTH, MN 56013
REORGANIZATIONAL & REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2020**

I. THE REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY ACTING CHAIRMAN JEFF BELL AT 8:35 A.M.

1. OATH OF OFFICE – N/A – no new elected members for 2020.

2. THE ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2020 was next on the Agenda with acting Chairman Bell asking for nominations for Board Chairman.

Motion by Anderson to nominate Jeff Bell as Board Chairman and to keep all Board Officers for 2020 the same as 2019 (Chair – Bell, Vice-chair – Feist, Secretary – Mensing, Treasurer – Mathews, and Public Relations – Anderson). Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

3. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS FOR 2020

Motion by Anderson to keep all Board Committee Assignments from 2019 the same for 2020. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

4. APPROVE ITEMS #5 - #14 ON REORGANIZATIONAL CHECKLIST

Motion by Mathews to approve items #5 - #14 on the Reorganizational Checklist for 2020 as presented. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

II. Chairman Bell calls the Regular Board Meeting to order at 8:49 a.m.

1. SUPERVISORS PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN – Jeff Bell
SECRETARY – Neal Mensing
TREASURER – Dave Mathews
P/R – Bill Anderson

SUPERVISORS ABSENT:

VICE CHAIRMAN – Randy Feist

2. STAFF & OTHERS PRESENT:

Michele Stindtman, Amy Huber, Shane Johnson, Nate Carr, Dustin Anderson, and Nicki Miranowski

III. APPROVALS

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDITIONS

Motion by Anderson to approve the Agenda with the following additions: V.3A, discuss grant sub-contracts per recommendation of MCIT; V.5B, GBERBA policy meeting; VI.2, consider/approve employee request to move excess PTO over the 400 hour carryover limit to the Emergency Sick Leave account; VI.6, discuss/consider an outside consultant to assist with office development, and VII, January 9 MPCA Walking Tour, Chad Viland, and January 22 GBERBA Technical Meeting , Michele Stindtman. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mensing to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2019 SWCD Board Meeting. Seconded by Mathews. 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 Mensing. 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 Mensing to approve the transfer of funds in the amount of \$72,640.00 from Savings to Checking to pay the current and upcoming bills. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. GRIEVANCES/OTHER – None

V. NEW BUSINESS –

1. FSA/Nicki –

Updates/Reports were given on: CRP Programs and ARC/PLC Programs. Provided several handouts on the various CRP Programs and explained they are doing new CRP registrations by appointment only. She also mentioned that there has been more interest in commodity loans and said there has been a few changes on eligibility for facility loans. She thanked the SWCD for partnering on the five FSA/SWCD informational meetings and mentioned there is no rental fee for use of space for the meetings except for Wells, which is a \$50.00 cost that the SWCD will pay. Nicki also described some of the differences in the ARC/PLC plans and said that acreage reports must be signed every year now.

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

Shane Johnson and Nate Carr briefed the Board on the Cost-Share requests.

ENCUMBERING –

Motion by Mathews to approve the Encumbering requests as presented for a total amount of \$6862.50. Seconded by Anderson. Member Mensing abstained. Motion carried

VOUCHER PAYMENTS -

Motion by Mathews to approve the Cost Share Payment in the amount of \$30,704.75 upon completion of final BWSR financial and E-link reporting by Nate. Seconded by Mensing. 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.

REVIEW PROJECT LOG -

Nate and Shane had a copy of some Grant Project logs available for the Board and reviewed it with them.

3. GRANTS UPDATE/OTHER -

Michele had a copy of an email string with MCIT in regards to the Brush Creek Grant agreement as it pertains to coverage with sub-contractors and liability. MCIT has suggested that the SWCD have a subcontract in place with anyone doing work on a grant where we are named Grantee as our insurance coverage does not extend to parties outside of our organization. Michele said it is ultimately up to the Board if they feel it is important to have a sub-contract in place before proceeding in any further projects and to direct her accordingly.

It was decided that Michele would check with Kathryn, the County Attorney, about obtaining a sub-contract with the County. Board member Mathews also wondered if the Contract for Services could incorporate language for sub-contracting work the county does in projects with the SWCD. Michele was directed to bring back options and a sub-contract to the February Board meeting.

Michele mentioned that the Corn Growers Association contacted her and suggested the SWCD consider applying for a \$30,000.00 grant which could be used for monitoring costs on CD62. The SWCD submitted the grant and we should know by 2/5/20 if we are recipients of any funds. Gary has also submitted a grant for monitoring on CD62 and has named the SWCD in the grant.

4. STAFF PROGRAM UPDATES -

Buffer Compliance Update – Dusty Anderson, County Buffer Compliance Coordinator, provided a handout on his tracking list of parcels that are currently out of compliance. He described his compliance process and the penalties for non-compliance. In 2019 he had a list of 15 parcels in noncompliance and of them, 9 received a corrective action plan. He also articulated the monetary fines for noncompliance.

5. SUPERVISOR UPDATES -

Board Member Mensing attended the CD62 meeting and the GBERBA meeting. Said there was good discussion at the CD62 meeting and he mentioned they are going to try to put new chips in this winter. In regards to the GBERBA meeting, he said they applied for the same Grant that our SWCD did, but did not receive funding. He also said that Faribault County was one of the few counties that uses most of the programs and or funding available through GBERBA for some reason.

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

January 9, 15, or 27	Farm Bill FSA/SWCD Meetings (Winnebago, Wells, Blue Earth)
January 10	GBERBA Policy Meeting, Mankato (Neal to attend – Chairman)

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Discuss Hiring an Intern

Michele has received a request and resume from Hadley Mensing to work at the SWCD as an intern, but it wouldn't be until after April 1st as she is in school until that time. Michele said she has identified a student intern to work within one of the grants and could be paid a billable rate. Will discuss this further at one of the next board meetings.

2. Consider/Approve Employee Request to Rollover Excess PTO Time (18 hours) to Emergency Sick Leave Account

Motion by Mensing to approve an employee's request to move 18 hours of PTO accumulated over the 400-hour maximum as of 12/31/19 to the Emergency Sick Leave account. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

3. Discuss set up of Office Space for new Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant, the Intern and Amy

Michele said the new Planning & Zoning/Office Administrative Assistant will be starting the end of this month and is moving to Amy's old desk, so they moved Amy to the back corner of the Conference room and will set up a cubicle for the intern behind the new Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant. She said they will put up a cubicle wall in the conference room to divide the room in half to utilize it both for a conference room and Amy's office area. The conference room has been used as an office for various staff over the years. She followed up stating that for large group meetings, we can use the large Conference Room in the Ag Center or the FSA Conference Room.

4. Consider/Approve Audit Engagement Letter with Peterson Company LTD for 2020

Peterson Company LTD has sent a proposal for Audit services for fiscal year ending December 31, 2019 for a cost of \$2,850.00. Amy mentioned she would be interested in seeking bids from other Audit firms in the future, but recognized that Peterson Company has been the Auditor for this SWCD for a long time and they have specialized in audit work for many SWCD's and is fine with engaging their services for another year.

Motion by Mensing to approve the Audit Engagement Letter/bid for fiscal year ending December 31, 2019 from Peterson Company LTD. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

5. Review/Approve KBEW Radio Ad Plan for 2020

KBEW had a variety of radio ad plans listed to choose from for 2020. Michele suggested we utilize plan C.

Motion by Mathews to approve Plan C of the KBEW Radio Ad plan choices for 2020. Seconded by Mensing. Motion carried.

6. Discuss/Consider an Outside Consultant to assist with Office Development

A list of 3rd Party Consultants was provided to the board to consider if needed for a 3rd party consultant to help with relations and tension in the office. After lengthy discussion, it was decided that two SWCD board members (Bell, Mensing, and Mathews as alternate) would meet with two County Commissioners in the next week or so to discuss the issue first to see if they can elicit a plan to help resolve office tension and if that did not work, a 3rd party consultant would be the next step to solving the problem.

7. February Board Meeting – Wednesday, February 12, 2020, 8:30 a.m., FSA Conference Room

Board member Anderson mentioned he would like to see pictures and documents of projects that have been done at an upcoming meeting.

VII. MEETINGS/EVENTS/TRAININGS FOR STAFF:

Motion by Mensing to approve attendance to the following meetings/events:

January 9	FSA Farm Bill/SWCD Meeting, Winnebago - Nate
January 9	MPCA/C.E. Event, Mankato - Michele
January 9	MPCA Walking Tour, Mankato - Chad
January 10-11	Tree Open House/SWCD Office – Nate/Amy
January 15	FSA Farm Bill/SWCD Meeting, Wells - Nate
January 22	GBERBA Technical Meeting, Mankato – Michele

January 27 FSA Farm Bill/SWCD Meeting, Blue Earth Ag Ctr. – Nate/Staff
January 28 Safety Training, Faribault County Law Enforcement Ctr. – All Staff
January 28-29 MOWA (wastewater) Conference, Mankato - Chad
Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT –

Motion by Mensing to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mathews. Motion carried.

Chairman Bell adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.