

Due to the current CDC guidelines on social distancing, we are limiting the number in attendance to 8 people at the board meeting. We will also have limited call-in capabilities for up to 10 people. Phone# 651-560-1088 Access code # 0147478#
If you are not fully vaccinated, wearing a mask will be required.

Phone or physical attendance will be allowed on a first come first serve basis following Wabasha SWCD board members receiving priority for phone or physical attendance. Anyone who is in the at-risk category should consider not attending. If you would like to attend either by call-in or physically, you must notify Sue Cerwinske to hold your place in advance. susan.cerwinske.wabashaswcd@gmail.com or 651-560-2053

**Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation District
District Regular Board Meeting
May 27, 2021
8:15 a.m.
County Board Room
625 Jefferson Ave.**

- I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER – Meeting called to order at 8:17 am by Terry Helbig, Chair**
Supervisors present: Terry Helbig, Chair, Lynn Zabel. Co-chair, Larry Theismann, Secretary, Chet Ross, member, (Sharleen Klennert, absent)
Staff present: Terri Peters, District Manager
Attending by phone: John Benjamin, NRCS and Sue Cerwinske, Bookkeeper/Admin Asst.
Others present: Bob Walkes, County Commissioner (joined meeting later)

II. PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

III. AGENDA

Motioned by Zabel and seconded by Theismann to approve agenda as updated

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

A. Meeting Statement – Terri Peters

Terri Peters made the decision to have call-in and limited number of attendees at the Board Meetings. Consulted with other SWCD's and BWSR on how they were handling meetings because of COVID-19 pandemic and State of Emergency Guidelines. Calling in is allowed under the open meeting law. Phone line set up for SWCD meetings by Wabasha County. Board was contacted about this suggested change and it was agreed that this was the best solution for the situation at this time.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments limited to 5 minutes per speaker

V. CONSENT AGENDA -Board Action

- A. Work Order# 79-20-W099, Contract # 189356 between the State of MN acting through BWSR and Wabasha SWCD. Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM). Effective date April 1, 2021 or when all required signatures obtained. Expiration date June 30, 2025, or until all obligations have been satisfactorily fulfilled. Contract amount \$1,650.00 for easement delivery.**

Terry Helbig asked if the payments for RIM inspections from BWSR were still inadequate. Terri Peters stated that they are. Terry Helbig will work on a resolution to bring to MASWCD addressing this issue.

- B. FY2021 Regional Safe Drinking Water for Private Well User Sub-Agreement between The Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District and Wabasha Soil & Water Conservation District.**

Funding 1st come 1st served to help with well construction for certain people by income prioritization guidelines and for water treatment systems

- C. Environmental Troubleshooters, Inc. Payment Voucher 4, in the amount of \$55,825.81 for contractor work up through 5-20-2021 for N.Fork Zumbro Stream Restoration**

Last invoice for first phase, including expanding mortar work

Motioned by Theismann and seconded by Zabel to approve the Consent Agenda

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VI. SECRETARY'S REPORT

- A. April 22, 2021 Meeting Minutes-Board Action**

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Theismann to approve Secretary's Report as written.

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT:

- A. Program Record – Board Action**

Motioned by Theismann and seconded by Ross to approve the Program Record as presented.

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

- B. District Financial Statements-Board Action**

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Theismann to approve the District Financial Statements as presented.

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VIII. PAYMENT OF MONTHLY BILLS

- A. **Monthly Bills in the amount of \$89,540.77 -Board Action**
Motioned by Theismann and seconded by Ross to approve payment of the
monthly bills in the amount of \$89,540.77
Affirmative: Helbig Zabel, Theismann, Ross
Opposed: None
Motion Carried

IX. DISTRICT REPORTS

- A. **Chair Report – Terry Helbig**
Attended RC&D meeting by zoom.
Presentation on Pollinator Project – “Project Wingspan”. Basically, the project is to get more native prairie plants in the ground by contract. May be working with us. Terri Peters presented Lynn’s report on conservation reward project and it was well received, they may be a supporter.
Emails Terry received. NACD newsletter, ideas for different projects.
Kellogg Wellhead Project 5-year review and 1W1P-60-day review for plan.
- B. **County Commissioner – Bob Walkes**
Bob stated that it is getting close to budget cycle. Question on 319 funding. Will it require more local funding? Terri replied that she anticipates pretty similar to last couple of years \$175,000. West Indian 319 – 40% match overall requirement which can come from multiple fund sources, partners, can get local funds and that would be helpful. Use some state funds which will be helpful for staff time, includes partners time and also include landowner’s portion of cost share. Goal is to implement projects funded @ 90% cost share. Requesting another \$50,000.00 for groundwater, well, landowner outreach and well testing in that area. Need to talk to Well Network about partnering with us.
- C. **District Manager Report – Terri Peters**
Action at WinLac – Memorandum of Agreement to Policy committee
Moving forward with RFQ for consultants. Reviewed them and now are in the interview process.
Working on budget request for County
Continued work with Lynn process on conservation reward project
Zumbro 1W1P out for 60-day review to agencies and then will be go out for 60-day public comments
Finishing up Mazeppa project
319 West Indian working with staff and NRCS to submit for (MRBI) Mississippi River Basin Initiative. Need to get project identified and put together application for the process. If NRCS approves, there will be a pot of money for that watershed. Less competition for EQIP dollars.
Presented conservation rewards project report to RC&D
- D. **NRCS Report – John Benjamin – Report in packet**
- E. **District Technician Report- Matt Kempinger – Report in packet**

- F. **Ecological Technician Report – Henry Stelten – Report in packet**
- G. **Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant -Sue Cerwinske – Report in packet**

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Conservation Reward Project – Lynn Zabel

Lynn reported: He and Terri met with Mark Root. He is evaluator and the certifier for the MAWQCP project. Lynn applied to see how the process works. \$5,000.00 available for people that want to be approved, to get in compliance. MDA is willing to modify the program to make it work better. We are working along line with them towards reaching our goal.

Terri added: will need funding source to be able to make it work. Talked to Brad Redlin, program manager of the MAWQCP. \$45,000 for pilot project, if we can figure best way to handle that. How to align to ours goals. Are they evaluating enough to get to what we are thinking? Landowner may need to add some conservation practice to raise score, to get certified or just raise their score. MDA would fund \$5,000.00 up to 75% of project. In our office using this as piggy back funding or applying for EQIP or put some state cost share towards it. There are four new enhanced certification or recognition. Brittany from Freeborn County is trained on it a has done a few enhanced one. May get Matt from our office into working on it. Reward for meeting criteria, \$1,000.00 through MDA. We can't call it property tax reduction, as that could cause trouble with Dept. of Revenue. Initially Brad Redlin said that it was one of their initial goals with the certification program and continue to try to take it to the legislature, but haven't gotten support they need from them.

Lynn also reported on carbon credits and how to get money in that way. To qualify, testing will take money and we would have to make sure in compliance. Need funding. MDA would work with us and explore possibilities to do things differently. Terri added we should pursue Ag Partners because we work with same conservationist minded people that come in the door and we are not reaching all of the people that the agronomists are. Agronomists are trusted advisors for landowners. Carbon credit program is going, but need to be really good to get that money. Cover crops don't hold enough carbon, No-till does hold carbon better. MDA would like us to give a report on it. Then could take the idea to the state legislature.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Approve Deborah Allan voucher payment for contract# 20-CWMA-7 in the amount of \$600.00 for practice 388 Prescribed Burn – **Board Action**
Motioned by Theismann and seconded by Ross to approve Deborah Allan voucher payment for contract# 20-CWMA-7 in the amount of \$600.00 for practice 388 Prescribed Burn (3 acres)
Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- B. Approve Nathan Arendt AgBMP Loan application for \$150,000.00 – **Board Action**
Terri was asked how loan works. Needs to be something with water quality improvement. Equipment, like no-till, manure application. Revolving account with so much available and we can only approve to what we have. Have one more to fund. We are getting repayment in October for some. Bridge loan in meanwhile. Once we approve, find out who the lender is and send approved copy over to them and they complete the loan process. 3% loan and the bank can only add ½ of a percent.
Motioned by Theismann and seconded by Ross to approve Nathan Arendt AgBMP Loan application for \$150,000.00
Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- C. Approve Prairie Restorations, Inc. voucher payment for contract 20-CWMA-8 in the amount of \$800.00 for practice 315 Herbaceous Weed Control – **Board Action**
Motioned by Zabel and seconded by Ross to approve Prairie Restoration, Inc. voucher payment for contract 20-CWMA-8 in the amount of \$800.00 for practice 315 Herbaceous Weed Control
Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- D. Amendment #1 to Agreement Between The Goodhue County Soil & Water Conservation District and Wabasha County Soil & Water Conservation District Changing payment terms and amount – **Board Action**
Goodhue dividing between us and them.
MPCA 319 Feedlot Grant (Reducing Bacteria form SE MN Feedlot)
Changing term end dates from August, 31, 2021 to July 29, 2022 and changing amount to be billed from \$26,872.86 to \$46,000.00 and amount for technical assistance of initial allocations from \$5,872.86 to \$1,000.00

Motioned by Theismann and seconded by Ross to approve Amendment #1 to Agreement Between The Goodhue County Soil & Water Conservation District and Wabasha County Soil & Water Conservation District, changing payment terms and amounts.

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

- E. **Contract Approval for Eric Klein Contract 19-319FL-2 in the amount of \$12,229.97 for NRCS practice 629 Waste Treatment – Board Action**

Motioned by Theismann and seconded by Ross to approve Eric Klein contract # 19-319FL-2 in the amount of \$12,229.97 for NRCS practice 629 Waste Treatment

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

Terri mentioned that he is going through MAWQCP process, using \$5,000.00 there.

- F. **Resolution Process. Meeting for potential resolutions – Board Discussion**

Conclusion: Terry Helbig will write up a resolution on RIM inspection payments from BWSR. \$50.00 is not enough to cover personnel, vehicle and expense costs. For inspections and follow-up inspections.

Will send to Terri to complete and submit.

Motioned by Zabel and seconded by Ross to submit a resolution to increase the BWSR payments for RIM inspections from \$50.00 to an appropriate amount to be determined through resolution process.

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

- G. **Conservation Farmer of the Year – Board Discussion**

Conclusion: Maybe carry over Chuck Schmidt from last year. He didn't get the recognition he deserved. Maybe we could do a bus tour. Could also check out the Zumbro River Project. Rep. Barb Haley may be interested in seeing where the money is going and what good it is doing. Terry asked Terri if the staff may have suggestions and bring to the board for approval. Criteria would be people that have worked with us regularly and installed numerous conservation practices.

- H. **Woodland Manager of the Year – Board Discussion**

- I. **Upcoming Events:**

- i. June 18 Copy of resolution and head count of in-person attendees
- ii. June 22 Area 7 Supervisors Meeting (Resolutions Meeting)
Riverland College-Austin or remote by zoom
- iii. May 31 Budget Request Due to Wabasha County

XII. Board Reports

A. Whitewater JPB – No Report

B. Zumbro 1W1P

Larry reported, no meeting yet, scheduled meeting in June.

Plan is out for comments to agencies for 60 days and then it will go out for 60 days period for public comment. Terri added, then it will go to the BWSR board for approval. Hopefully funded by end of year. Work plan needs to be written, submitted and approved before implementation.

C. WinLac 1W1P

Lynn reported that the agencies have priorities well mapped out. He volunteered to be in on interviews 26th and 27th. "We are the Water exhibit" would be good to get to Winona to bring attention to the project. Notifications sent out to all cities, township and agencies for intent to start planning process. June 14th next meeting. Terri added that they are interviewing all four consultants that submitted their qualifications. Bob asked if they would have the recommendations brought to the June 14th meeting for vote and approval. Terri said may want to approve on earlier. Lynn added that it depends on how much you want them to do. We could do some things ourselves, like public meetings and that would change the amount. Negotiate some items with them.

D. SE SWCD Technical Support JPB – No Meeting

E. County Board Meeting – Terri and Larry presented report for SWCD

F. Hiawatha Valley RC&D – Reported on Chair report.

Terry Helbig reported that they have a whole lot more to do and they seem to have it together for more realistic process.

XIII. Adjourn – Board Action

Motioned by Theismann and seconded by Ross to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 am

Affirmative: Helbig, Zabel, Theismann, Ross

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

Respectively Submitted by:



Larry Theismann, Secretary