

Please call office at 651-560-2053 or email susan.cerwinske.wabashaswcd@gmail.com if you have any questions on attending physically or by phone.

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**Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation
District Regular Board Meeting
August 24, 2023
8:15 am
County Conference
Room
625 Jefferson Ave.**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 8:15 am by Lynn Zabel, Chair

Supervisors Present: Chet Ross, Co-Chair, Sharleen Klennert, Treasurer, Dag Knudsen, Secretary, Seth Tentis, Member and Lynn Zabel, Chair

Staff Present: Terri Peters, District Manager

Others Present: Bob Walkes, County Commissioner, John Benjamin, NRCS, Adam Beilke, BWSR, Jim Wanstall, MN DNR Conservation Focus Area Coordinator and Frank Klennert, citizen

On the Phone: Sue Cerwinske, Bookkeeper/Admin. Assistant

II. PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

III. AGENDA

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve the Agenda with the additions of New Business letters G, H, and I

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments limited to 5 minutes per speaker

V. CONSENT AGENDA -Board Action

Items on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Board and may be enacted through one motion. Any item on the Consent Agenda may be removed by any of the Board members for separate consideration.

A. Roger Walkes AgBMP Loan Application of \$15,000.00 for purchase of a No-Till Drill to save topsoil and for water quality benefits.

B. Amended loan applicant to Brian Keller instead of Fred Keller for the AgBMP Loan Application for a Vertical Beater Manure Spreader - \$49,500.00

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve the Consent Agenda

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VI. SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. July 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes – **Board Action**

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve the Secretary's Report as presented.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT – Board Action

A. July District Financial Statements

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Tentis, Zabel

Abstained: Knudsen

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VIII. PAYMENT OF MONTHLY BILLS

A. Monthly Bills in the amount of \$14,002.23 - **Board Action**

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to approve Payment of the Monthly Bills in the amount of \$14,002.23.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

IX. DISTRICT REPORTS

A. Chair Report – Lynn Zabel

Lynn reported that he attended the West Indian Creek gathering and that the meeting was good. Bob Walkes also attended and said that Martin Larson had been his Agronomist and he had a good presentation.

B. County Commissioner – Bob Walkes

Budgeting is in process. Whitling costs and keep levy reasonable.

C. District Manager Report – Terri Peters

Onboarding with Jenna and Katelyn

WinLaC Advisory Committee meeting – different partners that can be involved.

WIC meeting, planning. Good turnout, follow up.

Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Program– Couple samples had high arsenic levels.

Work with Katelyn, map and billing similar nodes.

Response from Newsletter. Interest in programs. Local Whitewater has funding for well and septic.

Gorman – waiting for amendment to contract to reconnect to channel.

D. NRCS Report – John Benjamin – (in packet)

John gave his report at the meeting.

E. District Technician Report- Matt Kempinger (in packet)

- F. Conservation Planning and Outreach Technician Report– Jenna Rasmusson (in the packet)
- G. Natural Resources Technician Report– Katelyn Abts
Terri reported that Katelyn is onboarding. Will be working with Lake City to obtain a grant and will be helping them planting trees. RIM program, doing inspections.
- H. Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant Report -Sue Cerwinske (In packet)
- I. BWSR Report – Adam Beilke
*BWSR Grant Update. State Cost Share, which is the longest running historical grant program available to SWCD for cost share for landowners. Legislation broadened the program, more practices available for cost share. Such as habitat and helping landowners to conserve energy. No longer a cap on payment rates and incentives. Slight increase from \$15,000 to \$18,000.00 for the grant. Buffer laws in Wabasha County \$17,000 to \$21,000.00
Watershed base funding for those that have a comprehensive plan.
Increased funding for Zumbro \$1.2 million to \$1.9 million. WinLaC received \$600,000.00 and later next year will receive \$900,000.00. Since we no longer have capacity grant, funds were shifted to watersheds.
Application in for Soil Health grant. Try to leverage some federal funding.
Adam will have a temporary assignment as a BWSR Clean Water Specialist starting September 13. Dave Copeland in the Rochester office will fill in.*
- J. Other agencies – Jim Wanstall – MN DNR
Jim is the DNR Conservation Focus Area Coordinator for the Whitewater and Root River Watersheds. He is originally from New Mexico, where he spent 25 years with the New Mexico Dept. of Ag. Moved to Minnesota a year ago. He lives in Brainerd and in the process of hiring a full-time person that will be based out of Rochester and will be dedicated to be here. He said that we need to form a partnership with interested agencies and bring people together to get projects done.

X. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Conservation Project – Lynn (open to any Supervisor for ideas)
*Lynn reported on his project, took pictures and will bring later.
3 different methods to compare fields.
Sprayed rye with soybeans under
Soybeans no-till beans into combine with field corn
Soybeans after rye head drops
Straight no-till looked the best
Second best, no herbicide combined rye off the top, got 268 bushels of rye off the 7 acres. Discussion followed.*

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. MASWCD Awards Nominees-Annual Convention December 11-13, 2023

Start thinking about suggestions for this year's nominees

Write-ups for nominees for Wabasha County Outstanding Conservationist of the Year are due to MASWCD by 9/22/2023.

- i. Wabasha County Outstanding Conservationist of the Year
- ii. Woodland Manager of the Year
- iii. Wildlife Habitat Steward
- iv. Forestry Steward
- v. Teacher Award

Terri will have staff make suggestions and she will email them to the board for review

B. Approve Resolution # 08242023-1 for Contract and Extension Signature Authority policy Wabasha SWCD – Board Action/Signature

(Reference August 27, 2020 minutes, new business Letter F.)

Motioned by Knudsen and seconded by Ross to approve Resolution # 08242023-1 for Contract and Extension Signature Authority policy Wabasha SWCD.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

C. Approve donation to Wabasha County Cattlemen's Assn for \$300.00 for the West Indian Creek social event and that amount is also meant to help cover their time contribution for setup and grilling etc. – Board Action

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to approve the donation to the Wabasha County Cattlemen's Assn for \$300.00 for West Indian Creek social event.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

D. Approve Tony Johnson Contract# 22-SDWGPh2-2 in the amount of \$1,320.00 for a Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment System – Board Action

(Funding source FY22-23 Safe Drinking Water Phase 2)

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve Tony Johnson

Contract # 22-SDWGPh2-2 in the amount of \$1,320.00 for a Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment System

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

Discussion on arsenic testing high in drinking water. Last year tested for nitrates and manganese. Volunteer nitrate testing. Well testing.

Tap-in program regionally, private well testing. Caitlin sharing results with MDH.

Accelerated Implementation Grant – Caitlin started Tap-in program, education material. Each SWCD has an amount for well treatment and testing.

Hoping for more funding from MDH to work on ground water issues.

- E. Approve Allan Marking Amendment for Contract# 21-Capacity-7 to increase authorized amount to \$3,260.00 for addition of 16 acres of practice 340-Cover Crops for a total of 34 acres. Increase in payment rate from \$30/acre to \$40/acre to match updated policy– **Board Action**
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to approve Allan Marking Amendment #1 for Contract# 21-Capacity-7 to increase authorized amount to \$3,260.00 for the addition of 16 acres of practice 340 Cover Crops for a total of 34 acres and increase in payment rate from \$30/acre to \$40/acre to match updated policy
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- F. Approve Kent Crary Contract# 20-WWDWP-2 in the amount \$4,450.00 for practice 340 Cover Crops – **Board Action**
(Funding source: Whitewater Drinking Water Protection Grant)
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to approve Kent Crary Contract# 20-WWDWP-2 in the amount of \$4,450.00 for practice 340 Cover Crops
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- G. Approve Rosie Rettmann Contract# 23WAGZ-WC-03 in the amount of \$2,000.00 for Practice 351 Well Decommissioning – **Board Action**
(Funding source: Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ))
Motioned by Sharleen and seconded by Ross to approve Rosie Rettmann Contract# 23WAGZ-WC-03 in the amount of \$2,000.00 for Practice 351 Well Decommissioning
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- H. Approve SAPA SKA Farm Inc, David Pierson Contract# 23WAGZ-WC-04 in the amount of \$1,474.50 for Practice 351 Well Decommissioning – **Board Action**
(Funding source: Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ))
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve SAPA SKA Farm Inc., David Pierson Contract# 23WAGZ-WC-04 in the amount of \$1,474.50 for Practice 351 Well Decommissioning
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried

- I. Rental Agreement for Truax Drill: Pickup/Storage – **Board Discussion**
Need to get in touch with Jennifer Froehly from Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
Wanda from Winona SWCD wanted to know if we were going to rent it out regionally. Would we have staff trained to deliver/pickup. Additional charges for out of county. Trained on doing delivery. Pull with pickup. Winona had a guy that stored, maintained and showed customer how it works. Get in touch with him to see what the costs were for maintenance. Need to put in agreement that the renter would pay for damages. Work on agreement and bring it back later.
- J. Upcoming Events:
 - i. Fall MACDE Supervisors and Employee’s Meeting Sept. 19 in Northfield
 Morning meeting in Northfield-location to be determined and afternoon lunch and tour at the Salvatierra Farm -the pilot farm of Tree-Range Chickens

XII. Board Reports

- A. Whitewater JPB – Lynn
Lynn reported that they approved a couple of septic rebuilds and a couple they needed to hold off on. Small property lines, need a variance and one that requires a filter that needs to be changed by septic owner. How do you guarantee it will be maintained?
- B. Zumbro 1W1P – Dag
Meeting scheduled for August 10 was canceled. Next meeting November.
- C. WinLaC 1W1P – Lynn
Terri reported there was a Technical Advisory meeting. Planning group meeting. Modeling prioritization.
Zumbro prioritization for the next round of funding Exercise completed for top priorities.
- D. SE SWCD Technical Support JPB – Dag
Lynn asked if the amount of support needed is directly related to the amount of projects for the staff?
Terri reported that she is working with staff JAA for projects. Have funding available to work on Gorman Creek. Feedlot projects, Kate Bruss has done a lot of work on these.
- E. County Board Meeting – Sharleen
Terri went to last County meeting and gave them an update. Next meeting is Tuesday, August 1st.

Dag brought up a discussion about adding more staff and asked Terri how she felt about that. Terri replied that they will need training. Last newsletter brought a lot of responses on programs. Dag felt that we should be thinking long term and plan ahead to hire when the opportunity presents itself. Staff needs to be capable to get a step up, an opportunity to grow. Terri replied that it depends on grants available to hire any additional staff.

XIII. Adjourn – Board Action

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to Adjourn the meeting at 9:46 am.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Tentis, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

Respectively Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dag Knudsen", written over a horizontal line.

Dag Knudsen, Secretary

Seth Tentis

