

Benton SWCD
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
USDA Service Center, Foley, MN
December 16th, 2009

Attendance: Supervisors - Joe Jordan, Wade Bastian, Bernie Thole and Chuck Rau. Others: Gerry Maciej, Pat Gehling (NRCS) and DeAnna Doran (Sherburne SWCD, left at 11:20 A.M.).

I. Call meeting to order

The meeting was called to order by Bastian at 8:37 A.M.

II. Pledge of Allegiance - Recited

III. Approve Agenda

Maciej asked to add the following items. VIII Action Items, A. New Business, 12) Benton SWCD Photo and Coloring Contest. X Information Items, B. Old Business, 3. Rural Preserve Tax Program. Motion by Rau, second by Thole to approve the agenda with the additions. All were in favor. The motion passed.

IV. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Motion by Jordan, second by Rau to approve the minutes from the October 21st, 2009 regular board meeting and the November 18th, 2009 regular board meeting as presented. All were in favor. The motion passed.

V. Treasurers' Report

Maciej presented the Money Market Account Report, Account Quick Report and November Program Summary Report. Motion by Rau, second by Thole to approve the reports. All were in favor. The motion passed. Maciej presented the December Accounts Payable report. Motion by Jordan, second by Thole to approve the accounts payable report and pay bills. All were in favor. The motion passed.

VI. Permits, Applications, Certificates of Compliance

A. Denny Popp – Application for Water/Wetland Project

Motion by Rau, Second by Thole to approve the comments as presented. All were in favor. The motion passed.

VII. Conservation Plans

There was discussion about the amount of time that is needed to start and complete abandoned well sealing projects using State Cost Share Program funds. Motion by Rau, second by Thole to initiate a policy of allowing 90 days from board approval until the start of abandoned well sealing projects. This policy will be effective starting on January 1, 2010. Exceptions can be granted by the SWCD board at its discretion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

A. Tom Monroe – FY09-01 – State Cost Share program application – Maciej distributed the scoring sheet for the project. Motion by Rau second by Thole to approve contract FY09-01 in the amount of \$220.00. All were in favor. The motion passed.

B. Walter Parkins – FY09-02 – State Cost Share program application– Maciej distributed the scoring sheet for the project. Motion by Jordan second by Thole to approve contract FY09-02 in the amount of \$1,000.00. All were in favor. The motion passed.

VIII. Action Items

A. New Business

- 1) Finance committee recommendations – set 2010 budget – Maciej reviewed the operating budget spreadsheet. Maciej explained that due to the very large number of uncertainties in the 2010 budget, the finance committee recommended that an operating budget be presented that includes revenues from grants and partnerships that are currently being worked on. Revenue from these sources are estimated based on the managers intuition about the likelihood of them being funded (probability

- based budget). A more realistic operating budget and complete budget, which will include cost share and pass through funds, can be presented in February when BWSR determines which grants will be funded. Motion by Thole, second by Jordan to accept the probability based operating budget. All were in favor. The motion passed. A complete budget will be considered later in 2010.
- 2) Payment of bills on December 31st - Motion by Rau, second by Thole to authorize an SWCD supervisor to review bills and sign checks for outstanding bills on or about December 31st, 2009. All were in favor. The motion passed.
 - 3) Set prices for products and services for 2009 – Motion by Jordan, second by Thole to accept the prices for 2010 as presented. All were in favor. The motion passed.
 - 4) Designate an official depository - Motion by Rau, second by Thole to declare Frandsen Bank and Trust as the official depository for the Benton SWCD for 2010. All were in favor. The motion passed.
 - 5) Select tree specie for Soil and Water Stewardship week – Motion by Rau, second by Thole to select Norway Spruce for the 2010 Soil and Water Stewardship week tree specie. All were in favor. The motion passed.
 - 6) Manager and staff performance evaluations – After discussion there was board consensus to complete this item during the January board meeting. Due to a schedule conflict the January board meeting date had to be changed. The January meeting was tentatively rescheduled for January 12th, 2010 at 8:30 A.M. Maciej was asked to check with supervisor Grosland for his availability on this date and reschedule again if Grosland was not available.
 - 7) Anoka Sand Plain Plant Material Learning Center Board – Doran discussed the letter she sent to the Benton SWCD and asked for continued support of the Anoka Sand Plain Plant Material Learning Center. Motion by Jordan, second by Rau to continue participating and supporting the Anoka Sand Plain Plant Material Learning Center. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed.
 - 8) Renew Public Notary Commission – Maciej presented cost estimates for renewing his public notary commission which is set to expire on 1/31/10. There was board consensus to not renew Maciej's notary commission.
 - 9) Copier Memorandum of Understanding – Motion by Rau, second by Thole to sign the NRCS / SWCD Copier Memorandum of Understanding. All were in favor. The motion passed.
 - 10) Set Little Rock TMDL stakeholder committee – Water Plan Technician Annie Felix provided an update to the board on a number of activities related to the Little Rock Lake and Little Rock Creek TMDL's. Felix is organizing a formal stakeholder committee to assist with formulating the TMDL's and implementation plans from this point forward. A list of members was discussed. Felix was asked to contact the local irrigators association for possible participation on the committee. Motion by Thole, second by Jordan to authorize Felix to select the stakeholder committee from the nominations received. All were in favor. The motion passed. Motion by Rau, second by Jordan to delegate Bernie Thole to represent the Benton SWCD on the stakeholder committee. All were in favor. The motion passed. There was discussion about the timeline and process for coordinating the Little Rock Lake implementation plan with the Little Rock Creek implementation plan. Felix was asked to research this concept and provide more information, including a timeline of activities for both projects, at the January board meeting.

- 11) Consider a policy to void checks – Motion by Rau, second by Jordan to void all checks that have a value that is less than the cost of stopping payment after 90 days. All were in favor. The motion passed.
- 12) Benton SWCD Photo and Coloring Contest – District Technician Katie Evans presented rules and prizes for the new Conservation Photo and Coloring contests. Motion by Rau, second by Thole to accept the contest rules and prizes as presented, with the addition of three \$50.00 awards to be presented to the classroom of each of the first place winners in Group A, B and C for the coloring contest. All were in favor. The motion passed. Motion by Thole, second by Rau to select coloring sheet #3 for the 2010 coloring contest. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Progress Reports

- A. Staff Accomplishments** – Felix, McMillin and Evans highlighted activities in their monthly accomplishment reports. Felix reported the Benton SWCD received special recognition at the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts annual convention this year. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Waters selected the Benton SWCD as a co-recipient of the 2009 DNR Waters Appreciation Award. The award and a framed print were presented to staff and a supervisor during the awards banquet at the convention. The office was recognized for several activities including TMDL's, the Benton County Water Plan, the native buffer program in the Little Rock Lake watershed and the native buffer demonstration project at Benton Beach which was coordinated with Benton County Department of Development staff. Supervisors recommended that the public be made aware of this recognition by the DNR through local news releases. Gehling reported that an EQIP signup and ranking period will be announced soon. NRCS is anticipating other program announcements soon as well. An EQIP local work group meeting is being scheduled to happen immediately after the January Water Resources Advisory Committee meeting.
- B. Dan Martens – U of M Extension** – Martens provided information about the Minnesota Farmer Assistance Network (MFAN) and upcoming private pesticide applicator workshops.

X. Information Items

A. Committee Reports

- 1) MMM RC&D Meeting – November 19 (Joe and Gerry) – Maciej reported that the RC&D did not receive contribution agreement dollars from the NRCS for this fiscal year. Acting RC&D coordinator Jim Onstad has announced his retirement effective January 1, 2010. The coordinator for the Onanigozie RC&D is the most likely replacement for Onstad.
- 2) WRAC Meeting – November 24 (Gerry) – Maciej provided a summary of the items that were discussed at the meeting.
- 3) MASWCD Annual Convention – December 6-8 (Joe) – Jordan shared information from the convention including the results of the MASWCD resolutions including an emergency resolution about feedlot cost share. Jordan shared that the Kaschmitter's were recognized twice on stage during the Outstanding Conservationist luncheon as Benton County and MASWCD Area 2 Outstanding Conservationists.

B. Old Business

- 1) Board insight meetings – There was discussion about the results of the insight meetings. Motion by Thole, second by Jordan to discontinue bi-weekly insight meetings, schedule weekly staff meetings to last up to ½ hour and to have the

manager contact Mike Kremer to request an evaluation of current progress and to give guidance to the board on the next steps. All were in favor. The motion passed. Gehling offered to facilitate staff meeting.

Rau left the meeting at this time.

- 2) Clean Water Fund grant application update – Motion by Jordan, second by Thole to table this item. All were in favor. The motion passed.
- 3) Rural Preserve Tax Program – Maciej presented information about the district’s role with this program. SWCD’s are required to review and approve the required conservation plans. SWCD’s have the option of writing the plans as well. Maciej has met with County Assessor Brian Koester about the program and is working out the details related to roles and responsibilities of the program.

C. New Business

- 1) Supervisor claim forms – Supervisors were reminded to submit claim form and were provided a new form for 2010.
- 2) RIM Reserve Clean Water Fund Riparian Buffer program – This new program was recently announced by BWSR. Maciej shared a fact sheet about the program and shared his thoughts on the level of participation that might be expected in Benton County.

XI. Correspondence

- A.** FY08 State Cost Share program letter from Jason Weinerman, BWSR Board Conservationist – Maciej shared that Weinerman’s letter stated that there were no errors found during his review of the program.

XII. Adjourn

Motion by Thole, second by Jordan to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

Secretary, Board of Supervisors

Date

Calendar of Future Events:

- December 21, Elk River Watershed Association meeting
- January 12, Benton SWCD board meeting
- January 18, Elk River Watershed Association meeting