



## MEETING MINUTES

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

#### DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thursday, March 11, 2021

9:00 a.m.

4100 220<sup>th</sup> Street W, Suite 102  
Farmington, Minnesota

#### **Board Members Present:**

Laura Zanmiller, Chair  
Kevin Chamberlain, Vice  
Jayne Hager Dee, Treasurer  
Chelsea Skog, Secretary  
Bruce Johnson, Public Information Officer

#### **SWCD Staff Present:**

Brian Watson      David Holmen  
Curt Coudron      Ashley Gallagher  
Lana Rotty          Diane Schmidtke  
Todd Matzke        Joe Barten

#### **Others Present:**

Mark Zabel, VRW JPO  
Michelle Wohlers, NRCS

Due to the local state of emergency and social distancing, the Board of Supervisors participated in the meeting via telephone and the Board meeting was conducted under Minn. Stat. § 13D.021.

#### **1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Zanmiller called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Chair Zanmiller requested a roll call. All Supervisors were present.

#### **2. Audience**

Chair Zanmiller asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to address the Board on an item that is not on the agenda. Nobody came forward.

#### **3. Approval of Agenda**

**21.014** Motion by Johnson, second by Chamberlain to approve the agenda. Members voting in favor: Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain. Motion carried

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

#### **4. Approval of February 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

The February 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes were presented.

#### **5. Approval of March 11, 2021 Accounts Payable**

The March 11, 2021 Accounts Payable were presented.

- 6. Authorization to Execute Contract with the Food Group for Establishment of Cover Crop (one-year)**  
Contract 21-IPP-01 with The Food Group for establishment of cover crop on 85 acres encumbering \$2,125 based on \$25 per acre on one-year contract from Agreements with Dakota County and Vermillion River Watershed Management Organization.
- 7. Authorization to Execute Contract with Rehder and Associates for Engineering Services**  
Authorize execution of contract with Rehder and Associates for Engineering Services for the Dave and Maureen Fasbender and Jeff and Roger Peine properties in Douglas Township, Trout Brook Watershed. Funding available through the FY18 CWF Trout Brook Gant, Metro Conservation Engineering Technical Assistance funds, or CY Agreement with Dakota County.
- 21.015** Motion by Johnson, second by Chamberlain to approve the consent agenda items. Members voting in favor: Skog, Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain, Zanmiller. Motion carried.

## REGULAR AGENDA

### 8. Finance Committee Report

#### 8.1 Acceptance of December 31, 2020 Finance Report

Watson stated that the Finance Committee and staff met on March 3 to review the December 31, 2020 Finance Report. Watson reported that the budgeted fund balance shortfall was \$47,007 however, the actual shortfall was \$69,625. It was noted that with the 2020 year-end finances, we are now slightly below the Board approved fund balance policy of 6-10 months. Chamberlain asked if any new revenue opportunities are surfacing. Watson indicated staff will need to prioritize tasks associated with executed grants first and keep moving those initiatives forward while also continuing to look for new grant opportunities. Existing staff commitments also need to be balanced with new opportunities and commitments. Much of our grant and agreement work is specific to a task or set of tasks. The shortfall in revenue typically occurs when we have spent grant funds for staff time but have not met deliverables, provide education and outreach tasks that are not billable to a grant or agreement or the need for staff time to coordinate with new or existing partners. The COVID issue also had an impact on the 2020 budget as there was more administrative time associated with responding to the pandemic.

**21.016** Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to accept the December 31, 2020 Finance Report as presented. Members voting in favor: Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain, Zanmiller, Skog. Motion carried.

#### 8.2 Acceptance of January and February 2021 Finance Reports

The January and February 2021 Finance Reports were reviewed.

**21.017** Motion by Chamberlain, second by Dee to accept the January and February 2021 Finance Reports as presented. Members voting in favor: Dee, Chamberlain, Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson. Motion carried.

### 9. Legislative Updates

Watson stated that a lot of legislative activities and bills have been introduced that may impact soil and water conservation districts. There are many soil health initiatives that have been introduced. Watson highlighted House File 639 which includes State funds to soil and water conservation districts for local capacity and some of the changes being proposed.

### 10. Announcements and Reports

#### Natural Resources Conservation Service

Michelle Wohlers provided the NRCS report. She stated that regarding the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, priority was given to the 43 applications that were not funded last year. Six new contracts received medium priority. Those contracts receiving pre-approval were scheduled to be announced on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, however due to software glitches, they will be announced on March 30. All contracts funded will be announced on May 7. In addition, they received seven applications for round two and they will be considered if funding is still available. They are currently working on 35 contracts totaling

\$1,264,033 covering a variety of practices. Staff have been participating in Local Work Group training each Wednesday in March and Wohlers is seeking a date for a Dakota County Local Work Group meeting prior to July 30. Watson added that SWCD staff are also participating in the Local Work Group training and training for SWCD Supervisors is scheduled for March 31. A date for the Local Work Group meeting will be scheduled within the next month.

#### **Dakota County**

There was no Dakota County report.

#### **Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Power Board**

Zanmiller provided the Metropolitan Conservation District Joint Powers Board report. She stated they met on February 24. Officers were elected as follows: Chair - Mark Zabel (Carver), Vice-Chair - Shelly Binsfeld (Sherburne), Secretary - Glenda Meixell (Anoka), Treasurer - Doug Schoenneker (Scott). The Board also discussed future program opportunities where some Members might be eligible to participate but others are not and if the joint powers board as a whole would support that concept and administer those types of grant opportunities. The consensus was to pursue all opportunities even if some Members are ineligible to participate but to ensure the costs of those opportunities are paid for by those that receive the funding.

#### **Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts**

It was reported that the Legislative Briefing is scheduled for March 18 and the Local Work Group Training for Supervisors is scheduled for March 31.

#### **Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board**

There was no Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board report. The next meeting is April 7.

#### **Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization**

Mark Zabel provided the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) report. He stated that John Stelzner and Curt Coudron presented at a recent Watershed Planning Commission and Joint Powers Board meetings to highlight the general SWCD programs and progress on the Braun wetland bank project. He added that the Commissioners and others in attendance were impressed, especially with the onset of the harvestable cover program. He anticipates this to lead to additional cover on the landscape and address erosion in the county. He again thanked staff and the Board for their work on the cost share policy.

#### **District Managers Report**

Watson stated that staff have completed the Pay Equity Report which is required every three years. He noted that required report is a method of reviewing gender equity for jobs requiring comparable levels of expertise. Watson indicated that he would share the Pay Equity Report with Supervisor Dee as she was in the office and could review prior to submitting.

Watson expressed appreciation to the Supervisors for their patience and coordinating the use of iPads under County IT requirements. Staff will be looking to fully utilized all capabilities at the April Board meeting.

There are signs of COVID receding and the return to traditional work could begin sometime this summer. Watson further stated that through the CARES Act, Dakota County has provided much appreciated resources to the SWCD; such as computer workstations, and monitors, for telework purposes.

Watson added that there will be more Groundwater outreach to landowners occurring in the eastern portion of Dakota County. Partners include Dakota County to implement their groundwater plan, University of Minnesota, Cannon River Watershed Partnership and Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

**Board of Supervisors Reports**

There were no reports or updates.

**Upcoming Events**

The upcoming events were reviewed.

**11. Adjourn**

**20.018** Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to adjourn the meeting. Members voting in favor: Chamberlain, Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Skog  
Secretary