



MEETING MINUTES

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thursday, March 10, 2022

9:00 a.m.

4100 220th Street W, Suite 102
Farmington, Minnesota

Board Members Present:

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

SWCD Staff Present:

Brian Watson
Lana Rotty
Curt Coudron

Others Present:

Matthew Lundberg, NRCS

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Zanmiller called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Zanmiller led the Board of Supervisors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. 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.

4. Approval of Agenda

22.124 Motion by Johnson, second by Skog to approve the agenda. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Approval of February 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes

The February 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes were presented.

6. Approval of March 10, 2022 Accounts Payable

The March 10, 2022 Accounts Payable were presented.

22.125 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to approve the consent agenda items. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Approval of December 31, 2021 Finance Report

The December 31, 2021 Finance Report was reviewed. Watson noted that staff has completed financial transactions for 2021 including invoicing under our charges for service agreements and submitting

financial reports under State grants. For 2021 we adopted a balanced budget of \$1,689,436. Our year-end finance report shows a \$6,948.61 surplus for calendar year 2021. Our fund balance as of December 31, 2021 is \$689,287.45. The Board established policy to retain a fund balance that will support operations for 6 to 12 months. We began 2021 with a fund balance of 5.5 months. Our fund balance starting 2022 to support operations is now at 5.3 months. The slight reduction in our operating fund balance is due to an increase in our monthly expenses and the organization liability to pay for compensated absences.

22.126 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to accept the December 31, 2021 Finance Report. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

8. Update on Sub-Watershed Analysis Reports

Staff has worked with various partners over the past several years to develop sub-watershed analysis (SWA) reports. These reports are used to identify where and what types of conservation practices are most cost-effective for reducing pollutants such as sediment and phosphorus. Completed SWAs follow a protocol that has been developed to maintain consistency in their use. Different than other models that identify projects based solely on computer analysis, SWAs include on-site field assessments to consider the appropriateness of the conservation practice, existing site conditions, and how a practice fits into existing land use.

Grant opportunities under the Clean Water Fund and other state funding sources require that proposed projects are targeted and prioritized so that grant funds are used for the most cost-effective projects. Completed SWA's provide the prioritized approach by identifying the most cost-effective projects and have been important to being successful with grant applications.

To date, six SWAs have been completed and three are underway in rural Dakota County. We have also completed smaller SWAs in urban portions of Dakota County for locating neighborhood stormwater improvements. These urban SWAs are generally associated with street redevelopment projects.

Coudron added that the prioritizing, targeting, and measuring does not consider the landowner perspective. It's a great opportunity to share the findings and discuss what they see on their land. Some move forward and others do not.

9. Review 2021 Annual Report

Staff developed a draft 2021 Annual Report showcasing efforts and successes from the past year. This Annual Report will be sent to partners and elected officials, posted, and shared online through our website, social media, newsletter, and will be made available while tabling public events. The purpose of this Annual Report is to market our programs and provide a snapshot of the year in a concise and readable format. Not all efforts during the calendar year are identified in our annual reports. Staff provided an overview of the Report's content.

10. Legislative Update

Watson distributed an updated schedule of meetings with Dakota County legislators. There are three virtual meetings scheduled for Friday, March 11. He stated that the focus of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Legislative Briefing was the local aid bill for SWCDs. A copy of the Bill was distributed. HF3719 was introduced by Representative Reyer of Dakota County and SF3913 was introduced by Senator Rest of Ramsey County. It is also included in the Governor's budget. This current bill language includes \$22 million annually to SWCDs from local aid to provide essential services. The formula is 70% divided equally to 88 SWCD and 30% based on private land holdings. Watson voiced concern with the formula in the bill. His concern is that the formula does not consider demographics in any form. Under the current formula in the bills, Dakota SWCD would receive approximately \$0.39 per person while some SWCDs would receive over \$50 per person for essential services. MASWCD has set up another working group for March 16 to discuss essential services. Supervisor Dee stated that 21 or 24% of Minnesota counties have populations of less than 10,000. Dee added that she fully supports this funding

but a formula that takes into account population at some of the distribution equation should be considered now and not once the bill has passed.

11. Announcements and Reports

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) report was provided by Matthew Lundberg. He stated that Civil rights will be addressed in his report next month. The deadline for the EQIP sign-up was Friday, March 4. The pre-obligated contracts will be announced next week and he is anticipating three in Dakota County totaling \$50,000. They received three Conservation Stewardship Program contracts and the deadline for those to be planned and finalized is April 15, 2022. The District Conservationist application deadline just closed, a new hire should be available in April or early May. That person will be the NRCS representative at the SWCD Board meetings. The deadline to hold the annual Local Work Group (LWG) meeting is July 22, 2022.

Dakota County

There was no Dakota County report.

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

There was no Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization report.

Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board

There next Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2022.

Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Power Board

The Metropolitan Conservation District Joint Powers Board (JPB) report was provided by Zanmiller and Watson. Elections of Officers were held, the results are: Chair, Reinberger (Washington); Vice Chair, Frethem (Ramsey); Treasurer, Schoencker (Scott); Secretary, Meixell (Anoka). The workplan for Administrative Services with Scott SWCD was increased \$2,700 and that will come from membership dues.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

There was no Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts report.

District Manager Reports

Watson stated that interviews for the vacant Resource Conservationist position were held. He hopes to have the vacancy finalized this coming week.

Board of Supervisors Reports

There were no Board of Supervisor Reports.

20. Upcoming Events

The upcoming events were reviewed.

21. Adjourn

22.127 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Johnson to adjourn the meeting. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Skog
Secretary