



MEETING MINUTES

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thursday, April 14, 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
Al Singer
Valerie Grover
Theresa Mitchell

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

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

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Approval of March 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes

The March 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes were presented.

6. Approval of April 14, 2022 Accounts Payable

The April 14, 2022 Accounts Payable were presented.

7. Approval of January, February, March Finance Reports

The January, February, and March Finance Reports were Accepted.

8. Cancellation of Jay Frandrup Contract for Establishing Cover Crops

The Jay Frandrup Contract for Establishing Cover Crops was Cancelled.

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

REGULAR AGENDA

9. Authorization to Execute Contract with Julie Larson for the Establishment of Cover Crops (2-Year)

Julie Larson is proposing to establish cover crops on 120 acres over a two-year period. The field is in Vermillion Township, Middle Mainstem Watershed of the Vermillion River. This field received cover crop incentives in 2021 under the Jay Frandrup contract and is eligible for up to 2 additional years. Seeding plans are being finalized and each contract is limited to 100 acres. Payment for the first year will be made upon certification of the seeding and District Board approval. Payment for the second year will be made when the cover crop seeding has been completed and certified by District staff.

22.130 Motion by Johnson, second by Chamberlain to execute contract 22-IPP-01 with Julie Larson for establishment of cover crops on 100 acres at \$35 per acre annually, for two years, not to exceed \$7,000 from agreements with Dakota County and Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization. Members voting in favor: Chamberlain, Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee. Motion carried.

10. Authorization to Execute Contract with John Ista for Installation of Grassed Waterway

John Ista, in cooperation with Kenneth Messner the adjacent landowner, is proposing to reconstruct 1,500 linear feet of grassed waterway in Sciota Township, Cannon River Watershed. The existing waterway has exceeded its functional lifespan and storm water runoff is flowing through the field causing erosion. A Group Project Addendum has been signed by both landowners. The Addendum identifies John Ista as the spokesperson for the project and recipient of the cost share payment. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$14,700. The project is eligible for up to 85% cost share.

22.131 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to execute contract 22-IPP-02 with John Ista for installation of grassed waterway at 85% cost share not to exceed \$12,495 from agreement with Dakota County. Members voting in favor: Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain. Motion carried.

11. Authorization to Execute Contract with Jeremy Irrthum for the Installation of Grassed Waterway

Jeremy Irrthum is proposing to reconstruct 3,360 linear feet of two grassed waterways in Hampton Township, Pine Creek Watershed of the Cannon River. The existing waterways have exceeded their functional lifespan and storm water runoff is flowing through the field causing erosion. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$25,800. The project is eligible for up to 85% cost share.

22.132 Motion by Johnson, second by Chamberlain to execute contract 22-IPP-03 with Jeremy Irrthum for installation of two grassed waterways at 85% cost share, not to exceed \$21,930 from agreements with Dakota County, North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization, and FY21 Cannon River Watershed Based Implementation Grant. Members voting in favor: Skog, Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain, Zanmiller. Motion carried.

12. Authorization to Execute Contract with Sarah Bridges for Installation of Grassed Waterways

Sarah Bridges is proposing to install three grassed waterways in Eureka Township in the Upper Mainstem Watershed of the Vermillion River. Two existing waterways have exceeded their functional lifespan and storm water runoff is flowing through the field causing erosion. The third waterway is a new waterway in an area of concentrated flow. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$22,400. The project is eligible for up to 85% cost share.

22.133 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to execute contract 22-IPP-04 with Sarah Bridges for installation of three grassed waterways at 85% cost share, not to exceed \$19,040 from agreement with Vermillion River

Watershed Joint Powers Organization and the FY21 Vermillion River Watershed Based Implementation Grant. Members voting in favor: Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain, Zanmiller, Skog. Motion carried.

13. Authorization to Execute Contract with Dan Harris for Installation of Grassed Waterway

Daniel Harris is proposing to reconstruct 1,430 feet of grassed waterway in Castle Rock Township in the South Branch Watershed of the Vermillion River. The existing waterway has exceeded its functional lifespan and storm water runoff is flowing through the field and causing erosion. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$9,800. The project is eligible for 85% cost share not to exceed \$8,330.

22.134 Motion by Johnson, second by Dee to execute contract 22-IPP-06 with Dan Harris for installation of grassed waterway at 85% cost share, not to exceed \$8,330 from agreements with Dakota County and Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization. Members voting in favor: Dee, Chamberlain, Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson. Motion carried.

14. Authorization to Submit Accelerated Implementation Grant Application to Minnesota Department of Health for Groundwater Protection and to Execute if Awarded

The MDH has announced a grant opportunity focused on accelerating implementation activities that would benefit groundwater resources. In partnership with the Dakota County Environmental Resources Groundwater Unit, a grant application has been prepared requesting \$50,000 to review aggregate mining controls, develop a model ordinance and work with townships and cities to update local controls. The grant application was due to the MDH by April 8 and has been submitted in order to meet the deadline but will be rescinded if necessary. Under the proposal, the SWCD will be responsible for grant administration, selection and coordination with consultant, and outreach to townships and cities. Dakota County staff will develop the request for proposals for consultant selection and assist with outreach. If the grant is awarded, the work timeline would be July 2022 to June 2023. The budget includes \$45,000 for consultant services and approximately \$10,000 for SWCD and Dakota County staff time; \$5,000 of which would be in-kind match and not reimbursed by the grant.

22.135 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to submit Accelerated Implementation Grant Application to Minnesota Department of Health for Groundwater Protection; and execute if awarded. All members voting in favor. Motion carried.

15. Adopt Resolution on Preferred Redistricting Plan

During the 2014 legislative session, Minnesota Statute 103C.311 was amended to require Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Boards within the seven-county metro area to be elected by district instead of countywide. With completion of the decennial census, redrawing district boundaries needs to occur to ensure the people of each district are equally represented.

Central to this redistricting plan is the need to follow principles under Minnesota Statutes. The principles state that districts shall be contiguous, as compact as practical and as nearly equal in population as possible. No district shall vary in population by more than 10% of average for all districts. If after redistricting, a district has a total shift of population in and out of the district that is greater than 5% of the average population of all districts, then that district is up for election. The new 2020 census for Dakota County included a total population of 439,882 which is a 41,330 increase from the 2010 census. Equal population over five Districts would be 87,976. Since every district under the redistricting plan will be altered by more than five percent of the population of the districts, each Board Supervisor will be up for election in 2022.

Staff has consulted with Dakota County staff and developed three redistricting options for consideration (Option 1, 2 and 3). As part of the redistricting plan, a decision also needs to occur on how terms will be staggered, and which districts will serve two-year terms and which districts will serve four-year terms.

After a decision on the preferred redistricting plan, coordination will continue with Dakota County staff as they prepare a resolution that is scheduled for review and adoption by the Dakota County Board of

Commissioners at their April 19, 2022 meeting. After the County Board formally adopts a SWCD Board redistricting plan, the SWCD Board needs to adopt the county's resolution and submit the resolution along with a letter to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources by April 26, 2022.

Theresa Mitchell with Dakota County Public Services and Revenue was on hand to answer questions.

22.136 Motion by Dee, second by Chamberlain to recommend redistricting option #2 to the Dakota County Board of Commissioners. Members voting in favor: Zanmiller, Skog, Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain. Motion carried.

22.137 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to recommend SWCD Board District 1, 2 and 3 serve two-year terms, and Districts 4 and 5 four-year term with the 2022 elections. Members voting in favor: Skog, Johnson, Dee, Chamberlain, Zanmiller. Motion carried.

16. Announcements and Reports

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) report was provided by Matthew Lundberg. The Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners was read and signed by each of the SWCD Supervisors. He reminded those present that the Local Work Group meeting is scheduled for May 12 and to plan for about one hour. A new District Conservationist has been hired for the Farmington office and their first day will be in early June. They are coming to the NRCS from Wisconsin and are well-versed in Urban Agriculture. With EQIP assessments and ranking, three additional high tunnel applications have been approved with the potential for more funding as producers cancel or defer projects. Approximately \$54,000 has been preapproved so far and that includes energy efficiency improvements, ag waste facility closure, cover crops and a water and sediment control basin. They are planning to have all contracts signed and ready to begin May 13. With the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) grant for addressing groundwater concerns, \$3.5 million has been approved. The includes Dakota and Washington, and 18 additional SWCDs. It is a 5-year program with the initial sign-up period beginning in early May and ending June 17. Three CSP contract applications have been canceled in Dakota County. Watson asked about the new 30-year Conservation Reserve Program option. Lundberg responded that a new application is ready to go but that sign up dates have not been announced.

Dakota County

The Dakota County report was provided by Al Singer, Environmental Resources. He provided an update on the County Land Conservation Program. He noted the County and SWCD partnership with this program. He stated that the SWCD has been competing easement monitoring, providing technical assistance to landowners, developing new and updated natural resource management plans and property reports, implementing the natural resource management plans and assisting with scoping/hydrologic reviews. He reported that 8% of Dakota County land is permanently protected in some fashion; either through parks, wildlife management or scenic areas or through private easements. Future easements or acquisitions will be using conservation focus areas to concentrate efforts. Singer indicated there are some current challenges including the ability to compete with the current land prices and that new owners of easement areas may not have the same conservation ethic as the previous landowner.

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

There was no Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization report.

Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board

The Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board (JPB) report was presented by Chamberlain. They met on April 6, 2022. There has been a policy change allowing staff to expedite project approval prior to full Board approval. The JPB would like to establish a stronger fund balance. An audit is required for the organization and Peterson Company Ltd will be conducting the financial audit for 2021. Rice County has agreed to provide legal services to the JPB.

Supervisor Dee asked if there have been any completed projects. Chamberlain responded that there are completed projects and it appears that Goodhue SWCD may be requesting more funding.

Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Power Board

There was no Metropolitan Conservation District Joint Powers Board (JPB) report.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts report was presented by Zanmiller. The Area Meeting was held on March 24. There were very informative reports provided by staff from BWSR, NRCS, and MASWCD. Legislative initiatives were discussed. Still seeking support for the SWCD Aid Bill from the Senate.

District Manager Reports

Watson stated Matt Sorvig has been hired as the Resource Conservationist and will begin working on May 9. He also indicated that Lana Rotty will be retiring sometime late summer. He is hoping to post that vacancy soon. Watson requested the scheduling of a Finance Committee meeting for late April or early May. The trees will be arriving next Wednesday and the tree pick up and sale will be Thursday and Friday (Earth Day). There are some bundles of white oak, false indigo, and chokeberry yet to sell.

Watson requested the Board schedule a special Board Meeting to discuss redistricting and to fulfill the SWCD responsibilities per BWSRs Operational Handbook.

22.138 Motion by Dee, second by Johnson to schedule a special Board meeting for Wednesday, April 20 at 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of adopting a County Board resolution on the redistricting plan for the elected SWCD Board.

Board of Supervisors Reports

There were no Board of Supervisor Reports.

20. Upcoming Events

The upcoming events were reviewed. Zanmiller noted that most of the meetings are now held in person.

21. Adjourn

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Skog
Secretary