

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

APRIL 11, 2023 BOARD MINUTES

APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER

The regular Board Meeting was called to order at 3:03p.m. by Chair, John Rheinberger.

Members Present: John Rheinberger, Chair
Tim Behrends, Vice Chair
Diane Blake, Treasurer
David Nuccio, Public Relations and Information
Bob Rosenquist, Secretary

Staff Present: Jay Riggs
Shari Larkin

Other Agencies: None

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Two items were added under New Business. Item H for the Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood Projects; and Item I for the Rydeen Pasture/Hay Planting Encumbrance. A motion to approve the revised Agenda was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Items to approve this month are the 2023 SWWD Task Order – Hasenbank in the amount of \$2,000; the 2023 City of Afton Technical Service Agreement in the amount of \$5,000; and the 2023 Hennepin County Technical Service Agreement in the amount of \$28,000. A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 14, 2023 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the March 14, 2023 minutes was made by David Nuccio and seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Items to note are Loffler Companies, Inc in the amount of \$2,153.75 for telephone/internet; University of Minnesota in the amount of \$8,861.64 for the Agronomist position; Metropolitan Council in the amount of \$1,575.25 for water monitoring expenses; Sterling Equipment & Repair in the amount of \$500.00 for an LSC expense; Loffler Companies, Inc in the amount of \$1,976.21 for telephone/internet; Viking Industrial Center in the amount of \$621.66 for water monitoring expenses; and Central Roofing Company in the amount of \$975.00 for roof repair. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit, was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel – An update on the seasonal positions was given to the Board. The policy on background checks was also discussed.

Budget and Finance – Nothing to report.

Cost-Share – The Committee met earlier, and those items are later in the Agenda.

Communications and Outreach – Planning for the County Fair is underway.

AGENCY / PARTNER REPORTS

County – Nothing to report.

NRCS – A copy of the NRCS report was given to the Board. The Local Workgroup will be held one hour prior to the regular May meeting.

BWSR – Nothing to report.

MCD/Area IV – The next MCD meeting will be August 31st. The next Area IV meeting will be June 13th, and will include the boat tour on the St. Croix

Watersheds – Nothing to report.

MASWCD – Nothing to report.

EMPLOYEE REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. **WCD and EMWREP Outreach** – *See Attached and Newspaper Article Binder.*
- b. **Presentation** – None this month

OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Office and Vehicles** – We have purchased a used F150 for the BMP Maintenance Department. Jay asked if Board members would like email addressed under the WCD account. They agreed, so those accounts will be set up.
- b. **Equity Initiatives** – Nothing to report.
- c. **Program Updates** – A copy of the LSC Workplan update was included in the packet.
- d. **Tree Sale Update** – Tree handout is scheduled for April 28th and 29th at the Washington County Fairgrounds.
- e. **2023 Budget and Workplan** – Nothing to report.
- f. **County Budget Request** – A copy of the revised memo was presented to the Board. Tim Behrends made a motion to endorse the memo. David Nuccio seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- g. **WCD Regular Meeting Time** – The monthly meeting has officially been moved to the second Tuesday at 3:00pm.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Water Monitoring Gas Meter Purchase Request** – Approval was requested to purchase a new gas meter for water monitoring, spending up to \$1,202.19. A motion to approve the purchase of a new gas meter was made by David Nuccio, seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.
- b. **Software Purchase Request – ESRI Renewal** – Approval was requested to renew the maintenance and subscriptions for ESRI ArcGIS, for a total of \$2,382.76. Of this total, \$345.00 will be billed to Brown's Creek Watershed District and \$345.00 will be billed to Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization. A motion to approve renewing the maintenance and subscriptions for ESRI ArcGIS was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.
- c. **FY22 Lawns to Legumes Demo Projects Encumbrance Request** – WCD staff are requesting the encumbrance of \$16,000 for the installation of up to 15 pollinator-friendly practices located throughout the City of Landfall as a central component of the WCD's FY22 Washington

County Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grant (C22-1300). The \$40,000 Lawns to Legumes Phase 2 Demonstration Neighborhood program provides funding to install pollinator-friendly practices at a neighborhood scale to showcase ways of supporting Rusty-patched Bumblebee and other at-risk insects. The proposed projects are located within one of the three Demonstration Neighborhoods selected by WCD staff based on habitat suitability and equity criteria, including proximity to Rusty-patched Bumblebee High Potential Zones (USFWS) and key wildlife habitat corridors identified in the Districts' Landscape Protection & Stewardship Framework (LPSF), and the potential to work in partnership with underserved or underfunded communities in the county. Additional projects will be completed in 2023. A motion was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio, to approve an encumbrance of up to \$16,000 in grant funds for the project outlined and for the District Manager to sign cost share agreements. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

- d. **FY21 BWSR Capacity Encumbrance Request - Moosai** – WCD staff request the encumbrance of up to \$10,000 from the FY2021 BWSR Capacity cost share grant for the installation of a 1,200 ft² bioretention practice at the Moosai residence (661 Quixote Ave N, Lakeland), extending into Lakeland city right-of-way. The project will be located between two existing practices to the north and south, which were installed as a part of the 2015 Quixote Avenue N Drainage Improvements Plan. The basin will be installed in cooperation with the City of Lakeland to retain approximately 1 lb TP and 173 lbs TSS annually. The total estimated cost for this project is \$19,770 in materials and installation cost. The FY2021 BWSR Capacity grant would cover up to \$10,000 of total project costs. The remainder would be requested in match from the landowner and the Middle St. Croix WMO. WCD staff request approval to enter into the contract for FY2021 BWSR Capacity, Contract 21-01 BWSR Capacity. A motion was made by David Nuccio to approve an encumbrance of \$10,000 and enter into the contract for FY2021 BWSR Capacity, Contract 21-01 BWSR Capacity. No second is required. The district technical representative (Brett Stolpestad) has performed a site inspection, reviewed the concept plans, and cost estimate. Applicant will be notified of Board's decision within 15 days. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- e. **FY21 BWSR Capacity Nonstructural Incentives Policy Update** – The WCD was awarded a \$97,695 FY21 Metro WBIF – Mississippi East Watershed grant. The WCD allocated \$24,847.50 from this grant to fund installation of rural/agricultural best management practices, which may include both nonstructural practice incentives and structural practice cost-share. Because there is potential to fund nonstructural practice incentives, the WCD Board approved an associated nonstructural incentives policy in April 2021. WCD staff have updated the associated nonstructural incentives policy (April 2021) to match the rates of more recent grants (such as the Lower St Croix Watershed Clean Water Fund Soil Health grant). Consistency between WCD-offered grants will allow WCD staff to present the same payment rates to landowners/producers throughout Washington County, instead of navigating different grant payment rates for the same practices. WCD staff recommend Board approval of the updated policy. If the policy needs to be modified in the future to account for additional nonstructural practices under the FY21 Metro WBIF – Mississippi East Watershed grant, it will again be brought before the Board for approval. A motion was made by Bob Rosenquist to approve the updated FY21 Metro WBIF – Mississippi East Watershed Nonstructural Incentives Policy (April 2023). The motion was seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.
- f. **2023 EMWREP Materials Budget Request** – Approval was requested to spend up to \$13,000 from the EMWREP materials budget for items outlined in a memo prepared for the Board. A motion to approve spending the funds from the EMWREP materials budget for 2023 workshops, advertising, and other education activities was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio. Motion carried.

- g. **2023 LSCP Education Materials Budget Request** – Approval was requested to spend up to \$15,110 from the LSC A6 shared educator program budget for items outlined in a memo prepared for the Board. A motion to approve spending the funds from the LSC A6 materials budget for 2023 field days and workshops, advertising, and other education activities was made by David Nuccio, seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.
- h. **Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood Projects** – WCD staff are requesting the encumbrance of up to \$1,000 for the installation of one 750ft² native pollinator garden project located at 1590 Riviera Avenue S in Lake St. Croix Beach as a component of the WCD’s FY22 Washington County Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grant (C22-1300). The \$40,000 Lawns to Legumes Phase 2 Demonstration Neighborhood program provides funding to install pollinator-friendly practices at a neighborhood scale to showcase ways of supporting Rusty-patched Bumblebee and other at-risk insects. The proposed project is located within one of the three Demonstration Neighborhoods selected by WCD staff based on habitat suitability and equity criteria, including proximity to Rusty-patched Bumblebee High Potential Zones (USFWS) and key wildlife habitat corridors identified in the Districts’ Landscape Protection & Stewardship Framework (LPSF), and the potential to work in partnership with underserved or underfunded communities in the county. Additional projects will be completed in 2023. The projects to begin installation in 2023 include the Drinkwine Native Pollinator Pocket Planting for a 750 ft² native pollinator garden with a \$1,000 L2L allocation and \$250 MSCWMO matching grant. A motion was made by David Nuccio, to approve an encumbrance of up to \$1,000.00 in grant funds for the project outlined above and for District Manager to sign cost share agreements. No second was required. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- i. **FY23 LSC CWF Soil Health Contract CWF SH W 23-05** – Lower St. Croix Watershed (LSCW) partners applied for and received a \$200,000 BWSR Clean Water Fund (CWF) Soil Health grant. The goal of the grant is to provide technical and financial assistance to agricultural landowners in vulnerable groundwater areas to increase long-term implementation of soil health practices where there are direct benefits to public water supplies. The WCD was allocated \$65,100 to cost share soil health agricultural BMPs in priority areas:
- Tier 1: Vulnerable Groundwaters - DWSMA vulnerability is moderate, high, or very high; or Pollution sensitivity to wells is high or very high; or Pollution sensitivity to near surface materials is karst or high; or Well testing show ≥ 5 mg/L nitrate.
 - Tier 2: Lower St. Croix Watershed Basin - The high incidents of vulnerable groundwater in conjunction with the geography and groundwater flow indicate the necessity to implement practices on a basin-wide scale. WCD staff requests encumbrance of \$1,500 from the LSC CWF Soil Health grant to convert 10 acres of agricultural land to pasture/hay at the Rydeen property (14447 Norell Avenue North, Marine on St. Croix). The agricultural land is in a vulnerable groundwater area (high pollution sensitivity), making it a Tier 1 project. Following the WCD’s locally adopted policy for this grant, the contract would be \$150/acre with a 10-year practice lifespan. The project would reduce nitrate by 900 lbs (90 lbs/year). WCD staff requests approval to enter into the contract for FY2023 LSC CWF Soil Health, Contract # CWF SH W 23-05.

A motion was made by Tim Behrends to approve an encumbrance of \$1,500 and enter into the contract for FY2023 LSC CWF Soil Health, Contract # CWF SH W 23-05. The district technical representative (Angela Defenbaugh) has performed a site inspection, concept plans, and cost estimate. Applicant will be notified of Board’s decision within 15 days. All members voting yes. Motion carried

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

None.

Bob Rosenquist moved to adjourn the public meeting. David Nuccio seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m. The next scheduled meeting is May 9, 2023 at 3:00p.m.

Secretary

Approved Date