

# WASHINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## DECEMBER 8, 2022 BOARD MINUTES

**APPROVED**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The regular Board Meeting was called to order at 9:31a.m. by Vice Chair, Jim Levitt.

Members Present: John Rheinberger, Chair  
Jim Levitt, Vice Chair  
Tim Behrends, Public Relations and Information  
Diane Blake, Communications and Outreach

Staff Present: Jay Riggs  
Shari Larkin  
Abbey Kuntz

Other Agencies: None

### **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

An addition of a Washington County Administration Agreement in the amount of \$3,500 was added to the Consent Agenda. A motion to approve the revised Consent Agenda was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

### **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Items to approve this month are the 2023 CLFLWD BMP Technical Services Agreement in the amount of \$20,000; the 2023 CMSCWD Admin, Monitoring, and BMP Services Agreement in the amount of \$247,538; the 2023 RWMWD Monitoring and BMP Technical Services Agreement in the amount of \$36,000; the 2023 SWWD Monitoring and BMP Technical Services Agreement in the amount of \$223,009; the 2023 Washington County WCA Agreement in the amount of \$59,551; the 2023 Washington County Core Services Agreement in the amount of \$280,000; the 2023 Washington County Public Works Technical Services Agreement in the amount of \$32,400; the FY21 BWSR-Chisago SWCD Agreement Amendment – Street Sweeping Analysis in the amount of \$15,000; and a Washington County Administration Agreement in the amount of \$3,500. A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 9, 2022 BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

A motion to approve the November 9, 2022 minutes was made by Diane Blake and seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Items to note are University of Minnesota in the amount of \$8,230.36 for the Agronomist position; City of Scandia, MN in the amount of \$539.76 for a Master Water Stewards grant expense; John Heinbuch in the amount of \$6,750.00 for a BWSR 20-07 grant expense; Steve Herman in the amount of \$10,000.00 for a BWSR 20-06 grant expense; Terry Herman in the amount of \$10,000.00 for a BWSR 20-05 grant expense; Metropolitan Council in the amount of \$14,708.25 for water monitoring

expenses; Peterson Company, Ltd. in the amount of \$4,378.00 for the 2021 audit; and University of Minnesota Foundation in the amount of \$1,766.27 for a Master Water Stewards grant expense. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit, was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

### **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Personnel** – Some updates were made to the Employee Handbook to reflect the additional holiday of Juneteenth, the new payscale process and to include more gender neutral language. A motion to approve the revised Employee Handbook was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

**Budget and Finance** – The 2023 Budget is included under New Business.

**Cost-Share** – Several items under New Business.

**Communications and Outreach** – Nothing to report.

### **AGENCY / PARTNER REPORTS**

**County** – We are continuing to work on Agreements with the County.

**NRCS** – Nothing to report.

**BWSR** – Nothing to report.

**MCD/Area IV** – MCD will meet three times per year.

**Watersheds** – Nothing to report.

**MASWCD** – The annual convention will be held next week.

**\*Control of the meeting was passed to Chair, John Rheinberger.**

### **EMPLOYEE REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- a. **WCD and EMWREP Outreach** – *See Attached and Newspaper Article Binder.*
- b. **Presentation – Landscape Protection & Stewardship Framework** – A motion was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Jim Levitt, to move the presentation to the end of the meeting to see if there is ample time before the holiday open house. Motion carried.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. **Office and Vehicles** – We will need to look at getting another truck next year for the BMP Program. The new thermostats for the building are being installed tomorrow.
- b. **Equity Initiatives Update** – The update to the Employee Handbook included more gender neutral language, and addressed some of the conversations we have been having about mentorship. We have identified priorities for equity and outreach.
- c. **Program Updates** – Nothing to report.
- d. **2023 Budget and Workplan** – Jay presented an updated 2023 budget to the Board, in addition to the workplan. A motion to approve the 2023 budget and workplan was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. **Water Monitoring Tech Position** – Abbey Kuntz was introduced to the Board. She will be starting in this position on 1/1/23.
- b. **2023 Seasonal Tech Position Announcements** – Approval is requested to post and hire up to 18 positions for seasonal support. A motion to approve posting and hiring up to 8 individuals was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.
- c. **Landscape Protection & Stewardship Framework Final Draft** – The draft was included in the packet, which is the topic of the presentation this month. After the presentation, a motion was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Tim Behrends, to approve the Landscape Protection and

Stewardship Framework draft. Motion carried. Kudos were given to Tara Kelly, Brett Stolpestad and Aaron DeRusha for their work on the document.

- d. **Day at the Capitol Preparations** – Day at the Capitol was discussed, as far as meetings and a handout. A motion was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Diane Blake, for staff to prepare educational materials for Day at the Capitol, to be approved by the Board prior to the event. It was also decided to hold an introduction meeting with legislators at the office on December 20<sup>th</sup> from 11:00-1:00.
- e. **FY2021 BWSR LSCP Nonstructural Program – G. Swanson – Final Payment Request** - At the September 14, 2022 WCD Board Meeting, the WCD Board delegated authority to approve/deny/sign contracts with land occupiers to the WCD Administrator for WCD Board-approved non-structural agricultural BMPs under the FY2021 BWSR LSC WBIF grant. The WCD Administrator approved and signed a \$10,000 contract with Gary Swanson for 3 years of cover crops on 66.7 acres of agricultural land in Afton. Following the WCD’s approved Nonstructural Land Management Practices Implementation Plan, the WCD will make a one-time payment after successful completion of the first year of the installation of the non-structural practice, with yearly inspections for the rest of the contract length to ensure compliance with the individual’s Implementation Plan. Gary Swanson has successfully installed the first year of cover crops according to his Implementation Plan. WCD staff have determined the project meets the design intent and approve of the request for final payment. WCD staff are requesting final payment of \$10,000 from the FY2021 BWSR LSC WBIF grant to Gary Swanson (G&L Swanson Farms Inc, 5468 Neal Avenue S, Afton, MN 55001). Motion by Tim Behrends, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve a Final Payment of \$10,000 for contract 21-02 BWSR LSC WBIF to Gary Swanson for the G. Swanson Cover Crop project. The district technical representative (Angela Defenbaugh) has performed a final inspection. Applicant will be notified of the Board’s decision within 15 days. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- f. **FY2021 BWSR LSCP Nonstructural Program – J. Keene – Final Payment Request** - At the September 14, 2022 WCD Board Meeting, the WCD Board delegated authority to approve/deny/sign contracts with land occupiers to the WCD Administrator for WCD Board-approved non-structural agricultural BMPs under the FY2021 BWSR LSC WBIF grant. The WCD Administrator approved and signed a \$10,000 contract with Jeff Keene for 3 years of cover crops on 66.7 acres of agricultural land in Denmark Township. Following the WCD’s approved Nonstructural Land Management Practices Implementation Plan, the WCD will make a one-time payment after successful completion of the first year of the installation of the non-structural practice, with yearly inspections for the rest of the contract length to ensure compliance with the individual’s Implementation Plan. Jeff Keene has successfully installed the first year of cover crops according to his Implementation Plan. WCD staff have determined the project meets the design intent and approve of the request for final payment. WCD staff are requesting final payment of \$10,000 from the FY2021 BWSR LSC WBIF grant to Jeff Keene (Keene Farms LLC, 7920 Quadrant Ave S, Hastings, MN 55033). Motion by Tim Behrends, seconded by Diane Blake, to approve a Final Payment of \$10,000 for contract 21-01 BWSR LSC WBIF to Jeff Keene for the Keene Cover Crop project. The district technical representative (Angela Defenbaugh) has performed a final inspection. Applicant will be notified of the Board’s decision within 15 days. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- g. **FY2021 BWSR LSCP Nonstructural Program – T. Swanson – Final Payment Request** - At the September 14, 2022 WCD Board Meeting, the WCD Board delegated authority to approve/deny/sign contracts with land occupiers to the WCD Administrator for WCD Board-approved non-structural agricultural BMPs under the FY2021 BWSR LSC WBIF grant. The WCD Administrator approved and signed a \$10,000 contract with Travis Swanson for 3 years of cover crops on 66.7 acres of agricultural land in Afton. Following the WCD’s approved

Nonstructural Land Management Practices Implementation Plan, the WCD will make a one-time payment after successful completion of the first year of the installation of the non-structural practice, with yearly inspections for the rest of the contract length to ensure compliance with the individual's Implementation Plan. Travis Swanson has successfully installed the first year of cover crops according to his Implementation Plan. WCD staff have determined the project meets the design intent and approve of the request for final payment. WCD staff are requesting final payment of \$10,000 from the FY2021 BWSR LSC WBIF grant to Travis Swanson (5491 Neal Avenue S, Afton, MN 55001). Motion by Tim Behrends, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve a Final Payment of \$10,000 for contract 21-03 BWSR LSC WBIF to Travis Swanson for the T. Swanson Cover Crop project. The district technical representative (Angela Defenbaugh) has performed a final inspection. Applicant will be notified of the Board's decision within 15 days. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

- h. **FY2020 BWSR Drinking Water Grant – J. Neenan – Final Payment Request - WCD** encumbered \$4,117.50 from the FY2020 BWSR CWF Drinking Water grant to convert 2.25 acres of agricultural land to prairie at the residence of John Neenan in Denmark Township. The prairie was installed on November 3, 2022. WCD staff have determined the project meets the design intent and approve of the request for final payment. WCD staff are requesting final payment of \$4,117.50 from the FY2020 BWSR CWF Drinking Water grant to John Neenan (11626 Neal Avenue, Hastings, MN). Motion by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake, to approve a Final Payment of \$4,117.50 for contract 20-04 BWSR to John Neenan for the Neenan Ag to Prairie project. The district technical representative (Tara Kelly) has performed a final inspection. Applicant will be notified of the Board's decision within 15 days. Tim Behrends abstained from the vote. Motion carried.
- i. **FY23 CWF Minnesota Conservation Corps Grant Application - WCD** staff have been successful in implementing and supporting CWF grants for project partners in the last 5 years. Through this implementation a number of smaller practices have been identified that do not fit inside the traditional CWF funding framework. Examples include bluff and habitat restoration along the St. Croix, FY22 Lawns to Legumes project installation support, small residential shoreline restoration on Lily and McKusick Lakes, public shoreline enhancement for Tanner's Lake, and Perro Creek buffer enhancement in Bayport. WCD staff are seeking board approval to submit an application for up to 25 days of Minnesota Conservation Corps crew time for the implementation of practices referenced below. If awarded, this grant would require match from indicated partners in the form of already budgeted technical assistance. The communities of Lake St. Croix Beach, Bayport, and Landfall have already expressed interest in potential partnership if awarded. Motion by Diane Blake, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve using WCD staff resources to apply for FY2023 CWF Minnesota Conservation Corps crew time as outlined above. Up to 25% Match provided from existing county and watershed Technical Services agreements. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

#### **AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

None.

Jim Levitt moved to adjourn the public meeting. Tim Behrends seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m. The next scheduled meeting is January 11, 2023 at **9:00a.m.**

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Secretary

Approved Date