

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

FEBRUARY 9, 2022 BOARD MINUTES

APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER

The regular Board Meeting was called to order at 9:00a.m. by Chair, John Rheinberger. John Rheinberger received a letter of commendation from BWSR for Angie Hong's example of local innovation and bringing groups together. He would like that reflected in the minutes.

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

Staff Present: Jay Riggs
Shari Larkin
Aaron DeRusha
Rebecca Nestingen

Other Agencies: Steve Schmaltz, CLFLWD Board President

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Item M was added under New Business for an FY22 CPL Subcontract. A revised Consent Agenda was presented. A revised Consent Agenda was also presented. A motion to approve the revised agenda and consent agenda was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Items to approve this month are the 2022-24 EMWREP Partner Agreements for Isanti County (\$1,337.12), and the City of Woodbury (\$2,865.26); the 2022 VBWD AIS Watercraft Inspections Agreement in the amount of \$7,000; the 2022 Clear Lake Association AIS Agreement in the amount of \$8,500; and the 2022 Lake Demontreville and Olson Lake Association AIS Agreement in the amount of \$2,000. A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 12, 2022 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the January 12, 2022 minutes was made by Diane Blake and seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Item to note is \$27,157.00 payable to Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust for 2022 insurance. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit, was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel – The Personnel Committee met to review the 2022 salary recommendations. The action requested is to approve the recommendations. Bob Rosenquist made a motion to approve the recommendation. No second is required. Motion carried.

Budget and Finance – Nothing to report.

Cost-Share – Nothing to report.

Communications and Outreach – Jay notified the Board that we will be sending communication to some contractors in the spring regarding the Wetland Conservation Act, since there has been an increase in violations in the past couple years.

AGENCY / PARTNER REPORTS

County – Nothing to report.

NRCS – The application deadline for CSP-FY2022-1 is February 4th. The Assessment and Ranking Deadline for FY2022 EQIP, RCPP-EQIP and RCPP LM is March 4th. They will be reaching out to producers who are funded to finalize contracts shortly after. The Renewal Application Deadline for CSP-FY2023 is March 25th. CRP General Signup 58 runs January 31, 2022 – March 11, 2022. To ensure that CRP contracts for accepted general CRP signup 58 offers are approved by September 30, 2022, all participants must request a conservation plan from NRCS by close of business on April 15, 2022. A conservation plan for a general CRP signup 58 offers must be completed, signed by NRCS/Technical Service Provider (TSP) and all signatories on CRP-1, and returned to FSA by July 16, 2022. Contract status reviews to be completed after EQIP planning is complete. Annual practice reminders to be sent out within a week.

BWSR – Items were included in the packet.

MCD/Area IV – The next MCD meeting will be February 23rd. The next Area IV meeting will be March 25th.

Watersheds – CLFLWD completed their 10 year plan last fall. Within the next three or four years, they expect to have most of their lakes reach their target water quality goals.

MASWCD – Items were included in the packet.

EMPLOYEE REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. **WCD and EMWREP Outreach** – *See Attached and Newspaper Article Binder.*
- b. **Presentation** – *New WCD Database and Online Mapping*

OLD BUSINESS

- a. **COVID-19 Updates** – Nothing to report.
- b. **Building and Vehicles** – One item will be discussed under New Business.
- c. **Equity Follow-Up** – The equity subcommittee had a meeting and talked about trainings for the staff and board. There is an online training offered through Cornell University on equity and power dynamics. Approval is requested to allow two people (one board member and one staff member) to take the training, at a cost of \$800 each. Bob Rosenquist made a motion to approve the training request. Jim Levitt seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- d. **LSCP Embedded Extension Agent** – Jennifer Hahn will be starting in this position on February 28th.
- e. **1W1P, NRSF, Grant, and Program Updates** – Nothing to report.
- f. **2022 Budget and Workplan** – A copy of the workplan was included in the packet.
- g. **Salary Analysis** – The process is ongoing.
- h. **Tree Sale Update** – An update of what species are sold out was included in the packet.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **DATC Planning** – The MASWCD Legislative Report was included in the packet. DATC will be held March 9th.
- b. **2021 Audit Engagement Proposal** – Approval is requested to enter into an Agreement with Peterson Company for the 2021 audit. The fee is \$4,250. A motion to approve entering into the Agreement was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Jim Levitt. Motion carried.

- c. **Centraire Heating and Cooling Thermostat Proposal** – A proposal was included in the packet to change to a no zone HVAC system, with 3 new thermostats. The estimated cost is \$4,610. A motion to approve the proposed work, at a cost of up to \$6,000, was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.
- d. **Server Upgrade Purchase Request** – Our current server was purchased in February 2014 and is running Windows Server 2012 R2. It has exceeded the longevity that was estimated at 5-7 years. A motion to approve the purchase of new server hardware and software, at a cost of up to \$22,000, was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.
- e. **Floor Stripping and Waxing Proposal** – A proposal was included in the packet to strip and wax the floors in the kitchen, training room and back hallway. The cost would be \$1,500. It was decided to hold off on that expense for now.
- f. **EMWREP Materials Purchase Request** – the annual EMWREP materials purchase request was included in the packet. The total for the request is \$13,000, which comes from the EMWREP materials budget. A motion to approve the purchases was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.
- g. **Newsletter Graphic Design Support Agreement** – A request was made to enter into an Agreement with C Lanphear Design for editing of the newsletters for 2022, at a rate of \$75/hour. A motion to approve entering into the Agreement was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.
- h. **FY22 BWSR CWF Grant Agreement – Perro Creek** – The WCD Staff and partners have been awarded a FY22 Clean Water Fund Competitive Grant award in the requested amount of \$80,000. The WCD applied for these funds on behalf of the City of Bayport and Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization. The grant will cover \$60,000 of implementation costs. The MSCWMO has agreed to cover \$5,000 of design and engineering costs, and the City of Bayport has agreed to contribute \$15,000 for installation. These contributions will also be used as the 25% match to the grant. WCD staff requests approval to have the District Manager sign the grant agreement with the Board of Water & Soil Resources. WCD has submitted the initial draft of the grant work plan to BWSR. A motion was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Diane Blake, to approve signing a grant agreement with the Board of Water & Soil resources. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- i. **FY22 CMSCWD Lawns to Legumes Grant Award** – CMSCWD has received a Lawns to Legumes Grant in the amount of \$40,000. Approval is requested to partner with CMSCWD to implement the grant. A motion to approve partnering with CMSCWD on this Lawns to Legumes Grant was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Jim Levitt. Motion carried.
- j. **FY22 CWMA Grant Application** – The WCD Staff and partners are planning to apply for funding for the Washington County Cooperative Weed Management Area with funding from the Board of Water and Soil Resources. The BWSR Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Program was developed in 2008 to promote the collaborative and efficient control of invasive species and protection of conservation lands and natural areas across geographic boundaries. The grant application would focus on the management of “Emerging and Eradication Species in Washington County” including Grecian Foxglove, Oriental Bittersweet, Small-leaf Bramble, Black Swallow Wort, and Poison Hemlock. The total grant request is \$15,000, with a \$3,750 match. A motion was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake, to approve using WCD staff resources to apply for FY2022 BWSR Cooperative Weed Management Area Grant as outlined. Up to 25% Match provided from County Technical Services Agreement. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- k. **FY22 BWSR Habitat Enhancement Landscape Pilot Application** – The WCD Staff and partners are planning to apply for funding for the Habitat Enhancement Landscape Pilot from the Board of Water and Soil Resources. The program is focused on restoring and enhancing strategically located, diverse native habitat across Minnesota to benefit populations of

pollinators and beneficial insects as well as overall plant and animal diversity. Project criteria for the Habitat Enhancement Landscape Project:

- 0.25-5 acres is size for new plantings or enhancing prairie, savanna, wetland and shoreline communities that benefits “at risk” species
- Lands with a long-term commitment to conservation such as public lands, conservation easements and nature preserves
- 25% non state match, completed by December 31, 2024

WCD is working with partners to identify projects that would meet the criteria and benefit from this grant funding. Many of the projects were developed as part of a Monarch Initiative Grant application in 2017. A list of the projects was included in the memo in the packet. The total grant request amount is \$40,000 with the \$10,000 match. A motion was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve using WCD staff resources to apply for FY2022 BWSR HELP Grant as outlined. Up to 25% match for WCD time provided from County Technical Services agreement. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

- i. MacDonald Management Plan** – A memo was included in the packet, outlining a Management Plan we are working on with the County and the landowner. The Management Plan would be completed in partnership with the CMSCWD. Approval was requested to enter into the Agreement. A motion to approve entering into the Agreement was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Jim Levitt. Motion carried.
- m. FY22 CPL Subcontract** – The City of Afton and Washington Conservation District (WCD) applied for Conservation Partners Legacy Grants (CPL). The CPL Grant Program funds conservation projects that restore, enhance, or protect forests, wetlands, prairies, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife in Minnesota. Funding for the CPL grant program is from the Outdoor Heritage Fund, created by the people of Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources manages the Expedited Grant Program which is a reimbursable program to provide competitive matching grants from \$5,000 to \$50,000 to local, regional state and national nonprofit organizations, including government entities. WCD applied for these funds on behalf of the City of Afton. The grant will cover \$50,000 of implementation costs. The City of Afton has agreed to cover \$5,000 of administrative and project management costs in an agreement with WCD. This will also be used as the 10% match to the grant. A contractor will be hired to implement the restoration steps. The City of Afton received four quotes for the project and have reviewed and selected a contractor. WCD staff requests approval to have the District Manager sign a contract for up to \$50,000 with a contractor to implement the restoration. A motion was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve signing a contract with a restoration contractor by the District Manager. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Due to Day at the Capitol being held on March 9th, the March Board meeting has been moved to March 16th. Jim Levitt made a motion to approve moving the meeting to March 16th. Diane Blake seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Jim Levitt moved to adjourn the public meeting. Bob Rosenquist seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m. The next scheduled meeting is March 16, 2022 at 9:00a.m.

Secretary

Approved Date