

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MAY 11, 2022 BOARD MINUTES

APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER

The regular Board Meeting was called to order at 9:00a.m. by Chair, John Rheinberger.

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

Other Agencies: Jason Weinerman, BWSR
Michelle Jordan, BWSR
Steve Schmaltz, CLFLWD Board President

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

An additional item was added to the Consent Agenda for a NACD Grant Agreement. A new item was added under New Business for the Juneteenth Holiday. A motion to approve the revised agenda was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Items to approve this month are the 2022 BCWD Agreement Amendment in the amount of \$2,268; the 2022 Woodbury Carver Lake E Coli Monitoring Agreement in the amount of \$1,365; the 2022-2023 St. Mary's Point Beach Restoration Agreement in the amount of \$9,000; and the NACD Grant Agreement in the amount of \$10,000. A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 13, 2022 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

One correction was noted. A motion to approve the amended April 13, 2022 minutes was made by Jim Levitt and seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Items to note are Metro Blooms in the amount of \$500.00 for annual dues; Tech Sales Company in the amount of \$1,706.00 for a BCWD water monitoring expense; Washington County in the amount of \$1,914.86 for the special assessment for road repairs; Critical Connections Ecological Services in the amount of \$600.00 for a sedge workshop registration; Urban Ecosystems in the amount of \$5,254.00 for the subcontractor services of Bryan Pynn; Washington County Ag Society in the amount of \$518.00 for our fair booth rental; and HP Payment Processing Center in the amount of \$1,199.00 for printing of our newsletter. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit, was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel – There will be an item later in the Agenda.

Budget and Finance – There will be an item later in the Agenda.

Cost-Share – Nothing to report.

Communications and Outreach – Planning for the fair booth has started.

AGENCY / PARTNER REPORTS

County – Conversations are continuing regarding the 2023 budget.

NRCS – The NRCS update from Matt Lundberg will be emailed to the Board.

BWSR – Nothing to report.

MCD/Area IV – The next MCD meeting will be August 31st. The next Area IV meeting will be June 23rd, which will include a tour.

Watersheds – Nothing to report.

MASWCD – The Request for Resolutions was included in the packet.

EMPLOYEE REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. **WCD and EMWREP Outreach** – *See Attached and Newspaper Article Binder.*
- b. **Presentation** – BWSR Equity Training – *Michelle Jordan and Jason Weinerman*

OLD BUSINESS

- a. **COVID-19 & Telework Policy** – The telework policy will go into effect on July 1st.
- b. **Building and Vehicles** – Nothing to report.
- c. **Equity Follow-Up** – In addition to the presentation today, we are doing an internal staff workshop on gender and power dynamics.
- d. **Program Updates** – We have received a Cooperative Weed Management Grant, a couple habitat grants, and a NACD Grant.
- e. **2022 Budget and Workplan** – The new agreements are being incorporated into the 2022 budget and workplan. Also, two staff positions have been filled. Alex Larson has been hired as a Construction Site and Erosion Control Inspector, and Lori Tella has been hired as the Landscape Restoration Specialist.
- f. **Redistricting and '22 Election** – The County Board chose option A1 for redistricting, which means two of our Supervisors are in the same area. Areas 2, 4 and 5 will need to run.
- g. **Legislative Update** – Nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Salary Analysis, Revised Payscale, and Employee Handbook Changes** – The Personnel and Budget Committees have met to discuss the Salary Analysis that was presented last month. The Personnel Committee recommended adopting the recommendations from the salary analysis, the revised payscale and the employee handbook changes regarding classifications. The immediate salary adjustments were forwarded to the Budget Committee, who supported the recommendations. A motion was made by Tim Behrends to approve adopting the payscale, adopt the JET scoring system, adjusting the two salaries that were below the minimum for their classification, and adopting the handbook changes. The motion was seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.
- b. **Lower St. Croix Partnership Annual Plan of Work** – Approval was requested for the Lower St. Croix Partnership Annual Plan of Work. A motion to approve the Plan of Work was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Tim Blake. Motion carried.
- c. **Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) Grant Application** – The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources has an open Request for Proposal for

the 2023 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) Grants program. The program will provide funding for farmers, via local government units, who own or rent land to enhance the adoption of cover crops and other soil health practices to protect, conserve, and enhance Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. Funding will be requested to enable the development of equipment to further the implementation of soil health practices. Activities also include developing test plots to obtain data used for program development, outreach, and education. Priority for this program will be given to new adoption and understanding of soil health practices through the following efforts:

- Prevention strategies for protecting natural resources;
- Citizen and community involvement in scientific efforts;
- Implement or identify clear strategies for implementing research results;
- Research to help understand how to mitigate, adapt, or make Minnesota's ecosystems more resilient to climate change impacts, including drought and extreme weather events;
- Implementation of innovative efforts aimed at mitigating, adapting, or making Minnesota's ecosystems more resilient to climate change impacts, including drought and extreme weather events; and
- Technical assistance for agricultural land management in order to protect water quality and aquatic habitat

Application submitted will not exceed \$200,000. No match is required. The application deadline is Thursday, May 26th 2022. WCD staff are discussing Soil Health Grant application opportunities with Lower St. Croix partners, and would either apply directly or partner to apply. A motion was made by Jim Levitt to approve to directly apply or partner to apply for a 2023 ENRTF Grant. Tim Behrends seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- d. **FY22 BWSR HELP Grant Signatures** – WCD Staff and partners applied for funding for the Habitat Enhancement Landscape from the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). 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. WCD was awarded \$40,000 of funding to enhance prairie restorations at four project sites across Washington County. The next steps are to sign the grant agreement with the BWSR and develop and sign a workplan. WCD staff requests board approval for the District Manager to sign both of these documents. A motion was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake, to approve signing a grant contract and work plan by District Manager for the FY2022 BWSR HELP Grant as outlined. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- e. **FY22 BWSR CWMA Grant Signatures** – The WCD Staff and partners applied for funding for the Washington County Cooperative Weed Management Area with funding from the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). 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 focuses on the management of “Emerging and Eradication Species in Washington County”. WCD was awarded \$15,000 of funding over the next two years. The next steps are to sign the grant agreement with the BWSR and develop and sign a workplan. WCD staff requests board approval for the District Manager to sign both of these documents. A motion was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake, to approve signing a grant contract and work plan by District Manager for the FY2022 BWSR Cooperative Weed Management Area Grant as outlined. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- f. **CPL Grant Partial Payment Request – City of Afton** – 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. Stantec was hired to implement the restoration steps. They have completed the tree editing in the prairie area and part of the tree editing in the red pine grove. WCD staff requests approval to process a partial payment to Stantec Consulting Services Inc., 13908 Collections Center Drive, Chicago, IL 60693 in the amount of \$7,520.50. A motion was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve partial payment of \$7,520.50 to Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

- g. Americorps Climate Corps Agreements and Posting** – We have been approved to have a Climate Impact Corps member at our office, starting this Fall. A motion to approve entering into the agreement was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Jim Levitt. Motion carried.
- h. Juneteenth Holiday** – Approval was requested to recognize the Juneteenth holiday on June 20th as an official WCD holiday in 2022. A motion to approve Juneteenth as an official holiday for the WCD was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

None.

Tim Behrends moved to adjourn the public meeting. Diane Blake seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m. After discussion, it was decided to move the June meeting to the 15th. Jim Levitt made a motion to approve the date change, which was seconded by Diane Blake. The next scheduled meeting is June 15, 2022 at 9:00a.m.

Secretary

Approved Date