

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

NOVEMBER 9, 2022 BOARD MINUTES

APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER

The regular Board Meeting was called to order at 9:02a.m. by Chair, John Rheinberger.

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

Staff Present: Jay Riggs
Shari Larkin
Tim Foss

Other Agencies: Matt Lundberg, NRCS
David Nuccio, Board Candidate

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

No additions or deletions to the agenda. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Items to approve this month are the 2023 Chisago SWCD Technical Service Agreement in the amount of \$20,000; the 2023 Chisago SWCD Conservation Planning Support Agreement in the amount of \$5,000; the 2023 RCWD Water Monitoring Agreement in the amount of \$9,205; the 2023 RCWD BMP Technical Services Agreement in the amount of \$13,000; the 2023 VBWD BMP Technical Services Agreement in the amount of \$45,500; the 2023 MSCWMO Admin and Technical Services Agreement in the amount of \$121,264; the 2023-2024 City of Cottage Grove Erosion Control Technical Services in the amount of ~\$40,000 per schedule, and the 2023 U of M Erosion Control Program Support in the amount of \$32,000. A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 11, 2022 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the October 11, 2022 minutes was made by Jim Levitt and seconded by Bob Rosenquist. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Items to note are Happy's Stillwater Automotive in the amount of \$601.43 for vehicle repairs; Stantec Consulting Services Inc. in the amount of \$1,905.59 for a FY22 CPL grant expense; University of Minnesota. in the amount of \$17,265.23 for the Agronomist position; Washington County in the amount of \$1,914.85 for the 2nd half tax assessment; NACD Service Center in the amount of \$775.00 for membership dues; Rhithron Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$2,200.00 for volunteer stream

monitoring expenses; and ROC Commercial Cleaning in the amount of \$1,197.24, which is higher than our normal monthly bill due to window cleaning. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit, was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Jim Levitt. Motion carried.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel – One item under New Business.

Budget and Finance – One item under New Business.

Cost-Share – Nothing to report.

Communications and Outreach – The Fall newsletter has been mailed.

AGENCY / PARTNER REPORTS

County – The annual budget meeting was held last week. There is a \$20,000 increase from 2022.

NRCS – EQIP applications are being prioritized. BWSR has introduced a new program called Habitat Enhancement Landscape Pilot (HELP). The goal is to restore and enhance habitat for pollinators. Applicants can apply for grants of \$20,000 to \$40,000.

BWSR – Nothing to report.

MCD/Area IV – The next MCD meeting is November 16th. The next Area IV meeting will be November 18th.

Watersheds – We are working on finalizing agreements for 2023.

MASWCD – The Board was reminded of the upcoming convention.

EMPLOYEE REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

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

OLD BUSINESS

- a. **COVID-19 & Telework Policy** – Nothing to report.
- b. **Office and Vehicles** – Based on our workload for 2023, we will be in need of another truck.
- c. **Equity Initiatives** – Diane Blake and Karen Kill gave a presentation to staff last week on gender dynamics.
- d. **Program Updates** – Under our current Lower St. Croix 1W1P funding, there was \$45,000 allocated for prioritization for non-structural urban practices. The primary practice that is being looked at is street sweeping.
- e. **2023 Budget and Workplan** – Final adjustments are being made to the 2023 budget and workplan.
- f. **Board Tour and Holiday Potluck** – The annual tour is being cancelled for this year. Due to Board schedules, the December Board meeting and Holiday Potluck will be held on Thursday, December 8th. The meeting will start at 9:30, with the potluck from 11:00-1:00. A motion to approve the Board meeting change was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Center for Policy, Planning, and Performance – Equity Planning Services** – Approval is requested to enter into an agreement with Barbara Raye to work on equity related issues. A motion to approve entering into the agreement was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake. Motion carried.
- b. **Adoption of Juneteenth as Holiday** – We adopted Juneteenth as a holiday in 2022. Approval was requested to adopt that date into our annual holiday schedule. Bob Rosenquist made a motion to approve adopting Juneteenth as a permanent holiday. Diane Blake seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- c. **2023 Health Insurance** – The presentation from our insurance broker for 2023 insurance was included in the packet. Jay’s recommendation is to offer the same three plans for 2023. Bob Rosenquist made a motion to offer the same three plans for 2023. Jim Levitt seconded the motion. The HSA match was also discussed. Currently, the employer match is \$1,800 per year for family coverage, and \$1,400 for individual. A motion was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Bob Rosenquist, to continue that employer amount for the Silver HSA plan. After discussion, Tim Behrends made a motion to make the employer match for the Gold HSA \$700 per year for family coverage, and \$500 for individual. Diane Blake seconded the motion. All motions carried.
- d. **2023 COLA** – The COLA for the County will be 2.5% in 2023, due to a two-year contract. Some small cities are doing between 6-7%. Our 2023 budget currently reflects 4%. The Budget Committee recommended 6%. After discussion, Jim Levitt made a motion to stay with the 4% COLA that was budgeted for 2023. Bob Rosenquist seconded the motion. Tim Behrends opposed, as he would like to see it around 5%. Motion carried.
- e. **Water Monitoring Tech Position Announcement** – Approval is requested to post and hire for a Water Monitoring Technician. A motion to approve the post and hiring was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Jim Levitt. Motion carried.
- f. **Summit Fire Protection Sprinkler Upgrades and Signage** – After our annual review, some additional signage is needed for the office, as well as some spare chrome sprinkler heads. The proposal from Summit Fire Protection is \$1,900. Jim Levitt made a motion to approve the purchase of the additional signage and sprinkler heads. Bob Rosenquist seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- g. **FY2020 BWSR Drinking Water Grant – Heinbuch - 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 FY2020 BWSR CWF Drinking Water grant. The WCD Administrator approved and signed a \$6,750 contract with John Heinbuch for 3 years of cover crops on 45 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. John Heinbuch 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 \$6,750 from the FY2020 BWSR CWF Drinking Water grant to John Heinbuch. A motion was made by Diane Blake, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve a Final Payment of \$6,750 for contract 20-07 BWSR to John Heinbuch for the Heinbuch 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. Tim Behrends abstained from the motion. Motion carried
- h. **FY2020 BWSR Drinking Water Grant – S. Herman - 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 FY2020 BWSR CWF Drinking Water grant. The WCD Administrator approved and signed a \$10,000 contract with Steve Herman 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. Steve Herman 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 FY2020 BWSR CWF Drinking Water grant to Steve Herman (8428 St. Croix Trail S, Hastings, MN 55033). A motion was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve a Final Payment of \$10,000 for contract 20-06 BWSR to Steve Herman for the S. Herman 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.

- i. **FY2020 BWSR Drinking Water Grant – T. Herman - 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 FY2020 BWSR CWF Drinking Water grant. The WCD Administrator approved and signed a \$10,000 contract with Terry Herman 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. Terry Herman 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 FY2020 BWSR CWF Drinking Water grant to Terry Herman (8636 St. Croix Trail S, Hastings, MN 55033). A motion was made by Jim Levitt, seconded by Diane Blake, to approve a Final Payment of \$10,000 for contract 20-05 BWSR to Terry Herman for the T. Herman 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.
- j. **FY23 BWSR Habitat Enhancement Landscape Pilot Grant Application** - The WCD Staff and partners are planning to apply for funding for the Habitat Enhancement Landscape Pilot (HELP) 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 in 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 Dec 31, 2024

WCD applied for and received \$40,000 of funding in the initial FY22 HELP RFP. WCD would like to work with additional partners to identify projects that would meet the criteria and also benefit from this grant funding. Possible partners include the City of Lakeland, Washington County Public Works, Belwin Conservancy, and other public lands and nature centers. Staff requests board approval to develop and apply for up to \$40,000 of additional HELP grant funding. A motion was made by Bob Rosenquist, seconded by Jim Levitt, to approve using WCD staff resources to apply for FY2023 BWSR HELP Grant as outlined and use up to 25% match for WCD time provided from County Technical Services agreement. All members voting yes. Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

None.

Tim Behrends moved to adjourn the public meeting. Jim Levitt seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:14 a.m. The next scheduled meeting is December 8, 2022 at **9:30a.m.**

Secretary

Approved Date