

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 BOARD MINUTES

APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER

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

The meeting was suspended briefly to recognize Karen Kill and Erik Anderson on their 20+ years of service.

The regular Board Meeting was resumed at 3:18.

Members Present: John Rheinberger, Chair
 Tim Behrends, Vice Chair
 David Nuccio, Public Relations and Information

Staff Present: Jay Riggs
 Shari Larkin

Other Agencies: Chris Schmidt, NRCS
 Matt Lundberg, NRCS
 Lizzie Dawson, NRCS
 Corey Boyer, 4M Funds
 John Waller, RCWD Board Manager and County resident

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

No additions or deletions. A motion to approve the Agenda was made by David Nuccio, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Waller shared comments regarding a letter sent out for a natural resource inventory of Washington County.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

One item to approve this month for the 2023 Belwin Valley Creek HMP in the amount of \$6,100. A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 8, 2023 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the August 8, 2023 minutes was made by David Nuccio and seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Items to note are Comfort By Design in the amount of \$3,795.00 for a new HVAC unit; Graham McManus in the amount of \$7,000.00 for a grant payment; University of Minnesota in the amount of \$9,280.24 for the Agronomist position; Fedie Carpet Cleaning in the amount of \$540.00 for carpet cleaning; Sparks Affordable Automotive in the amount of \$1,664.47 for vehicle repairs; Dawn Bulera

in the amount of \$750.00 for a grant payment; HP Payment Processing Center in the amount of \$1,339.50 for a BCWD expense; Kris Peterson in the amount of \$1,500.00 for a grant expense; Lynn Gallandat in the amount of \$1,000.00 for a grant expense; Ron Schiltgen in the amount of \$18,000.00 for a grant expense; Landscape Alternatives in the amount of \$1,498.31 for a CMSCWD expense; Metro Conservation Districts in the amount of \$1,600.00 for our dues; Happy's Stillwater Automotive in the amount of \$540.84 for vehicle repairs; Sacred Earth Science in the amount of \$1,690.00 for a stress workshop; Tech Sales Company in the amount of \$5,959.00 for a water monitoring expense; and University of Minnesota in the amount of \$9,643.10 for the Agronomist position. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, subject to audit, was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio. Motion carried.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel – The Climate Corps employees were introduced to the Board.

Budget and Finance – Nothing to report.

Cost-Share – There is one item under New Business.

Communications and Outreach – Nothing to report.

AGENCY / PARTNER REPORTS

County – The budget meeting will be held on November 7th.

NRCS – There were 13 CSP applications funded. CSP payments will be made soon. There are currently five EQIP applications for Washington County.

BWSR – Nothing to report.

MCD/Area IV – The next MCD meeting will be November 15th. The next Area IV meeting will be October 28th.

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** – *4M Funds* – Corey Boyer

OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Office and Vehicles** – The new HVAC unit has been installed.
- b. **Equity Initiatives** – We are having conversations with partners regarding urban forestry programs.
- c. **Program Updates** – Nothing to report.
- d. **2024 County Budget and Workplan** – Jay would like to schedule a Personnel Committee meeting in September.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Land Cover Mapping Update** – This agenda item was discussed during Public Comments.
- b. **Outstanding Conservationist Awards Nominations** – The nominations were presented to the Board. After discussion, a motion was made by Tim Behrends to nominate Jeff Keene for Outstanding Conservationist. David Nuccio seconded the motion. David Nuccio made a motion to nominate John Goodfellow for Community Conservationist. Tim Behrends seconded the motion. Both motions carried.
- c. **Staff Training Request** – Approval was requested for up to seven staff members attending the Water Resources Conference, at a cost up to \$2,625 and up to eight staff members to attend BWSR Academy costing up to \$2,000. A motion to approve the training requests was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio. Motion carried.

- d. **First Aid, CPR, and AED Staff and Partner Training Request** – Approval was requested for CPR/AED training for a cost of \$1,009.50. A motion to approve the training request was made by David Nuccio, seconded by Tim Behrends. Motion carried.
- e. **Grant Application Request - ReLeaf** – Staff would like to potentially apply for the ReLeaf Community Forestry Grant in partnership with other local units of government. The goal of the ReLeaf grant is to encourage and promote the inventory, planting, assessment, maintenance, improvement, protection, and restoration of trees and forest resources to enhance community forest ecosystem health and sustainability as well as to reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and promote energy conservation. WCD staff have reached out to potential partners to gauge the need for tree inventory work, the development of community forestry management plans, and tree removal and replanting projects. If WCD moves forward with the application, WCD would provide grant administration and project management for this work. There is no matching requirement. Staff requests board approval to develop and apply for the FY23 ReLeaf Community Forestry Grant. A motion was made by David Nuccio, seconded by Tim Behrends, to approve using WCD staff resources to apply for FY2023 ReLeaf Community Forestry grant. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- f. **Grant Application Request - MDA** – The WCD Staff and partners are planning to apply for funding for a Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Grant through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture grant program. The total grant request is \$15,000. A motion was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio, to approve using WCD staff resources to apply for FY2024 MDA, Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Grant as outlined. Up to 25% staff time included in the grant. All members voting yes. Motion carried.
- g. **FY23 BWSR Capacity Encumbrance Request - Gerding** – WCD staff request the encumbrance of up to \$6,000 from the FY2023 BWSR Capacity cost share grant for the installation of 3 raingardens, totaling 1,500 ft². The project also includes an additional 7,000 SF of native landscaping to provide habitat and replace lawn. This bioretention practice at the Gerding residence (2482 Granada Ave N, Oakdale), will catch runoff from the home and the surrounding hillside. Collectively, the basins will retain approximately 99% of the contributing pollutant load including a reduction of 0.2 lb TP and 26.8 lbs TSS annually. The total estimated cost for this project is \$38,346.80 in materials and installation. The RWMWD is providing \$15,000 in match to the landowner. The remaining landowner portion is \$17,346.80. WCD staff request approval to enter into the contract for FY2023 BWSR Capacity, Contract 23-03 BWSR Capacity. A motion was made by Tim Behrends to approve an encumbrance of up to \$6,000 and enter into the contract for FY2023 BWSR Capacity, Contract #23-03 BWSR Capacity. No second to the motion is required. The district technical representative (Lori Tella) 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
- h. **FY22 Lawns to Legumes Final Payment Request - Paulson** – On July 11th the WCD board granted WCD staff-level approval for small-scale pollinator projects funded under the FY22 Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grant (BWSR Grant C22-1300). WCD staff encumbered \$1,250 from the FY22 Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grant to install a 600 square foot pollinator pocket planting at the residence of Jeannie and Jeff Paulson at 16681 16th St S, Lake St. Croix Beach, MN. The project was completed in July, 2023. 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 \$1,250 from the FY2022 Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grant to Jeannie and Jeff Paulson (16681 16th St S, Lake St. Croix Beach, MN 55043). A motion was made by David Nuccio, seconded by Tim Behrends, to approve a Final Payment of \$1,250 for contract FY22- 16 to Jeannie and Jeff Paulson for the Paulson L2L Pollinator Pocket Planting project. The district technical

representative (Brett Stolpestad) has performed a final inspection. Applicant will be notified of Board's decision within 15 days. All members voting yes. Motion carried

- i. **FY22 Lawns to Legumes Final Payment Request - Schmidt** – In February, the WCD encumbered \$979.99 from the FY2022 Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grant to install a 750 square foot pollinator pocket planting at the residence of Ellie Schmidt in Lake St. Croix Beach, MN. The project was completed in August, 2023. 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 \$809.96 from the FY2022 Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood grant to Ellie Schmidt (2022 Queens Ave S, Lakeland, MN 55043). A motion was made by Tim Behrends, seconded by David Nuccio, to approve a Final Payment of \$809.96 for contract FY22-12 Ellie Schmidt for the Schmidt L2L Pollinator Pocket Planting project; And unencumber remaining funds of \$188.03. The district technical representative (Elissa Thompson) has performed a final inspection. Applicant will be notified of Board's decision within 15 days. All members voting yes. Motion carried
- j. **New MN Sick Leave Law** – Jay updated the Board on Sick and Safety Leave, which goes into effect in 2024.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

None.

David Nuccio moved to adjourn the public meeting. Tim Behrends seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m. The next scheduled meeting is October 10, 2023 at 3:00p.m.

Secretary

Approved Date