

Benton SWCD
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
USDA Service Center, Foley, MN
December 21st, 2011

Attendance: Supervisors -Phil Grosland, Joe Jordan, Bernie Thole and Wade Bastian. Others: Gerry Maciej (Benton SWCD Manager), Pat Gehling (NRCS District Conservationist) Dave Copeland (NRCS Assistant State Conservationist (FO)). Bill Bronder (Sherburne SWCD Interim Manager) attended for items 1-6.

I. Call meeting to order

The meeting was called to order by Jordan at 8:31 A.M.

II. Pledge of Allegiance - Recited

III. Approve Agenda

Maciej requested the removal of item VII., B. and add Item VIII., G. Year end close out and audit for 2011. Motion by Bastian, second by Grosland to approve the agenda with the changes. All were in favor. The motion passed.

IV. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Motion by Grosland, second by Thole to approve the minutes from the November 16th 2011 regular board meeting as presented. All were in favor. The motion passed.

V. Treasurers' Report

Maciej presented the Account Quick Report and November Program Summary Report. Motion by Grosland, second by Thole to approve the reports. All were in favor. The motion passed. Maciej presented the Accounts Payable report. Motion by Grosland, second by Thole to approve the accounts payable report and pay bills. All were in favor. The motion passed.

VI. Sherburne SWCD Changes – Bill Bronder Interim District Manager

Bronder informed the board that due to financial reasons, the Sherburne SWCD has decided to not fill the vacant Manager and Water Resources Specialist positions at this time. Instead they are splitting many of the Manager duties between the Interim Manager and an Office Manager. The Administrative Assistant has been promoted to Office Manager. Additionally a temporary employee (technical staff) position has been extended. Bronder stated the Sherburne SWCD plans to continue its partnerships with the Benton SWCD in the future.

VII. Conservation Plans

A. Brian Montag – FY2010 CWF-24 – Payment Request (Tabled in November) - The needed items for processing this payment request were not available at this time. Motion by Bastian, second by Thole to table this item until the next meeting. All were in favor. The motion passed.

~~**B.** Greg Novak – CWF-11 – Payment Request~~

C. Roger Schmitt – FY2012 - 01 – Payment Request - Motion by Bastian, second by Grosland to approve contract FY2012 - 01 payment request in the amount of \$448.50. All were in favor. The motion passed.

D. Glen Traut – Low Interest Loan request - Motion by Grosland, second by Bastian to approve the project as eligible for the low interest loan program. All were in favor. The motion passed.

E. Daniel Kloss – DNR Water Appropriation Permit – Maciej informed the board that Kloss received a permit from the DNR. The board discussed, and came to consensus, to request that new permit applicants in the Little Rock Creek TMDL groundwater recharge area complete a uniformity check on their irrigation system.

VIII. Action Items

- A. Amendment to the Elk River Watershed Association Joint Powers Agreement – Motion by Thole, second by Bastian to approve the amendment to the Elk River Watershed Association Joint Powers Agreement and authorize the chair to sign it. All were in favor. The motion passed.
- B. Set 2012 budget – Maciej presented a 2012 budget. There was discussion about utilizing part of the FY12 state cost share grant for technical assistance to help leverage federal EQIP funds. Motion by Grosland, second by Thole to approve the budget as discussed, including employee salary and benefit rates, reducing the state cost share expense by \$10,000.00, and filling the Water Plan Technician position. All were in favor. The Motion passed.
- C. Payment of bills on or about December 30th – Motion by Thole, second by Grosland, to authorize the payment of expenses that accrue by the end of the year. All were in favor. The motion passed.
- D. Set prices for products and services for 2012 – Maciej distributed proposed prices for 2012. Motion by Bastian, second by Grosland to approve the prices as presented. All were in favor. The motion passed.
- E. Designate an official depository - Motion by Bastian, second by Thole to designate Frandsen Bank and Trust as the official depository. Grosland abstained from voting. All others were in favor. The motion passed.
- F. Improving administrative efficiency of the Low Interest Loan program – District Technician Nathan Sanoski shared some procedural changes that could be made to the program that would reduce administrative time and make the program easier for the participants. Motion by Grosland, second by Bastian to make the following changes to the low interest loan program: 1) Authorize staff to determine eligibility and approve loan program applications, or, if they choose they may still forward the applications to the SWCD board for consideration (special or unique situations) and 2) Eliminate the requirement to have SWCD staff approve the release of funds by signing the “completion signature” and instead allow the individual banks to release funds without SWCD involvement. In special or unique cases the staff or the board may still place restrictions on the release of funds. All were in favor. The motion passed.
- G. Year end close out and audit for 2011 – Motion by Grosland, second by Bastian to hire James Maiser, Certified Public Accountant, to complete the fiscal year 2011 year end financial statements and complete a financial audit for fiscal year 2011. All were in favor. The motion passed.

IX. Progress Reports

- A. Staff reports – Staff reports were discussed.
- B. NRCS reports
 - 1) Pat Gehling – Gehling provided a report.
 - 2) Dave Copeland – Copeland introduced himself as the Area Conservationist for NRCS Area 3 and welcomed the SWCD to Area 3. He provided information about Area 3 staff, the NRCS budget for 2012, the agricultural mitigation banking program being developed by NRCS, BWSR, MASWCD and others, and innovative agricultural drainage practices being promoted as conservation practices including “bio reactor” beds and “controlled drainage”.
- C. U of M Extension Service report – Dan Martens was not available to report. On his behalf Maciej distributed information about pesticide application training and certification procedures.

X. Information Items

- A. **Supervisor Reports** – Supervisors reported on the meetings they participated in.
 - 1) November 16, Benton SWCD finance committee meeting

- 2) November 21, Elk River Watershed Association board meeting
- 3) November 22, Water Resources Advisory Committee meeting
- 4) December 4 – 6, Minnesota Association of SWCD's annual convention
- 5) December 19, Elk River Watershed Association board meeting

B. Old Business

- 1) BWSR FY2012 Clean Water Legacy grant application update – Maciej shared information about projects that were selected and were not selected for funding. He also shared a power point presentation about a new program that was available this funding cycle and is expected to be available in future years (community partners program)

C. New Business

- 1) Chandler poultry manure spreader use report - Maciej shared that use of the manure spreader declined this past year and that a new individual or business will need to be identified to manage the rental and maintenance of the spreader.

D. Calendar of Future Events:

- 1) January 18, Benton SWCD board meeting – Bastian indicated he had a conflict with this meeting date and would not be able to attend.

XI. **Adjourn** - Motion by Grosland, second by Thole to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:58 A.M.

Secretary, Board of Supervisors

Date