



Rice Soil and Water Conservation District

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Rice SWCD – Board Meeting Minutes January 21, 2009 – 1:00 PM

Chairman Dick Huston called the meeting to order at 12:50 PM.

PRESENT: Bob Duban, Wally Hildebrandt, Dick Huston, Steve Pahs, Tom Coffman, Danielle Waldschmidt and Debbie Skarupa.

ABSENT: Bob Borchert and Gary Wagenbach

ELECTION CERTIFICATES: Dick Huston was given a framed election certificate from Rice County and he signed the Oath of Office. Bob Borchert and Gary Wagenbach were also re-elected, but were absent.

MINUTES: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to approve the December 17, 2008 board meeting minutes with a correction to the Adopt-A-Hwy location. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt and Huston. All aye - None opposed – Motion carried.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND BILLS PAYABLE: Not all of the December bills have been received yet so the financial statement is not ready for approval. Bills payable will be included at the February board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

ENTERING RICE SWCD SIGNAGE: Dick Huston has ordered white lettering on green background for the four-foot high signs.

BIOMASS TECHNICIAN: Item was tabled from December's board meeting. Position has been filled by Dave Rickert. Steve Pahs met with the other managers of the five counties (Dakota, Scott, Carver, LeSueur and Rice) two weeks ago to discuss potential projects. Possibilities are goats to eat Buckthorn, controlled drainage projects, or farmable/harvestable grass buffer strips with a \$200 per acre incentive paid up front. Biomass (native grasses), corn stalk/cob condensers and harvesters were discussed. A couple from a Bloomington company (High Tech Agro) was in the conservation office yesterday talking about India and its 300 densification plants.

AG & ENVIRONMENTAL MEETINGS UMEX: Brad Carlson from the extension office is coordinating speakers like Mark Seeley and Gyles Randall for educational meetings at the Community Bank in Northfield in February. Brad is seeking donations from the Farm Bureau.

CWMA GRANT STATUS: Adam Arndt accepted the grant and is taking charge of this project to utilize funds for Buckthorn removal in the Cannon River Wildlife Area..

NEW BUSINESS:

DESIGNATE OFFICIAL DEPOSITORY: Motion by Wally Hildebrandt, seconded by Bob Duban to approve 1st United Bank of Faribault as the official depository. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt and Huston.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY & DATA PRACTICES OFFICER: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to designate Steve Pahs and Tom Coffman as the Responsible Authority and Data Practices Officers for the state and federal side respectively. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt and Huston.

ROTATE SUPERVISOR POSITIONS AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS: Motion by Wally Hildebrandt and seconded by Bob Duban to approve the Rotation of Supervisors and the Committee Assignments for 2009. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt and Huston. (Positions are: Chairman Huston, Vice Chair Borchert, Secretary Hildebrandt, Treasurer Wagenbach and PRI Duban.)

I.R.S. MILEAGE RATE: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to approve the 2009 IRS mileage rate of \$.55 per mile. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt and Huston.

RICE COUNTY BUDGET CUTS: An article in the newspaper stated Rice County Commissioners are asking all departments to cut back 5% on their 2009 budgets, which is about \$9,000 for us. Fund balance and compensated absences were discussed.

ANNUAL DUES: Motion by Wally Hildebrandt, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the following 2009 annual dues:

MASWCD	-	\$2750.00
NACD	-	\$ 750.00
MACDE	-	\$ 100.00
JPB	-	\$ 500.00
ENVIROTHON		\$ 175.00
AREA 7 MASWCD		\$ 500.00

All aye - None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt, Huston.

STATE COST-SHARE VOUCHER: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to approve the following cost-share voucher:

CS#081430 Milt Olson 7648 200th St. E - Faribault – Whg. #3 - 1 Sediment basin \$6500.00

All aye - None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt, Huston. Kelly Oliver was the designated Conservation District Technical Representative. No other funds are being applied to this 2008 FY practice, meeting the high priority definition does not apply to this practice and 65% is the approved cost share amount.

RICE COUNTY FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR: The board nominates John and Riitta Hellerud, Charles & Eileen Shimota and Ron & Ruth Sommers as requested from Rice Co. Extension Office.

DAY AT THE CAPITOL: Richard Huston will be out of town. Wally Hildebrandt and Bob Duban would like to attend. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to approve registration and fees for supervisors and staff that would like to attend the Day at the Capitol to meet with legislators in February. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt and Huston.

FEEDLOT II & III GRANT STATUS: There is \$9200.00 left as of December 31, 2009 in this SE MN Water Resources grant that must be spent by June 30, 2009. Feedlot III has \$19,405.00. Steve and Wade Schulz have prioritized 30 feedlots and Tim Labs will visit landowners.

2009 PAY EQUITY REPORT: The State of Minnesota requires a report every three years to ensure women are receiving equal pay for equal work. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to approve the pay equity report as passed out. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt and Huston.

FIREPROOF SAFE: Currently, we use Rural Development's fireproof file cabinet for cash and important documents like vehicle titles and abstracts. Steve to check on options and costs for February's board meeting.

RICE CO. WATER PLAN ADOPTION AS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to approve the Rice County Water Plan as our Comprehensive Plan from 2009 to 2014. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt, and Huston. Rice County Water Plan has currently received an extension date for final adoption so another resolution will be completed when final adoption takes place.

CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS: A final tally of the MASWCD Resolutions was briefly discussed.

MN WATERS ASSOCIATION GRANT: Motion by Wally Hildebrandt, seconded by Bob Duban to approve acceptance of the MN Waters Association Grant for rain garden assistance and education. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt and Huston

AREA 7 WOMEN'S AG DAY: NRCS would like SWCD's and RC&D to partner in case they need to accept funds for food or registrations. Tom Coffman asked for input and ideas. Wally suggested all women be invited, not just farm women.

LIVING SNOWFENCES: MN DOT has priority area maps of snow problems on highways. They are paying \$1.50 per bushel over market rate at the time of harvest and corn can be harvested in the spring. Corn rows trap snow very well and at least six rows are needed.

OFFICE LEASE/RENT: Rental agreement expires in February 2009, but will probably be extended. Rural Development may still move to Owatonna, but nothing is certain at this time. Rice SWCD and NRCS need 1500 square feet. File cabinets may get moved into copy machine room. FSA has more square feet than they can legally pay for. Add to February agenda.

LESSARD OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND: The Lessard Outdoor Heritage Fund has adopted a process for developing recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature on expenditures from the 3/8 percent sales tax increase. Basically anyone (DNR, PCA, CRWP, Sportsman's clubs, etc.) is eligible to request funding. Fund was discussed. There is citizen involvement on the council now. Website has names of members.

SUPERVISOR REPORTS: Wally reminded members of the RC&D Midwest Value Added Conference in Rochester on January 22 and 23. Wally will be doing the welcoming session, and moderating Methane Digesters and Wind Mill sessions. Registered participants total more than 190. Discussion followed on alfalfa pellets, a densification company in Bloomington based on India's compacters and Cabela's clothes with "Soil Conservation" on them. Dick Huston spoke on his conservation award and the importance of letting others know who we are and what we do. Dick Huston and Glenda will be donating pheasant hunting trips with lunch at their home for future causes. Bob Duban congratulated Dick Huston on his retirement.

DC REPORT by Tom Coffman:

Financial Audit: We have completed our financial audit of 76 active Farm Bill contracts. The audit did point out shortcomings in how we contract federal dollars to private landowners. It will change how we do business in regards to requiring more documentation and verification from program participants.

Due to the changes in Washington, we have not been given authority yet to conduct farm program signups.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT: Steve ordered education materials for 2nd and 5th grade students. Tri-Lakes Sportsman's Club will donate \$500.00 again this year for materials. Steve ordered two soils books that will be given to two of the classroom teachers.

Activity has been very busy with year-end reports. Several of our funding sources are grants, which all have different reporting requirements and some seem to change the rules regularly. The SWCD newsletter was prepared and mailed out in late December. It included our annual tree order form, and we have since been receiving tree orders. Unfortunately, the economy seems to be having an affect on sales. We may have to make some drastic reductions in inventory before the end of February. I have also been preparing for the educational activities at the schools and will be ordering materials soon. The ditch inspection program continues to occupy some of my time. Work on CD 32A will soon start with the removal of trees. Feedlot projects are also becoming a priority as a few of the sites we have funding for are planning for spring construction. I am also spending some time working with the new Biomass Technician in Jordan. Related to that, the area of Rice, Scott, LeSueur, Dakota, and Carver counties is applying for a Working Lands Initiative, which may end up providing us with a very good stream of money for various projects like farmable buffer strips, controlled drainage, and more.

Just released from Rice County is a request for all agencies to trim their budgets by 5%. I will be looking at the budget and recommending strategies to you on where we can cut spending to reach that goal.

DISTRICT PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT:

- ⊗ Continued CREP easement processing
- ⊗ Reviewed current and pending state cost share contracts and completed a cost share voucher for payment
- ⊗ Attended a Forestry Committee Meeting
- ⊗ Reporting of all state cost-share contracts that were paid in 2008 and all WCA activities into the delink state reporting system.
- ⊗ Started to complete the 2009 Ag BMP Low Interest Loan Program application.
- ⊗ WCA:
 - Held a WCA Technical Evaluation Panel Meeting to review the Bridgewater Commons Replacement Plan Application to impact 2,613 square feet of Type 2 wetland. After discussion, the application was approved.
 - On site on the George Wagner property to view the location for a wetland excavation project in Wells Twp.
 - Completed a couple of windbreak tree planting plans.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST'S REPORT:

- Completed a MinnFarm Evaluation for Jack Volkert.
- Setting up workshops titled "The Economics of Manure" through the U of M. These will be held March 27th in Steele and Rice counties.
- Attended December board meeting.
- Moved no-till drill to county shop and covered.
- Revised the CWMA grant and sent in the acceptance letter. Picking up loosed ends and trying to revive the project.
- E-Link reporting for Nutrient Management grant and the CWMA grant.
- Radio show with Jerry Groskreutz, am Minnesota talking about Nutrient Management issues.
- Helped Dawn Bernau with "What is Manure Worth" workshop in Preston.
- Security and Diversity training through Aglearn.

Nutrient Plans in Progress, Completed, or Revised Last Month:

- Jim Bastyr (Rice)
- Jack Volkert (Rice)
- Steve Arndt (Steele)
- Jim Ditterich (Wabasha)
- Martin Werner (Rice)
- Oran Clemensen (Rice)
- Scott Thompson (Freeborn)
- Gary Lehnertz (Wabasha)
- Steve Matthees (Goodhue)

December Ditch Services:

- Attended CD 23 cleanout proposal meeting.
- Attended CD 32 cleanout proposal meeting.
- Contacted Tupy Tree Service to start clearing trees on CD32.
- Checked CD 9 to verify that beaver dams were removed.

STORMWATER TECHNICIAN’S REPORT:

Most of the construction activity is completed for the season. I met with some of the contractors and owners that are still working or were working up to the first snowfall. I have been working with the MPCA on a construction site that had severe violations from the NPDES requirements on enforcement actions. I have also been working with the MPCA on sites that have other problems. I met with the City of Faribault regarding their MS4 program and the Minnesota Waters grant. I have been working to put together a work plan for the grant and talking to other interested parties.

Accomplishments Include:

- Updated and organized case files for the stormwater program
- Conducted construction site inspections
- Worked with Contractors/Owners/ to get their construction site activities in compliance with the NPDES/SDS
- Worked on enforcement cases with the MPCA

JPB ACTIVITY REPORT: Not received.

ADJOURN: Motion by Wally Hildebrandt, seconded by Bob Duban to adjourn. All aye -None opposed - Motion carried. Ayes: Duban, Hildebrandt, and Huston. Time: 2:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Debbie Skarupa – Secretary

Wally Hildebrandt - Board Secretary