RICE S.W.C.D.
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 12, 2014 – 9:00 AM at Government Services Building


ABSENT: None

Chairman Jim Purfeerst called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M.

MINUTES: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Gary Wagenbach to approve the January 8, 2014 board meeting minutes. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Gary Wagenbach to approve the December financial report and bills payable subject to audit. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:
TOPICS OF INTEREST FOR POSSIBLE SPRING SUPERVISOR’S MEETING:
Gary Wagenbach had asked the board for ideas for a possible spring supervisor’s meeting. Day at Capitol, educational needs and water quality issues were discussed.

MPCA LIST OF IMPAIRED WATERS:
Steve showed a MPCA website map of impaired waters in our area. Gary spoke on public accessibility to data collection. Website was slow so Steve went on to the next agenda item.

NEW BUSINESS:
KATHLEEN DORAN-NORTON BRIDGEWATER TWP OFFICIAL: Bridgewater Township Official Kathleen Doran-Norton was introduced to everyone in attendance. Kathleen asked to be put on a future SWCD agenda as Bridgewater Township has had more flooding issues and they are hoping for help from the SWCD. Their engineer’s preliminary report, neighboring properties, structural sizes, 100-year rain event frequency, culvert sizes, rainfall records, and flood control were discussed. Will put on the April agenda.

MPCA LIST OF IMPAIRED WATERS: MPCA website was shown on the wall again. Spring Brook, nitrates, turbidity, TMDL’s, Circle Lake Association, and water sampling were discussed.
DAY AT THE CAPITOL: Day at the Capitol will be March 24 and 25 as the session starts later this year. Jim Purfeerst was wondering if Steele County staff could go with us to two meetings this year. Steve will schedule meetings with legislators and supervisors will let Debbie know who wants to register for the evening meeting by March 1. Jim Purfeerst and Gary Wagenbach plan on attending.

DUES PAYABLE: Motion by Gary Wagenbach, seconded by Dale Neirby to approve dues payable as follows: CRWP - $50.00, MACDE $20.00 for each staff member, SEMACDE $10.00 each staff member, and SEMASWCD $500.00. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS FOR 2014: Board reviewed 2013 Committee Assignments and changes were made. Collin Schoenecker will be added where Tim Labs was listed. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Jerry Courson to approve the revised Committee Assignments for 2014. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

NRCS MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING: Tom Coffman reviewed the NRCS Memo of Understanding. FAX machine will be discontinued at the end of February. Use of equipment during government shutdown was discussed.

NRCS “AND JUSTICE FOR ALL” POSTER: Nicole Schaffer explained the NRCS “And Justice for All” poster with discrimination and complaint information.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT FEE STRUCTURE: Spencer Herbert explained that Dawn out of Fillmore SWCD has revised her manure management fee schedule to be based on a per acre rate. Total fees collected would remain about the same, maybe 10% more or less. A similar rate here would mean consistency for the Joint Powers Board. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Gary Wagenbach to table the revised rate schedule discussion until the March board meeting. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Steve Pahs spoke on some possibilities for operating under this grant as the application to renew the nutrient management grant was unsuccessful this time around. Spencer’s rates are about 50% less than a technical service provider’s would be. Nitrates are a big concern in the state and SE MN ended up with nothing to fund feedlot updates.

APPROVE 4-H AWARDS: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Dale Neirby to approve four Champion Awards at $7.50 each and three 4-H Reserve Champion Awards at $7.00 each for a total of $51.00. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

ONE WATER PLAN CONCEPT FOR CANNON RIVER: Steve Pahs, Gary Wagenbach, and Tom Gile attended a meeting on a water plan based on watershed concept. Rice County is part of three watersheds; Minnesota, Zumbro and Cannon River. Gary read BWSR’s vision statement for One Watershed One Plan and said Cannon River Watershed Partnership is leading the charge for this effort to represent the entire watershed. He suggested a letter of support to explore options. Rice County Commissioners will make the final decision. Jenny Mocol-Johnson came in at 10:40 am and said the Rice County Water Plan will expire December 31, 2014. A current plan is needed for BWSR grant participation. Do we wait, ask for extension, if so, how long? DNR Hydrologist Dan Giralamo arrived at
10:50 am. Discussion continued. Other items discussed were City of Lonsdale, Northfield and Faribault participation on Tech Advisory Committee and more informational discussion meetings with all potential participants. Steve Pahs will meet with Jenny Mocol and Beth Kallestad from CRWP.

**MCIT WORK COMP. RESOLUTION:** Supervisors are not covered under SWCD’s work comp with MN Counties Intergovernmental Trust and we have a resolution from 2002 stating this. Motion by Gary Wagenbach, seconded by Bob Duban to sign a new resolution stating the Rice SWCD denies workmen’s compensation coverage for their supervisors. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**OTHER REPORTS:**

**TREE SALES UPDATE:** Steve Pahs said 15,000 trees were ordered and sales are about 2000 trees behind last year. Surplus trees will be cancelled at the end of February.

**ENVIROTHON:** The Envirothon will be held in Faribault on May 7th again this year. However, the National competition that was scheduled to be held in Georgia this year will not be taking place due to funding and timing issues. Amanda Gentry from Winona SWCD has applied for a grant through EPA to help with the cost of substitute teachers, gas, books, etc. for the area Envirothon.

**BIENNIAL BUDGET REQUEST:** BWSR does a biennial budget request as a wish list for a general funding list to help legislators know how much funding is needed. Item will be put on March agenda.

**SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** Gary W. said Karl Hokanson will be replaced with someone in the ag arena and Spencer H. will apply for that as well. Fund raising tickets are available for a late February event. Bob D. went to Joint Powers Board meeting on January 29 – nutrient management grant not being renewed was a disappointment. Jerry Courson will soon be at Enters Fertilizer of Nicollet and updated board on Roberds Lake project. Jim Purfeerst said Hiawatha Valley RC&D is deciding how to proceed and is working on a project to extract protein. Cover crops were mentioned.

**DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST’S REPORT by Tom Coffman:**

1. Farm Bill – First time ever, Title II Conservation Title has more dollars appropriated than Title I Commodity although it is six Billion less than 2008 Bill. CRP acres step down to 24 million. Flexibility for increased managed harvest grazing.

   EQIP-Not sure if dollar obligation to contracts will be delayed from the scheduled March timeline to summer.

2. Program Activities-CSP-First signup in 2014 closed February 7. We received three applications. Scoring and ranking will be completed in March.

3. EQIP-First 2013 EQIP signup is underway. Original deadline is February 21. Currently working on estimates and planning appointments. Our planning program Toolkit has been revamped. We will need to all go through a learning curve here as we have had teleconference and classroom trainings.
4. Compliance Issues- There are presently, compliance issues with four farm program participants for HEL and wetland violations. FSA has sent letters requesting benefits received paid back.

**DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs:**

January has been filled with completing reports for grants, meetings, and training webinars. The cold weather has given little opportunity to spend time in the field. I have been working with BWSR staff to prepare for a soil erosion discussion with board and staff. We had some additional repairs needed on the 2005 Chevy-wheel hub assembly.

Other activity this past month:

- GIS users group meeting at Rice County
- NACD Climate Change Webinar
- Zumbro Watershed Partnership meeting on top 50 erosion control projects needed
- Scott County WMO meeting to review new grant for conservation projects
- CRWP meeting on developing a watershed management plan
- Met with French Lake landowner to look at possible projects
- Office FAC meeting
- RIM Buffer webinar
- Forest Council meeting on SE MN forestry plan

The next month will focus on some ditch system projects, follow-up on the soil erosion discussion, legislative Day at the Capitol, tree program, and spring work prep. Next Tuesday Ashley and Collin will be on AM Minnesota on KDHL. Steve’s daughter, Hannah, will move on to the state spelling bee.

**FARM BILL TECHNICIAN REPORT by Ashley Tabery:**

**Past Month:**

- MDA monitoring site meeting, and planning for snow melt/sampling season
- Needs, survey, planning and EQIP application for Vollbrecht, Hildebrandt, and Donkers
- Farm bill technicians training in Granite Falls, and Grasslands training in Olivia
- Sand Creek application for Fuchs, and other Sand Creek planning and promotion through direct mailings
- CRP filter strip estimates for Walker, Kelm, Eggum, Chester, Bickel and Purfeerst
- Newsletter articles, layout, and edits
- Conservation Planning training online
- Additions and edits to Annual Plan and Report
- Water plan meeting and assistance with survey questions
- New Toolkit 7 training online
- Area engineering training in Rochester
• Finished eLink reporting for state-cost share grants/flood relief/CWMA
• Door-to-door tree sales promotion
• 50 foot buffer research and preparation for special meeting
• Uploaded grant reports to website, and cleared all old documents

Upcoming:
• Needs and planning for DeGrood and Gary Donkers for EQIP
• Furlong pre-con meeting with Area Office and contractor/landowner
• Continue to explore grant options (LCCMR and DNR)
• Zumbro watershed meeting on February 25th
• Engineering training on March 4th
• Booth at Pheasants Forever Banquet March 8th
• Soil Mechanics training March 10th - 11th
• Soil health workshop March 12th

Pheasants Forever will pay for Ashley’s Pheasant Forever Banquet ticket and she will be at a booth for the Northfield Garden Club.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST’S REPORT by Spencer Herbert:

I met with and completed a plan for Steve Emery (Goodhue). I also had meetings with Nick Hanson (Rice) and Jerry Kelm (Rice) and am currently working on plans for them. I spent a lot of time entering info and maps into eLink. I also spent a lot of time working on the grant report for the calendar year 2013: producer expenses, producer match time and dollars, narrative, etc. I attended the JPB meeting in Oronoco on 1/29. There was a lot of discussion about possible funding sources for the Nutrient Management positions. I met with Jim Fritz to evaluate my Ecological Sciences approval for practices and implementation. I have also been spending some time studying for my next CCA exam, which will be February 7. Looking ahead: Complete plans for Nick Hanson and Jerry Kelm. I also have plans to meet with Paul Strand (Goodhue) and Casey Lehnhardt (Wabasha) to develop MMP’s for them. I need to meet with any EQIP plan producers to develop annual plans. I will be attending MDA’s Nutrient Management Conference on Feb 11 and SFA’s Soil Health Summit Feb 19 and 20. Will attend Soil Health Summit in Alexandria next week.

RESOURCE SPECIALIST REPORT by Collin Schoenecker:

Past:
• Completed and submitted 2013 WCA Annual Report.
• Attended GIS meeting.
• Submitted 2013 AgBMP Loan Report.
• RIM/WRP meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Larson.
• WCA webinar on Ag wetland bank.
• Staff meeting.
• Sent William Hein RIM easement paper work to BWSR for payment.
• Met with landowner about sediment removal in a wetland.
• Climate webinar.
• Sent out TEP approval sheet for CSAH 1 Phase II.
• PWP easement split, collected Deeds for 12 new owners.
• Toolkit training.
• RIM grassland management meeting in Olivia.
• Door to door tree sales.
• Windbreak meeting with a landowner and Ashley.

Upcoming:
• Basic engineering training.
• RIM buffer enrolment webinar.
• Minnesota’s water webinar.
• Staff meeting.
• Promote tree sales.

OTHER/CORRESPONDENCE: None

UPCOMING EVENTS:

ADJOURN: Chairman Jim Purfeerst adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, March 12 at 9:00 am.

Respectfully submitted by:                       _____________________________
                                                   Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

                                                   _______________________________
                                                   Jerry Courson - Board Secretary