
ABSENT: None

Chairman Jim Purfeerst called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and introductions were made. Dick Peterson has been a Faribault resident for 25 years and a DNR Forester for 32 years. Richard Cook is a retired Rice County Sheriff, and active with the Rice County Historical Society, Veterans’ Services, South Central Technical College and the Cannon-Wells Lake Association.

MINUTES: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Jerry Courson to approve the November 12, 2014 board meeting minutes with clarification on tillage survey. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL: The program record was reviewed. Motion by Gary Wagenbach, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the November financial report and the bills payable subject to audit. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

WILDLIFE ENHANCEMENT AWARD LUNCHEON: The Wildlife Enhancement Award luncheon was held for Judith Bechtum at Gran Plaza Mexican Restaurant on November 12. A thank you note was received from Judith.

DEPT OF AG NUTRIENT MGMT AGREEMENT STATUS: Steve is working with the Mn Department of Ag for a half-time position grant for nutrient management work and should have an agreement by December 16. The half-time position is a Clean Water Fund grant.

NEW BUSINESS:

MASWCD CONVENTION DECEMBER 7, 8, 9 IN BLOOMINGTON: Board felt the convention was well-run and everyone had a fun time. Clyde and Chris Eggum along with Bryan and Jennifer Eggum enjoyed coming up Monday evening for the dinner and auction. Jennifer purchased a quilt at the auction. Bob Duban said three years ago they added a Monday night meal before the auction and attendance has sky rocketed. Next year invite the outstanding conservationist to come even earlier for the trade show on Monday as it closed at 4:30 pm.

Gary said Legislative Day at the Capitol will be January 26 and 27 next year. How do we meet statutory obligation/needs on the ground with current funding? $20 million is available and need $22 million for basic needs. Lobbyist has been hired for about $40,000. May be unrealistic to visit with legislators with any info packets before the Day at the Capitol. David Bly attended the
convention luncheon yesterday. There must be a change in state statutes for SWCDs to use other means of funding like fee structures or levy authority. Jim said we have good support from our commissioners, but some other districts receive little funding from their county. Richard Cook asked who has taxing authority like District One Hospital had. Watershed Districts. Bob said it’s hard to keep good employees if we don’t get grants or if unsure if grants will be funded again. Bob D spoke about the Rice County Invasive Species grant dollars. Steve to check with Environmental Services to see if we can send someone to the DNR Aquatic Invasive Summit.

WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT POSITION: Personnel Committee (Bob Duban and Gary Wagenbach) met with Steve Pahs and discussed the WCA position. Tim is comfortable with continuing with the WCA position contract. They recommend hiring for the WCA opening in July 2015. Discussion followed. Workload is less with less development going on.

APPROVE 2015 BUDGET & PERSONNEL WAGE INCREASES: Steve went over the budget amounts with a 1% cost of living adjustment and a step increase. Ashley Gallagher will go into a higher wage range. Discussion followed. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Gary Wagenbach to approve the 2015 budget with the Personnel Committee recommendations for 2015 wage increases. Budget is balanced at $589,132. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

CONSERVATION APPRENTICESHIP INTERN: Steve explained the Conservation Apprenticeship Academy with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota. The Conservation Corps hires and pays interns and the SWCD would supply a computer, desk and in the field learning opportunities. Tom is willing to help with training. Motion by Gary Wagenbach, seconded by Jerry Courson to approve applying for the Conservation Apprenticeship Academy intern. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

DEW DROP DRILL PURCHASE: Steve Pahs showed a PowerPoint on a Dew Drop drill that could be used with an ATV for smaller sites. Nobles County has one that was donated by Pheasants Forever. Would need a trailer also. Discussion followed. Motion by Gary Wagenbach, seconded by Bob Duban to pursue getting assistance with the purchase of a Dew Drop drill and trailer. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

RICE CO. DITCH DRAINAGE INSPECTOR CONTRACT RENEWAL: Steve said the old contract with Rice County for ditch inspections was set at $35.00 per hour with mileage expenses. Mileage has been about 11% of the billed out amount so he and Fran agreed on a new rate of $42.00 per hour. Job is technical and not administrative so rate is lower. Time varies between 10-20% of Steve’s time. Ditches are in better order now with 60-70% in good repair. County billing cap is at $20,000 of expenses per year. Motion by Gary Wagenbach, seconded by Dale Neirby to approve the 2015 Drainage Inspection contract at $42.00 per hour. County ditches are privately funded by landowners where the water drains into. No tax payer dollars are involved and expenses are assessed to the users. When redeterminations or repairs are done, then one rod (16.5 feet) of permanent vegetation is required - measured from the top of the ditch bank. The 50 foot shoreline buffer is measured 50 foot from the normal high water mark. Ditch law supersedes shore land rule. Enforcement is Rice County’s responsibility. Filter strips do work.
**2013 AUDIT REPORT:** Bound copies of the 2013 audit were received yesterday. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Gary Wagenbach to table the 2013 audit report to the January meeting. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**EXTEND BRENT FUCHS SCOTT WMO DEADLINE:** Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Jerry Courson to extend the Brent Fuchs Scott WMO Contract from December 31, 2014 to December 1, 2015. Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**RICE COUNTY DIGITAL MAPPING:** Gary Wagenbach said Jenny Mocol from Rice County is in charge of the grant to work on the Upper Cannon River. A private engineer will do the mapping. Discussion followed.

**STATE C-S FLOOD RELIEF VOUCHER PAYMENT:** Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Dale Neirby to approve the following C-S Flood Relief Phase #2 voucher payment:

FR13-010-Eleanor Salisbury Trust (Mark Bauer operator) – 1100 Farehaven Court – Northfield-Bridgewater Section 24 - 1 Sed Basin and 2 terraces- $32,844.08

Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**STATE C-S FLOOD RELIEF AMENDMENT:** Motion by Dale Neirby, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the following Flood Relief Phase #3 cost share contract amendment to increase the cost from $31,402.42 to $35,155.58 due to additional fill needed.

FR13-017 Eleanor Salisbury Trust (Mark Bauer - operator) -1100 Farehaven Court-Northfield-Bridgewater Section 24- One Erosion Control Grade Stabilization – $35,155.58

Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**STATE C-S FLOOD RELIEF VOUCHER PAYMENT:** Motion by Dale Neirby, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the following 2013 C-S Flood Relief Phase #3 voucher payments:

FR13-017-Eleanor Salisbury Trust (Mark Bauer operator) – 1100 Farehaven Court – Northfield -Bridgewater Section 24 – One Grade Stabilization - $35,155.58.

Ayes: Courson, Duban, Neirby, Purfeerst and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Steve wants to incorporate into a tour next spring. Barnett was the contractor.

**4th QUARTER VOUCHERS:** Supervisors turned in convention receipts with voucher.
**PURFEERST COVER CROP RESULTS:** Steve showed a PowerPoint presentation that Gene Kuntz prepared on the Jim Purfeerst Cover Crop results. Comments were: 65% of seeds hit the ground, there are erosion and yield benefits, soil temperature is lower, organic matter and micro-organisms are cooler, cover crops collect dew, 15 plants per square foot did not reduce the yield, moisture is conserved, could reduce expenses by changing a few things, there is a dramatic change in cover crop acreage nationwide, radishes pull nutrients from the bottom and put nitrogen towards the top in the spring, no-till keeps soil on the ground, tested soil in four different locations, increases in organic matter increase the moisture holding power of soil, etc. Thanks again to Jim Purfeerst for hosting the cover crop tour and doing the trials.

**NACD CONVENTION:** Gary Wagenbach said the NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts) national convention will be in New Orleans February 1-3, 2015. Discussion followed. Motion by Dale Neirby, seconded by Jerry Courson to approve Gary Wagenbach attending the NACD Convention in New Orleans February 1-3, 2015 for up on $675.00 in registration, meals, and per diem expenses (not mileage.)

**SUPERVISOR/OTHER REPORTS:** Gary Wagenbach spoke on the MN Ag Resources Center, which is a private group encouraging conservation and they also support Discovery Farms. Gary passed out Green Star Farms Initiative and nitrate bulletins. CRWP is hiring new staff. Bob Duban did ask the Tri-Lakes Sportsmen’s Club for an additional donation for the Dew Drop Drill. Tri-Lakes Sportsmen’s Club funds many good projects. Jerry Courson will attend the BALMM (Basic Alliance Lower Mississippi Mn) in December. Jim Purfeerst said Hiawatha RC&D is working on the Fugle’s Mill project. Jim was wondering about support for poverty level families to test their well water for nitrates for free. Lighter soils may have higher nitrates. Irrigation wells are allowed to go deeper than private wells meaning families are drinking water with more nitrates than water that is used to irrigate fields. Ashley Gallagher said many small towns don’t have well-head protection plans.

**D.C. REPORT by Tom Coffman:**

1. Construction/Season Wrap Up:
   We are still currently working on installing several EQIP projects. Some dirt work activity, but mostly underground outlet installations.

2. Payments:
   Our payment deadline for Calendar Year 14 is December 19. Presently, we have processed 21 payments. Approximately ten more to go.

3. Soil Health Group:
   I would like to schedule a Rice Soil Health Group meeting before Christmas. Will plan on December 18th.

**DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs:**
Construction work came to an abrupt halt with the cold air arriving early again this year. We did get a few projects finished, including the Salisbury, Estrem, and Sherwin flood relief projects. Wetland activity picked up in late November, and Tim and I have dealt with a number of complaints.
Other activity this past month:

- Gave a presentation on flooding to a group in Northfield
- Read the DNR Observation Wells
- Lining up contractors for JD 6 repairs
- Attended MN Pesticide Applicator Re-Certification training in Blaine
- AG BMP Loan program training in Oronoco
- Working with county staff on buffer compliance
- Attended the Ag Business lunch
- Gave two presentations to Northfield High School classes on conservation
- Conducted reviews of all employees

In the next few weeks, I’ll be finalizing the budget, preparing the annual report, annual plan, and coordinating some ditch projects.

FARM BILL TECHNICIAN’S REPORT By Ashley Gallagher.
Past Month:

- Lyman grassed waterway stake, survey design
- Finished up state cost share inspections
- Ross planning, stake and survey
- Tousignant needs, and CRP estimates
- Organize CS files
- CRP estimates and contract work for Bechtum, Seeman, Morris, Skluzacek, Peterson and Sullivan
- CWMA buckthorn needs at Babcock Park Northfield, and studied the new MN DOT invasives guide
- Winterize monitoring site and no-till drill
- Developed education materials and matched programing with state standards, as well as emails and scheduling of programs
- Water plan meeting
- State convention

Upcoming:

- Continue to move Nielsen RIM forward
- Needs on many farms
- eLink reporting for all cost-share programs
- Education programs for 2nd and 5th graders
NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST’S REPORT by Travis Hirman:
I attended an Integrated Crop Management Conference at Iowa State University in Ames with 14 different seminars and it was a good learning opportunity.

- I have three plans to work on currently, all in Wabasha County. Two of these are new plans. One of these new plans is a CNMP for Stacy Miller. Since he is not receiving a CAP payment from NRCS, I am allowed to complete his plan. If he were to receive this payment, only a TSP would be able to work on this plan.
- I will work with Jeff King in the following weeks on the Stacy Miller and John Miller plans. This will help me to obtain job approval authority from the NRCS. Currently, Jeff needs to approve any NRCS EQIP plans that I work on.
- I completed a MMP update for Jary Holst (Kellogg).
- I attended the Iowa State Integrated Crop Management conference Dec 3-4.

OTHER/CORRESPONDENCE: Dale Neirby and Jerry Courson were thanked for their years of service as Rice SWCD supervisors.

ADJOURN: Chairman Purfeerst adjourned the meeting at 11:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

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Gary Wagenbach - Board Member