Rice Soil and Water Conservation District  1810 30th Street NW, Faribault, MN  55021   Phone: (507)332-5408   www.riceswcd.org

RICE S.W.C.D.
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday - March 9, 2016 - 9:00 AM

PRESENT: Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, Steve Pahs, Bridget Evers, Travis Hirman, Justin Fuchs, Thomas Coffman, Nicole Schaffer, Jim Jirik, and Debbie Skarupa.

ABSENT: Richard Cook and Gary Wagenbach

Chairman Bob Duban called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

SOIL HEALTH TOPIC: NRCS Resource Conservationist Jim Jirik spoke on building more productive soil with organic and microbial life. He showed an NRCS video entitled, “The Hope in Healthy Soil.” He suggested looking at the many videos on the NRCS website and YouTube videos. Bob Duban asked Tom if he could show a video at the Millersburg Area Soil Health Meeting.

FURNITURE PURCHASE: Steve showed a preliminary office furniture layout design from Bertelson Company. Due to two interns and an NRCS Ultima employee coming, we may need to make more space with a different configuration of furniture. Discussion followed. Price for the furniture package was $9,714.50 which includes the reception table and chairs. Recent NRCS personnel changes of Jim going to Dodge and Nikki to Goodhue will change things. NRCS can’t add any more space, FSA can’t switch spots and RD is staying in the building. Think creatively before spending $10,000.00 and plan for flexibility. Put on April agenda.

MINUTES: Motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the February 10, 2016 board minutes with one correction. Ayes: Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL/BILLS PAYABLE: Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the February checks and March bills payable including the Frontier invoice for the Trimble R10 survey equipment. Ayes: Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:
BUFFER LAW STATUS – Rice County sent out ditch public maps to DNR to incorporate into the DNR maps. Was good to get word out at Crop Days that SWCD is the main point of contact for the buffers. Burn permits were discussed.

NEW TRIMBLE R10 SURVEY EQUIPMENT: Bridget showed the board the new Trimble VRS R10 survey equipment and explained how it is used.
DAY AT THE CAPITOL: Steve will make appointments and coordinate with Steele County. Dick Peterson considering going to the briefing. Jim, Bob and Steve will carpool on March 22.

STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION: Nothing to discuss at this time.

RICE COUNTY FARM BUREAU MEETING: Farm Bureau meeting at Trucker’s Inn on February 16 had good discussion on both sides.

CROPS DAY AT 4-H BUILDING: Crop Days was held at the 4-H Building on February 24 for Rice and Steele County. About 40 people were in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS:
CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE BOARD: Bob Duban discussed the requirement to file every year in January, late fees, and partnerships also having to complete the information form. Township officials and county commissioners do not have to file.

WETLAND DELINEATION CERTIFICATION COURSE: Discussion. Motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve paying for the Wetland Delineation Certification Course for Justin Fuchs. Ayes: Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

ANNUAL 2016 DUES: The Fillmore invoice was a soils agreement with Dean Thomas for the 11 SE counties. Motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the following dues for 2016:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRWP</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fillmore SWCD</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
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</tbody>
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(Dean Thomas Soils Agreement)

Ayes: Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.


APPROVE ANNUAL REPORT: Discussion on copy machine, Pheasants Forever, and rain gauge monitors. PERA GASB 68 portion needs to be completed. Report needs to be to BWSR by March 15. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the 2015 Annual Report contingent on new PERA requirement completion. Ayes: Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

SUPERVISOR ELECTIONS: Bob Duban will not be running again. Richard Cook and Gary Wagenbach are up for re-election. Add to April agenda.

75TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2017: Rice SWCD charter was in 1942 so 2017 will be our 75th Anniversary. Good opportunity for district to promote conservation. Think of ideas and revisit.
**TRI-LAKES SPORTSMEN’S CLUB DONATION:** District received $1500.00 donation for 2016. Could use this money for Haney soil tests and CRWP may have some additional money for these tests (30-40 would be ideal). PLFA biology tests another possibility. Could bring up at Soil Health Meeting. Nice to do test before 2 years of cover crops to compare hard numbers. Could do one farmer in each township and do both tests. Could split field in half to get results. Jim suggested not using donation for Dew Drop trailer.

**STEWARDSHIP INSERTS:** NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts) no longer is printing stewardship inserts but sending pdf files instead. Districts can print their own items. Insty Prints quote for 1000 inserts was $485.99 for full color and $351.76 with back side in black and white. Discussion. Board felt it may be better to spend money on something else, maybe a better display for the fair. No inserts will be given out.

**SUPERVISOR/OTHER REPORTS:** Dick Peterson said Laurie Svien is leaving as executive director of Zumbro Watershed Partnership. Tom spoke on cover crops. What is smallest amount of seeds required per square foot to still get benefit? Nice to get costs down. Gandy boxes, High Boy, sprayer, chains, and damage to crops were discussed. Jim Purfeerst spoke about the U of M meeting yesterday in Waseca.

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

1. EQIP 16 – We recently sent 14 case files to our Area Office for a Quality Assurance Review prior to approving a contract. NRCS is trying to tighten up our contracting as when we turn back financial assistance funds we also turn back technical assistance funds.

2. Organic Producer Meeting was held last week at The Depot. Nine attended and most enjoyed sharing information.

3. I attended a Cover Crop Meeting yesterday in Owatonna. LCMR funding is available to find at least one producer per county to do a cover crop demonstration. Everyone was given the opportunity to talk and there was some interesting comments brought forward.

4. Upcoming Soil Health Meeting March 24 at Forest Town Hall. Possible agenda items were discussed. Discussion techniques/ideas were solicited.

**OTHER/CORRESPONDENCE:** Steve sent out letter for Ag Water Quality Workshop on March 18th from 10:00 to noon at the Government Services Building Room 3A. March 21 ditch inspection meeting in Wilmar. Contractor’s meeting will be in Dakota County March 30. Jim Purfeerst asked us to ask contractors to separate out bills for dirt work and tiling so easier to itemize for tax work. Environmental Work Group nitrate article was discussed. Travis said Tom Giles will present a mapping service to SWCDs that if they use it, they will have parcel compliance per acre and will not need to report in eLink. Committee will discuss. Justin spoke on wetland mitigation in Rice County. Flood retention pond on D. Palen farm was discussed. Tom said NRCS did site review on Gill project and it may need secondary review changes for dam safety requirements. Planning for worst case scenario. May lower top elevation. District inspects 1st, 5th and 9th year.
DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs: February was a month full of meetings. We have been busy with the tree sale, and numbers so far are similar to last year. I did a show on KDHL to promote the Ag Water Quality Certification Program. Most of us took an Emerald Ash Borer training so we are better prepared to help landowners who suspect they have it. We also have now received our new survey equipment, and will give the board a demonstration at a future meeting. Specific items I’ve done this month are:

- Farm Bureau buffer meeting
- Soil Health Expert training-Alexandria
- Biennial Budget Request prep meeting
- Completed ditch map updates with Rice County staff
- Attended the Rice Co Crops day
- Met with CRWP staff to brainstorm ways to work together more effectively
- Working on new office furniture plans
- Completed work and training plan for MCC intern
- Completed Annual Report and Plan for SWCD
- Completed Annual Report and Plan for ditch program

DISTRICT TECHNICIAN’S REPORT by Bridget Evers:

Soil Health Day in Alexandria
- New CRP contracts
- Three feedlot sites with the JPB engineer’s
- State Cost Share projects
- Training for new VRS surveying equipment
- CWMA Application follow up calls
- Emerald Ash Borer meeting
- Seed Training
- WASCOB (engineering) training
- Beginner Engineering training

Upcoming:
- Wetland Restoration training 3/15
- CRP webinar 3/10
- Soil health group meeting 3/24
- Area 7 meeting 3/31

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT REPORT by Travis Hirman:
- Attended the nitrogen conference in Rochester, as well as the nutrient management conference in Morton. Both of these were held by MAWRC.
- Took part in EAB training in Apple Valley. We toured an active infestation and learned about identification of potential EAB damage.
- Gave two presentations on the buffer law. One was for the Farm Bureau, and the other was a part of the Rice Co crops day.
- Met with three producers in-office regarding their buffer needs. I also took some phone calls regarding buffers as well.
- I am continuing work on my buffer mapping/mailing list project.
- Received training at a “building soil health experts” program at Alexandria.
• Took part in winter producer meetings in Zumbrota and St. Charles. These were private meetings held as part of my nitrogen management work with MDA. Producers and crop advisers were presented with information about the project and how to interpret data from their individual demonstration plots.

• Looking ahead: finish Tuma nmp, area employee meeting, training for the Wabasha technician who is taking over my MDA work.

RESOURCE SPECIALIST REPORT by Justin Fuchs

• Met with Rice County GIS to review Ditch records for accurate mapping database.
• Meeting with Nature Conservancy about tools we use around Cannon River for BMP’s specifically for Geospatial technology.
• Staff Meeting
• Board Meeting
• Meeting with rural landowners about wetland and drainage issues.
• Attended Buffer speech located at Super America.
• Attended Emerald Ash Borer workshop located in Apple Valley.
• TEP meeting regarding culvert replacement on Co HWY 90.
• TEP meeting in Lonsdale regarding DNR wetland and past WCA violation.
• Attended Rice Crops Day at 4H Building.
• Training for new survey equipment with Frontier Precision.
• Meeting at City of Faribault Public Works about upcoming WCA project.
• Meeting at City of Northfield about potential WCA impacts or mitigation.

ADJOURN: Chairman Duban adjourned the meeting at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

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Dick Peterson – Board Secretary