RICE S.W.C.D.
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday – May 10, 2017 - 9:00 AM

PRESENT: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, Steve Pahs, Travis Hirman, Bridget Evers, Teresa DeMars, Sarah Middleton from Zumbro Watershed Partnership, Debbie Skarupa, Wheatland Township dairy farmer Mark Trcka, dairy farmer Brian Pieper and dairy farmer Jim Duban.

ABSENT: None

Brad Carlson from MN Extension had stopped in before the meeting and introduced the new Rice County Extension Educator, Claire LaCanne.

Chairman Jim Purfeerst called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Introductions were made.

DITCH 25 CONCERNS: Three dairy farmers from or near Wheatland Township expressed their concerns over excess water in Ditch 25. They pointed to areas on the aerial map on the wall that they walked, felt were not draining, and the tile outlets are underwater. This has been a concern for decades. Most private ditches and the county ditch goes into the lake and nothing is leaving the lake. Many trees are down and pushed into the ditch making it a bigger job than chain saws can fix. They have spoken to several DNR officials about opening up the cattails to get the water moving, but nothing has been resolved. Steve said he emailed Kurt Deter and Kurt said this is something we can’t touch, as is far removed from the drainage system. Beaver dams, permission from neighbors, culvert sizes, petition to make it a county ditch, narrow leaf cattails, floating mats, permits, different counties’ involvement, state land nearby, neighbor liability, prior lift pumps,

MINUTES: Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Tim Little to approve the March 8, 2017 board minutes. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL/BILLS PAYABLE: Steve reviewed the financial statements. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the January, February, March Program Records and April bills payable subject to audit. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:
BUFFER UPDATE: Travis Hirman said Other Waters were discussed at the area meeting two to three weeks ago. Subpart requires SWCD to compile a list of Other Waters not currently on the DNR maps. This list will go to Rice County to incorporate into the Rice County Water Plan as a suggestion of Other Waters that should have buffers. Not
regulatory. Travis would like the District to pass a resolution next month at the May meeting about Other Waters that are intermittent and perennial streams. County has one year to add to the County Water Plan and is up to the County. This includes private ditches and streams - anything that flows into a current stream.

Tim Little suggested promoting alternative practices like cover crops that are like buffers across a whole field. Travis Hirman will put together a resolution for the May board meeting.

BWSR Alternative Practices - Travis explained the following “Six Pack” of common alternate practices:

1. Enrollment in MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program.
2. NRCS Filter Strip Standard
3. Grassed Waterway/Cultivated Watercourses
4. Negative Slopes or Concentrated Inflow - Public Ditches
5. Negative Slopes or Concentrated Inflow - Public Waters
6. Conservation Tillage/Cover Crops with Vegetated Filter Strip - Public Waters

Discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

75TH ANNIVERSARY - AUGUST 25, 1942: Suggestions for the 75th Anniversary were Fair booth, continually playing tape, tripods around fair to advertise (get fair board approval), Julie Fox video, drone use for aerials, photos taken of cover crops now, Daily News insert, past supervisors, past award winners, etc. Put on May agenda.

INTERIM REPORT FOR BWSR SPRING PARK GRANT: Julie Krebs from BWSR reconciled the Spring Park Grant as ok. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Tim Little to approve the interim report for Spring Park Grant. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

INTERIM REPORT FOR BWSR 2016 LOCAL DISTRICT CAPACITY GRANT: Julie Krebs from BWSR reconciled the Local District Capacity Grant as ok. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Tim Little to approve the interim report for the BWSR 2016 Local District Capacity grant. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

SE MN SWCD TECH SUPPORT JPB SUB-AGREEMENT: Discussion on small feedlot fixes and coverage in 11 SE Minnesota counties. Motion by Tim Little, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the SE SWCD Technical Support Joint Powers Board Sub-agreement for $20,000.00. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

SE MN WRB AGREEMENT: Discussion. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the SE Minnesota Water Resources Board Agreement to reduce feedlot
runoff for $8,250.00. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**MASWCD CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS:** Steve explained the resolution process starting at the local SWCD, then to the Area MASWCD meeting, and finally to the MASWCD convention. Please contact Steve with resolution ideas so we can draft for the May meeting. Add to May agenda.

**CIRCLE LAKE ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION:** Rice SWCD was asked by the Circle Lake Association to submit a LCCMR grant on their behalf. (They are not eligible.) Circle Lake Association would like to hire a consultant about establishing wild rice and request a grant to manage invasive species. Steve read their proposed resolution. Discussion followed on carp, wild rice, some causes of phosphorus overload, sun fish, and wild rice on Duban Lake. Lake Association is trying to establish a Lake Improvement District for taxation ability. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve Circle Lake Association’s resolution in support of an LCCMR grant for the Circle Lake Association. (Resolution is attached to the minutes.) Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**BWSR FY 2017 RIM GRANT CLOSE-OUT:** Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the BWSR RIM FY 17 Grant close out. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**MN FARM BILL:** Steve Pahs said we receive a half-time Farm Bill Grant that is renewed annually to promote CRP and RIM. Grant period is July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2019. Discussion. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Richard Cook to apply for the Farm Bill Tech Assistance Partnership Grant Phase XVII. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**J. SATRE RIM BOUNDARY:** Justin Fuchs showed an aerial photo of RIM property in Shieldsville Township owned by J. Sathre. A gravel road has been added at the north end of the property. RIM and WCA violation issues were discussed with possible solutions. BWSR is the enforcement authority.

**OTHER:** CRWP Ag Program Assistant Alan passed out business cards. “6,5,4” has six counties with $5,000 for each county to work with three landowners for lakeshore improvement. Justin said R. Stoick is interested in pollinator work and wild rice on Shields Lake property. CRWP wants to keep lines of communication open and work together.

**SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** Mike Ludwig said he learned a lot at Day at the Capitol and thanked Steve for setting it up. Others felt it was well attended and a good annual event too. Buffer rule controversy, funding, RIM, two new legislators, alternative practices, and networking were discussed.

Tim said the New Prague and Pine Island cover crop tours were both well-attended. Jim attended the demo crops tour in Waseca. Steve Pahs and John Beckwith met with two extension agents for a partnership with U of M for cover crops. Jim went to Nitrogen Smart Seminar.
**ACTING D.C. REPORT by Leslie Diaz-Alvarez:**
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP-EQIP)
- NRCS has two eligible applications, eligibility process and shovel ready deadline is on April 17, 2017

**Conservation Compliance/Planning (Plans, tract splits, 1026's)**
- Received 10 AD-1026 requests this month and addressed 5 previous/current AD-1026 requests
  - Completed 2 - Maintenance Requests
  - Completed 0 - Small Area Exception (Open land into Production)

**Client Gateway**
- We would like to keep promoting the Client Gateway. This is a secure NRCS website which provides online access to conservation assistance for farmers and ranchers 24/7.

**CRP**
- CRP job sheet and eligibility practice standards were updated. The eligibility criteria include: Watershed to filter ratio, location (stream, wetland, ditch or sinkhole), “sheet flow” runoff to the filter and soil erosion calculation for upland area.

**DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs:**
Steve went to MCIT Performance Management Training yesterday on how to help staff succeed and how to improve performance. Trees are coming next week with distribution on April 21. One Watershed One Plan Policy Committee met. Five applications were received and they will interview three and select one. Richard Cook and Mike Ludwig will attend the next meeting. Earth Day event in Northfield is on 22nd.

**RESOURCE SPECIALIST REPORT by Justin Fuchs:**
- Cover Crop Workshop in Owatonna.
- DNR OB well measurements.
- Meet with RMB Labs regarding the Township Well Testing program mailing list.
- Meet with landowner regarding wetland.
- Meeting with RIM/WRP landowner about potential activities and questions about sale of easement.
- Meet with landowner about wetland on property.
- Rain Garden Contractor meeting in Rochester.
- ESRI meeting at Rice SWCD office about licensing
- Meet with landowner about purchase of property and location of a new driveway.
- Various inquiries about water on property after last year’s precipitation.

**DISTRICT TECHNICIAN’S REPORT by Bridget Evers:**
Construction season is coming soon and CRP workload is large.
- New CRP contracts
- Re-enroll CRP contracts
- State Cost Share projects Survey and Designs
- EQIP projects
- Scott WMO projects
- RCPP Projects
Upcoming:
- Continue New CRP Sign ups
- Survey and designs for Cost share items and CRP program (wetland restorations)
- EQIP survey and designs with Colin
- Feedlot Project installation with JPB engineer

**NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT REPORT by Travis Hirman:**

- Completed MMP update for Jerry Kelm (Faribault, Dairy, 554 acres).
- Attended cover crop meetings in Owatonna and Zumbrota, and met with Rice Co soil health group.
- Met with other SWCD area 7 staff to discuss the “other waters” portion of the buffer law.
- Landowners continue to request assistance with the buffer law. I have begun visiting buffer sites for compliance determinations and flagging.
- Looking ahead: more general buffer work, finish Degrood mmp, area 7 employee meeting, tree week.

**SOIL HEALTH TOPIC VIDEO:** Steve showed a three minute Purdue University You tube video Acting DC Leslie Diaz-Alvarez found entitled “Unlock the Science of Soil Health.” It showed the length and quantity of earth worm tunnels and the benefits of their infiltration.

**ADJOURN:** Motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Dick Peterson to adjourn. Ayes: Richard Cook, Tim Little, Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Time: 10:57 a.m.

Submitted by: 

Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

Board Secretary - Timothy J. Little