RICE S.W.C.D.
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
July 09, 2014

PRESENT: Robert Duban, Jerry Courson, Gary Wagenbach, Steve Pahs, Tom Coffman, Ashley Tabery, Spencer Herbert and Debbie Skarupa.

ABSENT: Jim Purfeerst and Dale Neirby

Acting Chairman Gary Wagenbach called the meeting to order at 9:07 am.

Steve Pahs asked to add two items to the agenda: Item M – Accept Spencer Herbert’s resignation and Item N - Authorize the hiring process for the Nutrient Management Specialist position.

MINUTES: Discussion followed on adding more details to a motion about the budget that failed or attaching the budget to the minutes. Motion failed, so left the wording as is. Motion by Jerry Courson, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the June 11, 2014 board meeting minutes. Ayes: Courson, Duban, and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Jerry Courson to approve the bills payable subject to audit. Ayes: Courson, Duban, and Wagenbach. All Aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT CONTRACT STATUS: The WCA Agreement is in place and Tim Labs is officially a part-time, temporary employee who will work less than 14 hours per week.

SOIL TOUR AUGUST 12: Tom, Spencer, Steve and Gene Kuntz met and are planning the tour for August 12 at Jim Purfeerst’s farm. Jim and Tom will do an introduction for 15 minutes, Gene Kuntz, who used to work at South Central College and is now working at CRWP, will speak on the economics of strip till. Clayton Peterson, a crop consultant, will speak on cover crops. Spencer Herbert, if he can get back that day, will handle the Principles of Soil Health. The Sommers brothers and Brad Spindler, may also speak. Cover crops planted June 23, drone technology, and helicopter seeding (if weather permits) will also be shown. Pork Producers will handle the lunch sponsored by Reliance Bank, Cargill, CRWP, and Richland Repair. SWCD will take RSVP’s. Jerry Courson will pass out brochures at Farm Fest.

SEMASWCD RESOLUTIONS MEETING: Gary Wagenbach said he, Jerry Courson and Steve Pahs attended the Resolutions Meeting June 25 at the Stewartville American Legion. He thanked Debbie Skarupa for her help setting up the meeting. Resolution copies were mailed to the board: four resolutions passed and two failed. Ed McNamara filled in for Mark Ihlenfeld as secretary. Jerry Courson said Gary Wagenbach did a good job as acting director and he liked the group breakdown for resolution review/discussion. Thank you’s have been sent. Good meeting.
MEETING WITH RICE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: All five supervisors attended the meeting and thanked Steve and Ashley for the crisp visuals for topics. Jerry Courson felt the discussion was really good and all five supervisors attending shows commitment. Good meeting. County ditches, public awareness of 50’ buffer requirement, newspaper articles, erosion concerns, flooding, and educational work plan were discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

MASWCD PRESIDENT AND V.P. CANDIDATE PROSPECTUS: A MASWCD President and Vice President candidate prospectus was mailed to each supervisor. Election will be at the December convention.

HEAVY RAINS AND TILLAGE TRANSECT SURVEY: Steve did a newspaper article. If he groups mulch till, strip till and no till together, there has not been much change in the last ten years. Wet springs and dry falls make a difference in tillage. Over 80% of the corn ground is not meeting conservation tillage. Weather patterns are changing. Gyles Randall has said the current corn/soybean production is not sustainable the way we are doing it now. Many different cases and causes of soil erosion were discussed. Steve would like office challenge to get one new landowner to try no-till or strip till in each township. Many farmers do care about their soil and their land is well maintained.

RICE COUNTY FAIR:
Ag Breakfast: Chamber/Farm Bureau Breakfast will be Wednesday, July 16 from 7:30 – 9:00 with program starting at 9:15 am. Jerry Groskreutz will invite Outstanding Conservationists Clyde and Bryan Eggum, Wildlife Enhancement Award winner Judith Bechtum and Tim Labs will also receive an award for his years of service to conservation.

Booth: Ashley showed a bulletin board and pollinator game she made to display at the fair. A sign up sheet was passed around. Gary would like the pollinator presentation for the September 14th Valley Grove Society event. Ashley has cheat sheets.

FLOOD RELIEF COST-SHARE VOUCHER PAYMENT:

Motion by Bob Duban seconded by Jerry Courson to approve the following 2013 flood relief cost share voucher for payment:

CSFR13-007 Chris Donkers-9625 150 St. E Nerstrand-2 sediment basins- Wheeling Township Section 5 - $10, 211.99.

Ayes: Duban, Courson, and Wagenbach. All ayes. None opposed. Motion carried.

FLOOD RELIEF C-S AMENDMENT ESTREM FARMS AND PARTIAL PAYMENT:

Motion by Jerry Courson, seconded by Bob Duban to approve a flood relief cost share amendment to increase the contract amount to $64,800.00 because of increased tile size and borings for the following contract:

CSFR13-013 Estrem Farms-13864 Kane Ave-Nerstrand- Northfield Section 27 Sediment Basins.
Ayes: Duban, Courson, and Wagenbach. All ayes. None opposed. Motion carried. Four out of 15 sediment basins are complete. Bore line under 246.

Motion by Jerry Courson, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the following partial payment:

CSFR13-013 Estrem Farms -13864 Kane Ave-Nerstrand-Sediment Basins Northfield Section 27 $53,561.42.

Ayes: Duban, Courson, and Wagenbach. All ayes. None opposed. Motion carried. Four out of 15 sediment basins are complete.

**FLOOD RELIEF C-S AMENDMENT FOR TOM FURLONG:**
Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Jerry Courson to approve an amendment to the FR13-003 State Cost Share Flood Relief Contract to increase the amount to $33,495.75 and extend the expiration date to April 10, 2015. This increase was due to further survey and design work by area office staff. Ayes: Duban, Courson, and Wagenbach. All ayes. None opposed. Motion carried.

CSFR13-003-Tom Furlong-5998 177 St. W.-Faribault-Wells Section 7 – Grade Stabilizer $33,495.75. This is a 2013 flood relief grant cost share contract.

**2012 CWMA CONTRACT AMENDMENT:** We are asking BWSR to extend this agreement so jobs can be completed by contractor. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Jerry Courson to approve a contract amendment sent to BWSR for the 2012 Cooperative Weed Management Area grant to extend the deadline from December 31, 2014 to December 31, 2016. Ayes: Duban, Courson, and Wagenbach. All ayes. None opposed. Motion carried.

**FLOOD RELIEF C-S CONTRACT LEONARD PETRICKA:** Motion by Jerry Courson, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the following 2013 Phase #3 Flood Relief Contract:

CSFR#13-016 Leonard Petricka-15414 Shieldsville Blvd-Faribault-Wells 5-four sediment basins - $11,526.57

Ayes: Duban, Courson, and Wagenbach. All ayes. None opposed. Motion carried.

**REVISED DNR OB WELL AGREEMENT:** Rates to read the DNR OB Wells have increased from $15 to $30 each since the recent agreement was signed. Motion by Jerry Courson, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the revised Department of Natural Resources Observation Well Agreement effective July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. Ayes: Duban, Courson, and Wagenbach. All ayes. None opposed. Motion carried.

**SE MN WRB FEEDLOT VI GRANT AGREEMENT:** Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Jerry Courson to approve the SE MN Water Resources Board Feedlot VI Agreement for $10,000 effective until December 31, 2016. Ayes: Duban, Courson, and Wagenbach. All ayes. None opposed. Motion carried. Grant is reimbursable.
1ST UNITED BANK CD MATURES JULY 14, 2014. A list of interest rates from several banks were reviewed. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Jerry Courson to move the CD that matures July 14 at 1ST United Bank to Reliance Bank for 12 months at .70% interest. Discussion followed. Ayes: Courson, Duban and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

ACCEPT SPENCER HERBERT'S RESIGNATION: Spencer Herbert has taken a position with the MN Department of Ag in Mankato and July 24 will be his last day. Uncertainty of grant funding was the main reason for the decision. Motion by Jerry Courson, seconded by Bob Duban to accept Spencer Herbert’s letter of resignation with regrets from the board. Ayes: Courson, Duban and Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Spencer thanked the board for the opportunity to work here.

AUTHORIZE ADVERTISING FOR NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST: Motion by Jerry Courson, seconded by Bob Duban to authorize advertising to fill the position of Nutrient Management Specialist. Steve Pahs will speak with Beth Kallestad and coordinate with the Personnel Committee.

SUPERVISOR REPORTS: Jerry Courson said last BALMM meeting covered forest stewardship. Revised campaign will contact 150 landowners in targeted SE area on available programs. U Tube has a video called “Ditch the Rule” that he recommended viewing. Gary and Tom spoke on FSA taking sediment basins off cropland acres and on tax status.

D.C. REPORT by Tom Coffman:

1. SOIL EROSION: With 11”-12” of rain in June, we are witnessing horrific soil erosion again. Some farm fields are decimated from erosion. This begs the question; is corn-bean rotation sustainable on sloping land with present tillage systems? I say no. Wouldn’t it be sad if our generation goes down in history as ruining the land and water with the corn-bean rotation? Terraced land and no-tilled land performed well.

2. PROGRAM ACTIVITY: Due to heavy rains in June, we are seeing an increase in requests for financial assistance to control soil erosion. EQIP and CCRP are being requested. It is unfortunate that our EQIP cropland funding pool is out of funds.

3. U OF M EXTENSION- DECISION SUPPORT TOOL TO RESTORE IMPAIRED WATERS: U of M Extension is in the process of developing computer watershed decision supporting tools to be used by resource professionals to improve water quality in MN impaired waters.

4. STORM DAMAGE REPORT-Added paragraph on soil erosion. Storm damage reports and media coverage seem to show and talk about drowned out crops. Seldom do we hear about the damage to the land from soil erosion. I requested Rice FSA CED to add a paragraph to his report on the significant soil erosion that has occurred this past month.
DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs:  Fair amount of issues in Spring Creek Watershed (south of Northfield.)  Steve will meet with McGhee and Bets tomorrow. Rice County Fair breakfast is next week and we’ll recognize Eggums and Judith Bechtum. Steve has FEMA meeting same morning. July 29 is date for county budget requests. County budget will be handled differently than in the past, as using committees now. No written report.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST’S REPORT by Spencer Herbert:  Over the past month I continued work on the plan for Nate Kuball (Rice), and met with Tom Lexvold (Goodhue) and Peter Burfeind (Goodhue) to gather info and begin their plans. I am nearly finished with both Kuball and Lexvold. The plan for Peter Burfeind is a CNMP that a private consultant had been working on previously, but there were communication issues and Peter was referred to me. The plan needs a lot of work and will be time consuming to pick up another individuals work. However, Peter was able to supply me with a lot of past information and correspondence that will help.

I worked a lot on items related to the Soil Health Tour that we will be hosting next month. I visited Jim’s farm once for planning, and then again when the seeding was being done by the coop. I visited ETS with Steve to see if they would be present on the day of the tour. They said they would and we also got a quick tour which was very interesting. I’ve been in contact with others for sponsorship or presentation opportunities. I think we have a good start on things so far.

I also put some time into my CRWP contract work. Time was spent gathering contact information for the identified landowners, drafting and mailing an outreach letter, and following up with phone calls to the individuals. There were a few interested landowners that I will continue to work with.

Looking ahead: Complete plans for Kuball, Lexvold soon. Burfeind will be finding the missing pieces and completing them. Jeff King should be a good help on this plan. I will continue to put time into tour planning as needed, as well as my CRWP work.

FARM BILL TECHNICIAN REPORT by Ashley Tabery:

Past Month:
- Meeting with Springs on whole farm conservation plan
- Prep for County board meeting and presentation to board
- Drill to McFadden and Maas
- CRP eligibility site checks, and eligibility paperwork to FSA for ~10 contracts
- Construction checks and vouchers for Donkers, Strouth, Estrem, Klapperich
- Survey and design for Petricka
- EnviroScape, soils and native plant ID for Lonsdale and Montgomery summer KidZone program
- CPR training
- CWMA site visit with Paro, and paperwork to ask for CWMA grant extension
- Flood damage complaint site visits for Dreslow and Walker
- Award pictures/info gathering/articles with Bechtum and Eggum
- Organized and started annual state cost-share site inspections
- Created pollinator display for county fair
- Sand creek paperwork for payments, and submission of Fuchs application

**Upcoming:**
- Use pollinator display at fair, and farmers markets
- LincPass enrollment
- Waterway training
- Approximately 25 CRP site visits, and writing of cons. plans/contracts
- RIM inspections for 12 contracts
- Continue to work on state cost-share site inspections
- Sand Creek projects follow through

**OTHER/CORRESPONDENCE:**

**ADJOURN:**  Acting Chairman Wagenbach adjourned the meeting at 10:55 am

Respectfully submitted by:

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Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

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Board Member