PRESENT: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Gary Wagenbach, Steve Pahs, Travis Hirman, Tom Coffman, Nicole Schaffer, Debbie Skarupa and Jenny Mocol-Johnson, from BWSR.

ABSENT: Jim Purfeerst

Chairman Gary Wagenbach called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

INTRODUCE JENNIFER MOCOL-JOHNSON: Board welcomed our new BWSR Board Conservationist Jennifer Mocol-Johnson. Jenny worked for Rice County for 8½ years and now has a BWSR office in Mankato. She discussed the Rice County Water Plan and buffers.

SOIL HEALTH TOPIC: Tom Coffman showed a NRCS video on the Science of Soil Health about how live roots in the soil create microbial mineralization and add nutrients to the soil making fertilizer and thereby increasing profits. Tom also showed two Lester Loam soil samples. The clump from strip till corn/soybean rotation had much less compaction and better aggregate structure than the soil from the conventional till corn/soybean rotation.

MINUTES: Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the August 10, 2015 board minutes with a correction. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL/BILLS PAYABLE: Financial statements were reviewed. Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Richard Cook to approve the August financial report and bills payable subject to audit. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

CTIC TOUR: The National Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) Tour was August 12 in Goodhue and Rice County. Stops included Hmong vegetable farming, Fargaze Peterson Farms in Northfield, the Dave Legvold farm in Northfield, and sites in Goodhue County. Gary, Nikki, Bridget, Tom, Jim and Richard Cook attended. Tom Coffman and Jim Purfeerst spoke on cover crops. Tom felt there was a good mix of people in attendance and it was good to have agency people see practices on the land. CTIC gives presentations at the NACD Convention.
**BWSR TOUR AUGUST 26:** The Board of Water and Soil Resources board tour on August 26 was also in Goodhue and Rice County. This tour started in Red Wing and included a boat tour of Lake Pepin. Gary, Richard Cook and Steve did the full tour. Nikki, Travis, Bridget, and Justin also attended. Overall it was a good tour with diverse sights and was well received.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**BWSR ACADEMY:** Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the October 27-29 BWSR Academy registration fees for four people. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**2016 BWSR CONSERVATION DELIVERY & C-S GRANTS:** Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the 2016 BWSR Conservation Delivery, Easement and Cost Share Grants for $40,964.00. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**PERSONNEL POLICY HANDBOOK REVISION:** Steve felt the $1,750 medical insurance deductible will be best given to an employee in a lump sum rather than $350.00 per month within two months of starting insurance. Discussion. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the following changes to Section 2.2 Health Insurance in the Employee Handbook: Employees are eligible to enroll after 30 days of employment. The SWCD will pay 100% of the monthly premium for individual coverage and 50% for a spouse and/or children. New full-time employees will also receive a one-time deposit into their Health Savings Account equal to the annual deductible for an individual. (Redundant sentences were also removed.) Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**BWSR 2015 FLOOD RELIEF PHASE 2 GRANT AGREEMENT:** Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Richard Cook to approve the BWSR Flood Relief 2015 Phase #2 Grant Agreement for $121,500.00 and set the cost-share rate at 90%. Includes 10% landowner contribution. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**AMEND DATE BRENT FUCHS SCOTT WMO AGREEMENT:** Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Dick Peterson to amend the completion date from 12/31/14 to 12/31/16 for the Brent Fuchs Scott WMO Contract #14-35. Project was originally approved in August 2014 and should be completed this year. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**STATE C-S CONTRACT APPROVAL:** Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the following 2015 regular state cost-share contract application:


Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Cost share rate is at 50%.

**ADOPT-A-HWY AND CANNON RIVER CLEANUP:** Adopt-A-Hwy commitment with Rice County is finished. Board needs to decide if they want to continue cleaning ditches.
along 9th Avenue SW or discontinue it. Discussion. We could participate in the Cannon River Cleanup instead. Board decided to discontinue doing Adopt-A-Hwy. To clean up the Cannon River on September 19th from 9:00 am to noon, please sign up on the www.crwp.net website.

AREA7 SEMASWCD MEETING: Board received agenda and information about the SEMASWCD Joint supervisors and staff meeting September 15 in Elgin. Supervisors and staff will carpool. Gary would like to carpool from Kenyon. Deb will write registration check.

NEW NO-TILL DRILL: Steve received a quote from Lodermeier’s for a new Great Plains no-till drill. Steve anticipates we’ll need both drills due to the buffer strip legislation. Currently, drill is in for about $3,000 worth of repairs to gear box due to rust because of outside storage. Jenny Mocol said Buffer Implementation Funds can be used to purchase a new no-till drill, but grant application must be signed by both parties before a check is written to pay for the drill. Discussion. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Bob Duban to approve the order of a new Great Plains no-till drill with appropriate tarp to protect it from the elements. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

TRAVIS HIRMAN ONE YEAR PROBATION PERIOD: Nutrient Management Specialist Travis Hirman started a year ago. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Bob Duban to approve Travis Hirman coming off the one year probation period making him a permanent employee and thank him for his service. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

MN AG WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM: This was a pilot program last year that has now been extended to all of MN. Funds are based on crops and size of the county. Discussion. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to authorize the district manager to request funds and sign grant for the MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FY 2016 $20,000.00 DISTRICT BUFFER IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING: Some staff and supervisors attended the August 11 meeting at the Rice County Government Services Building with Kurt Deter. Kurt felt legislative wording is fairly vague with little policy making authority. Tom wondered if it is “Protected” or “Public” waters. Gary Wagenbach handed out his one page summary sheet on buffer implementation. Jenny Mocol-Johnson said she drafted a buffer plan for the commissioners. Compensation like the ditch systems, public comment meetings, preparation, redoing DNR maps with waterways/fields, CRWP’s maps, BWSR GIS person’s maps, getting files up to date, timelines, newspaper and media coverage, advertising for more staff and equipment, county ditches, aerial maps, etc. were discussed. Invite DNR Hydrologist Todd Piepho to our next board meeting. Letters sent from SWCD must be accurate. In Olmsted County, both SWCD and Planning and Zoning signed the letters. Collaborate with other counties? Is Conservation Plan still in the plan? Can’t use it a lot. Best to have a strategic meeting on buffers after we have money for it.

Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to authorize Steve Pahs to apply for the Buffer Implementation Funding of $20,000 and sign the associated grant agreement with
BWSR. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**PRIORITIZING $100,000 BUFFER FUNDING:** Steve reviewed BWSR info sheets and what funding can’t be used for (debt, building, match loans, reduce county allocations, trucks, etc.) Need good work plan. Meeting with legislators paid off. BWSR asking for feedback on application process. Hire additional staff? Share staff with another county? Utilize current staff? Potentially, could be used to make wages competitive to surrounding counties. Employee should be hired ahead so they understand the process. Discussion. Will put Buffers on October agenda.

**RESCHEDULE NOVEMBER 11 BOARD MEETING:** November board meeting is on Veteran’s Day. Board rescheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2015.

**SUPERVISOR/OTHER REPORTS:** Richard Cook mentioned Root River and the conservation projects. He felt it’s good to include the Cannon River Watershed Partnership as part of our work group. Need to collaborate with partners. Gary Wagenbach said a new director has been hired. Dick Peterson said Emerald Ash Borer is noted in Scott County, Dakota County and Olmsted County now. Private ditches might be petitioned to public ditches.

**D.C. REPORT by Tom Coffman:**
1. Workload
   Presently, we are busy with CRP and CCRP renewals/extensions. Construction is happening on one WRP easement, one EQIP, and one state cost share job.

2. Cover Crop Aerial Seeding
   We will be doing some aerial seeding this week on several Rice Co farms. Many will be seeding either 70-80 acres of cereal rye and some will throw in four to five pounds of Daiken radish.

3. MN Soybean Growers
   I was asked by the MN Soybean Growers to prepare a 20-30 minute presentation on sustainability to a group of 200-300 foreign visitors this Saturday at Richie Brothers.

**DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs:**
A lot of drainage ditch projects this fall. Staff as a whole is busy. No written report given.

**DISTRICT TECHNICIAN’S REPORT by Bridget Evers:**
- Needs with Colin
- CTIC Tour
- BWSR Tour
- Buffer meeting
- CRP eligibility checks
- Groundwater training
- CRP contracts in Toolkit
- Scott County WMO projects
- Outstanding conservationist award application
• Surveyed with Nikki

Upcoming:
• 2 day Toolkit Training Sep. 9-10
• Area 7 SEMASWCD Meeting Sep. 15
• Cannon River Meeting
• CRP contract writing

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT REPORT by Travis Hirman:
• Attended a crop management field day in Lewiston
• Participated in the soil health trip to Bismarck.
• Began and finished a MMP update for Schmity Holsteins in Owatonna. They are a dairy operation undergoing a small expansion and have not updated since 2008.
• Completed a new MMP for Estrem farms in Northfield, a small hog operation.
• Attended the groundwater workshop at Cascade Meadows in Rochester. Several speakers presented topics covering technical and social impacts of groundwater management.
• Helped Justin with the no-till drill program
• Attended the BWSR tour.  
• Work with the MDA outreach program has been largely nonexistent lately, but going forward it will pick up. As corn reaches maturity in mid to late September, we will begin basal stalk nitrate testing, which will consume a lot of my time.

RESOURCE SPECIALIST REPORT by Justin Fuchs

Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)
• City of Northfield wetland creation on Woodley St.
• No Loss application for incidental wetland for construction of cul-de-sac.
• Field review for possible WCA fill violation on Lake Mazaska.
• Field review for Faribault Foods possible expansion and relocation for new facility on property with multiple wetlands.
• Agricultural activity exemption for wetland drain on local farm.
• Possible culvert re-position next to wetland that flows under road.
• Meet about potential wetland drain on Ag land for wetland banking (2 acres).
• Delineation review for culvert replacement on CSAH 30.

Re Invest in Minnesota (RIM)
• Meet with multiple landowners around easement in Lonsdale, MN.
• Multiple meetings consisted of clarifying easement responsibilities of landowners and in process of retrieving signatures for new conservation plans with new landowners around easement boundary.

OTHER/CORRESPONDENCE: None

ADJOURN: Chairman Gary Wagenbach adjourned the meeting at 11:15 am.
Respectfully submitted by:

_____________________________
Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

_____________________________
Richard Cook – Board Secretary