PRESENT: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, Gary Wagenbach, Steve Pahs, Bridget Evers, Travis Hirman, and Debbie Skarupa.

ABSENT: Tom Coffman

Chairman Gary Wagenbach called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

SOIL HEALTH TOPIC: Bridget Evers talked about her internship at Kansas State University in 2012. Kansas doesn’t till and most of the region is in no-till with foothill region in native grasses. In spring, plots were sprayed and then planted. Some used inoculants on seeds before planting without fertilizer, others with side dressings of nitrogen. Crops were winter wheat, sorghum, canola, sudangrass, corn, and soybeans. Organic matter was discussed.

MINUTES: Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Richard Cook to approve the November 12, 2015 board minutes. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

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

MASWCD ANNUAL CONVENTION: Annual MASWCD Convention was held Dec 7 and 8th at the Doubletree in Bloomington. Tom Coffman, Bridget Evers, Bob Duban, Jim Purfeerst, Dick Peterson, and Gary Wagenbach attended. Also attending with their wives for two days were 2015 Outstanding Conservationists Richard and Robert Sommers. Buffers were discussed - See comments below. Media session at convention was reviewed by Bridget and Gary.

BUFFERS – STATUS – LEADERSHIP TEAM: There were sessions at the convention on the new buffer law. Determination of “other” waters and County Water Plan was discussed. Other waters is local decision by county. SWCD doesn’t want to be ditch cops. Other topics discussed were surface water, tiling, Discovery Farms, LeSueur County letters, Lake Pepin runoff, tile outlets possibly regulated as point source under MPCA regulation, ditch redeterminations, buffers can be hay or grazed, county ditches receive payments but
not allowed to graze, news releases, KDHL Radio is a good forum. DNR maps on web are from 1990. Lake Pepin surface runoff is 65% from stream bank erosion. Gary proposing media outreach goal over a two to three year period. Jenny Mocol or CRWP can help with press releases. Eye-grabbing bulletin board on buffers would be good. Also discussed partnering with Steele or Goodhue, Leadership Team, winter meetings, some interpretations could be revisited, align with county, get help with draft wording, invite commissioners into the process, do memo of understanding or resolution. Invite Administrator Tony Murphy and Commissioner Jeff Docken to board meeting. Gary created a nice outline/timetable. Put buffers on agenda next month.

SOIL EROSION ORDINANCE: Not prepared to discuss. We have not received any complaints. Steve said he will start media campaign after we have some answers.

NEW BUSINESS:

CWMA #12-4 VOUCHER JUDITH BECHTUM: Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the following Cooperative Weed Management Area payment:

CWMA12-4 Judith Bechtum-6010 Dent Ave-Webster-Webster Sec21-Brush Management $750.00.

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

TRIMBLE SURVEY EQUIPMENT: Steve Pahs discussed the quote and $1800 rebate to order a Trimble R10 GNSS survey equipment from Frontier Precision. We can’t order equipment until we receive the $100,000.00 grant from BWSR. Discussion. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Richard Cook to authorize Steve Pahs to proceed to order the Trimble with attachments for $32,250.00 when we receive the buffer grant authorization to start. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

2016 SWCD BUDGET: Steve reviewed the updated 2016 budget line-by-line. Ditch inspection is reimbursed at $42.00 per hour. MASWCD dues will increase. Rent may increase also. Motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Bob Duban to accept the 2016 solid working draft, balanced budget as printed. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT: Steve, Gary and Richard Cook did staff reviews last week and Steve said all is going well and no issues were raised during the process. Gary Wagenbach spoke about a 360 review and stay reviews. County HR and MCIT has tools. Maybe more frequent evaluations.

COST OF LIVING AND WAGE INCREASES: Steve passed out wage increase tables for 2016 and reviewed. Discussion. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the 2016 wage scale worksheet as presented with wage increases effective the first pay period in 2016. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Bob Duban would like to see supervisor salary on the January agenda.
**MN CONSERVATION CORPS INTERN:** The deadline to apply for a MN Conservation Corps intern is soon. Jarett Spitzack was our intern this past summer from NDSU and it was a good experience for him. Office space is a concern now with ten employees already. New staff can be time consuming to teach when we have a lot on our plates. Discussion on value of internships and the future of the industry to be able to explore the field. Internships teach invaluable skills not taught in college. Discussion.

Motion by Bob Duban, seconded by Dick Peterson to proceed to apply for a MN Conservation Corps internship for 2016 summer. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**2014 WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT GRANT CLOSEOUT:** Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Bob Duban to sign the WCA Grant 2014 closeout form. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst and Gary Wagenbach. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Rice County will now forward the 2015 grant that they received in 2014.

**BUFFER LAW COMPLIANCE UPDATE:** Travis Hirman presented maps on proposed buffer locations. Blue lines were current DWI maps which will stay pretty much the same. Yellow lines were public ditches. Pink lines were private ditches that may need one rod buffers. Gary suggested using LeSueur County as an example. Landowners could come into the office before July 1, 2016. Use Beacon, Google Earth, and FSA maps to see different imagery. Discussion was held on filter strips along ditches. Annexing ditches to county ditch system could take 26% of the landowners and at least $10,000 minimum. DNR maps will be available for public comment. Alternate practices, waterways, headwaters, other counties, possible datelines, letters, changes to maps, etc., were discussed. Need meeting timelines. Put on January agenda.

**SUPERVISOR/OTHER REPORTS:** Assorted pamphlets were handed out on managed grazing, invasive species, prairie strips, and more. Bob spoke on Circle Lake improvement. Gary said Army Corps of Engineers is trying to streamline shoreline permit process.

**D.C. REPORT:** None. Tom Coffman Absent

**DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs:** Fall construction has been fairly busy, with a wide variety of projects including several ditch repairs. I’ve also spent considerable time on personnel reviews, the budget, and grant management. It looks like we will not be receiving approval for the Saturated Buffer proposal I submitted, so I’ll have to look at what I can do to strengthen the application for next time.

Specific items I’ve done this month are:

- Many ditch projects
- Met with Fran W. to review workload
- Manager’s meeting in Owatonna
- Middle Cannon Lobe WRAPS meeting
- Completed supplemental documents for new Water Plan
It has been a busy and successful year, and now it is time to report accomplishments, wrap up fall construction, and prepare for spring work. There is generally more meetings to attend this time of year as well, so I expect there will be some time focused on this. Buffers are now and will continue to be a point of discussion, as plans are now underway to implement the new law.

**DISTRICT TECHNICIAN’S REPORT by Bridget Evers:**
- CRP General Sign up Training
- CRP contract writing in Toolkit
- Scott County WMO projects
- Surveyed with Tom and Steve
- Cannon River Meeting
- MASWCD Convention
- Soil Health meeting
- Tri-Lakes Sportsman Club meeting

**Upcoming:**
- General CRP Sign up Dec.1- Feb. 24
- Ground water meeting 1/5

**NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT REPORT by Travis Hirman:**
- Reported on the FY2012 NMP grant; the funds were depleted in April.
- Created new ArcMap files and filing system for NMP producers.
- Harvested another plot for the MDA program. This marks the end of field work for this project.
- Began preliminary mapping for buffer implementation. This includes identifying public and private ditches, and which landowners may need to establish buffers.
- Looking forward: A new MMP for Wayne Peters (Lake City). The MDA program will have at least one more meeting in December, as well as a potential winter meeting with the producers that participated in the program.

**RESOURCE SPECIALIST REPORT by Justin Fuchs**
- Conducted final Well Check in the 2015 season for the MN DNR.
- Meeting with J. Sather and B. Behren about pond permit.
- TEP meeting in Lonsdale about City of Lonsdale utility work on Delaware St. and Florida St.
- Wetland Delineation Review for Ulteig Transmission Line Rebuild, 2nd phase of project.
- Meeting with J. Sather about change in pond permit and excavation regulations with WCA.
• Conducted R. McDonough Wetland Delineation Review in field, found incomplete.
• Met with T. Peterson about McDonough project on site and talked about what can be
done until the Delineation Report can be reviewed in 2016 growing season as well as
possible purchasing of wetland credits.
• Talked with S. Vosejpka and visited property for possible wetland creation in
USFWS easement on southwest side of Circle Lake.
• Contacted M. Malling in regards to this project and possible funding options.
• Meeting with R. McDonough about project and what can be done in meantime
before the Wetland Delineation Report can be reviewed and validated in 2016
growing season.
• Meeting with Tri-Lakes Sportsman Club in Millersburg about donations that they
have given in the past as well as introducing ourselves to the club.
• Met with J. Flaten about cleanout of public drainage ditch and what WCA law
regulates. Drainage Exemption applied.

OTHER/CORRESPONDENCE: None

ADJOURN: Chairman Gary Wagenbach adjourned the meeting at 11:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

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Richard Cook – Board Secretary