RICE S.W.C.D.
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday – December 14, 2016 - 9:00 AM

PRESENT: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Richard Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, Steve Pahs, Thomas Coffman, Leslie Diaz-Alvarez, Colin Williams, Justin Fuchs, Bridget Evers, Travis Hirman, Debbie Skarupa, Supervisor-elect Tim Little, and Supervisor-elect Mike Ludwig.

ABSENT: Gary Wagenbach.

Chairman Bob Duban called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

SOIL HEALTH TOPIC: Steve Pahs showed Julie Fox’s video that was shown at the Millersburg Soil Health Workshop on December 8. Board felt it was a great video and should be on website after it is fine tuned.

MINUTES: Motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Richard Cook to approve the November 9, 2016 board minutes. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Richard Cook, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL/BILLS PAYABLE: Steve reviewed the November financial summary. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to accept the November program record and bills payable subject to a audit. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:
BUFFER LAW STATUS: Travis said DNR released map updates in November. There were maybe six or seven changes in Rice County and two or three small alignments. Legislature may take a closer look at and some revisions may be made in January, February or March. Discussion was held on specific land areas, app on website to submit comments, DNR permits needed to reconstruct waterways, historical map, two square miles, local enforcement, using CRP dollars before the deadline, federal vs state programs, and possible landowner compensation.

SOIL HEALTH WORKSHOP – DEC 8, 2016: The December 8 Soil Health Workshop at the Forest Town Hall was discussed. Board felt the video was outstanding and if tweaked, could go viral. Speakers were great at holding everyone’s interest and to have about 80 people in attendance was amazing. Forest Township was very accommodating and Little Caesar’s pizzas were good. Successful workshop.
RICE CO. COMMISSIONERS AND NEW ADMINISTRATOR MEETING:
Richard Cook thought the November 15, 2016 meeting went well. Sara Folsted, the new county administrator, understands districts and we’re hoping to have more meetings to work together with Rice County.

MASWCD CONVENTION: Steve, Bridget, Bob Duban, Dick Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, and Elaine and Steve Trnka attended the December MASWCD Convention in Bloomington. Discussion: Well represented, nice to network, great location, good sessions, etc. Consider a teacher from Nerstrand or the STEM school for Teacher of the Year Award next year. Larry Richie does a lot of educational sessions for students - even made a teepee and a boat made out of cottonwood tree.

NEW BUSINESS:
AMEND RON STICHA SCOTT WMO #15-15: Discussion. Motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve an amendment to increase the Ron Sticha Scott WMO Contract #15-15 to increase the project cost to $10,670.00 with $8,002.50 (75%) coming from the WMO and $2,667.50 from the landowner. The amendment also extends the deadline to 12/31/17.

WMO#15-15 Ron Sticha 12836 Ottawa Avenue Savage $10,670.00 12/31/17

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

CANCEL RALPH SULLIVAN SCOTT WMO #15-44, 15-45, 15-46: Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to cancel the following Scott WMO contracts that expire on December 31, 2016:

WMO#15-44 Ralph Sullivan - 30095 151 Ave New Prague 2 sed basins. $6956.25
WMO#15-45 Ralph Sullivan - 30095 151 Ave New Prague 1 sed basin $5006.25
WMO#15-46 Ralph Sullivan - 30095 151 Ave New Prague 2 terraces $8381.25

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

1W1P MEMO OF AGREEMENT: Steve explained the One Watershed One Plan Memo of Agreement that all partners will sign. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve signing the One Watershed One Plan - Cannon River Watershed Memo of Agreement. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FR 13-021 BRIDGEWATER TWP. AMENDMENT ADDITIONAL COST: Steve reviewed the project. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the amendment to increase the project cost by $13,767.75. Discussion. Steve said project has been approved by BWSR staff and they are satisfied with it. Project cost was increased due to removing trees that engineer initially thought did not have to be removed. Discussion. Vote: Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.
FR 13-021 BRIDGEWATER TWP. VOUCHER PAYMENT: Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the voucher payment for the following Flood Relief Phase #3 contract:

FR13-021 Bridgewater Township-Gary Ebling-PO Box 246 Dundas-Lined Waterway Edgebrook Project - $99,019.35

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

FLOOD RELIEF PHASE 3 CLOSEOUT: Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the closeout form for state cost-share flood relief 2012 Phase #3 and sign final financial report. Phase #3 deadline is December 31, 2016. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

2016 CONSERVATION DELIVERY GRANT CLOSEOUT: Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the BWSR 2016 Conservation Delivery Grant closeout and sign final financial report. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

2017 RICE SWCD BUDGET APPROVAL: Steve passed out a budget worksheet and reviewed. Some grant dollars are pass through dollars. We are fiscal agent for One Watershed One Plan and will receive about $2,000.00. Motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Richard Cook to approve the 2017 budget. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE/ANNUAL WAGE ADJUSTMENTS/EMPLOYEE REVIEWS: Richard Cook and Bob Duban met with all the employees and are pleased with staff. Good to know their challenges also. Have as good a staff as any and future looks bright. Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve 2% cost of living allowance for 2017 as proposed and also the changes in the wage scale for the technicians effective January 1, 2017. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.


RICE COUNTY COVER CROPPERS LLC: Tom is meeting this afternoon with a handful of producers to discuss Limited Liability Corporation options. Group could purchase a used Hagie to interseed cover crops into corn. Should district do rental program? Better if group of landowners run with a prototype. Limited liability corporation options were discussed. Bob Duban mentioned palmer amaranth was in cover crop seed and prairie CRP seed according to a Farm Journal article. Hartmann’s set up works. Discussion. Steve passed around annual rye roots from Jeff Jirik’s land seeded with Dew Drop. More discussion. Add Julie Fox’s video to YouTube and website after it’s fine-tuned. Add NRCS soil health PowerPoints to our website.
**CRWP $5,000 PROPOSAL (6-5-4 FUNDS):** Proposed CRWP $5,000 project was discussed. Board recommended offering incentives for shoreline restoration projects.

**$20,000 BWSR BUFFER LAW IMPLEMENTATION GRANT:** Motion by Richard Cook, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the 2017 BWSR Buffer Law Implementation Grant Agreement for $20,000.00. Ayes: Richard Cook, Robert Duban, Dick Peterson, and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** Bob Duban and Tom Coffman were thanked for their many years of service. It’s been an honor to work with them and they will be missed along with Gary Wagenbach.

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

1. **CONSTRUCTION:** Construction is done as of today due to the cold weather. This is Mn. Tilers may start up again if snow cover pulls frost out of the ground.

2. **CRP CLEAR (Clean Lakes, Estuaries, & Rivers):** 1.1 million acres added to a number of key CRP practices. Practices include bioreactors and saturated buffers.

3. **LAST REPORT:** It’s with mixed feelings that I am giving my last DC Report. It’s been a challenging and rewarding 30 years in Rice County. The diversity of the land and the farmers have truly made my job interesting and most satisfying. Rice County landowners and farmers have been a joy to work with. I truly will miss that aspect of the job. When I arrived here in June 1986 from Owatonna, the board was made up of Lincoln Paulson, Wally Hildebrandt, Dean Cates, Roger Keller and Rene Koester. Staff was Ceil Duchene, Tim Labs and Ron Maas.

**DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs:** We rely on Tom for a lot, he knows the land and the people and will be missed. R & B Labs will be doing nitrate testing with Dept. of Ag and we’ll get money to assist to test for nitrates in wells. Will send letters offering free tests for Northfield, Bridgewater, Morristown and Cannon City Townships. One Watershed One Plan will be starting soon and a little work being done on ditches.

**OTHER/RETIREMENTS:** Justin Fuchs discussed RIM easements, electronic filing of WCA files, and the Faribault Foods site dewatering on the Peroutka easement.

We recently lost Wally Hildebrandt who was a Rice SWCD supervisor for more than 50 years. He will be missed. Money was collected for flowers or a plant.

Tom Coffman made Bob Duban and Gary Wagenbach a wooden plaque engraved with the words, “I consider the soil conservation districts’ movement one of the most important developments in the whole history of agriculture.” H. H. Bennett 1959. We will miss them. Bob said he has enjoyed working with staff. Biggest positive change he’s seen: tillage procedure changes from mold board plows - less black soil in the fields in the fall.
DISTRICT TECHNCIAN’S REPORT by Bridget Evers:
- New CRP contracts
- State Cost Share projects Survey and Designs
- SWCD Convention
- Scott WMO projects
- Soil Health Day
- Reporting

Upcoming:
- Continue New CRP Sign ups
- Survey and designs for Cost share items and CRP program (wetland restorations)

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT REPORT by Travis Hirman:
- Attended CNMP training from NRCS staff in Owatonna.
- Spoke to a St Olaf class about the district and what we do. We also discussed the Des Moines water works case and buffer law, along with general conservation topics.
- I took soil samples from fields to send in for the Haney soil health test.
- Most of my time was spent with buffer implementation. I continued to field phone calls and meet with landowners to answer questions and plan for buffer installations. I spent time in the field assessing specific parcels for compliance, and flagging buffers when necessary.
- Looking ahead: Continue to work on buffer implementation. I am planning to send out a second round of letters this winter. We also must complete the “other waters” part of the buffer law, which is due by July 2017.

RESOURCE SPECIALIST REPORT by Justin Fuchs:
- Meet with DNR staff on-site to review old wetland delineation regarding the Mill Towns State Trail Faribault connection along Lyndale Ave Hwy 21 in Faribault.
- Meet delineator on-site to review wetland delineation at Faribault Aldi distribution facility north of Faribault for an expansion.
- Retirement Lunch for Gary and Bob at The Depot after Board meeting.
- Meet on-site with delineator about Veseli Solar Garden wetland delineation.
- TEP meeting for Rice County Highway Department culvert and bridge 66J72 replacement.
- Hoehn R.I.M. wetland embankment pre-construction meeting with Mike Malling with USFWS and landowner.
- Attended Rice County GIS Day.
- TeePee Tonka bridge restoration wetland delineation review.
- Cedar Lake Association meeting with U of M and DNR staff about potential future projects for improving water quality and vegetation management.
- Pre-construction meeting with BWSR engineer and Hackett Construction about Hoehn R.I.M wetland embankment construction.
- Hoehn R.I.M construction checks.
- Various residents coming in for interest in wetland banking.
- WCA site checks and wetland boundary flagging for a few residents.
- Reached out to R. Barnes with Natures Acres to find a resolution or to see if a surveyor was contacted, and I haven’t heard any response back.

**ADJOURN:** Chairman Robert Duban adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Submitted by: __________________________

Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

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Board Secretary - Dick Peterson