PRESENT: Mike Ludwig, Richard Peterson, Jim Purfeerst, Steve Pahs, Teresa DeMars, Travis Hirman, Debbie Skarupa, and Rice County Commissioner Jeff Docken.

ABSENT: Tim Little and Richard Cook

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

NEW DISTRICT TECHNICIAN: Emmie Peters, our new district technician, stopped in before the meeting to introduce herself.

MINUTES: Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the October 12, 2017 board minutes. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL/BILLS PAYABLE: Steve reviewed the financial statements. Motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve the October Program Record and bills payable subject to audit. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: BUFFER STATUS: Rice County has approved the Rice County Buffer Ordinance and fees were outlined for non-compliance. First 11 months, zero fine; $50/month for the next six months; and then $200/month until corrected. Fines are charges on a parcel by parcel basis. Rice County Commission Jeff Docken felt the fees are fair and there is enough time allowed to be in compliance. Discussion on options for technical assistance, permission to enter landowner property, working with conservation officer, GPS 50’ measurement, Waiver A and Waiver B. Landowners have 11 months from date of violation notice so can accommodate a late harvest. Commissioner Docken said if a landowner is non-compliant, the county attorney’s office would write a letter and handle enforcement. He said he has two meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. Jeff talked about spraying and mowing county road ditches.

MASWCD CONVENTION: Annual MASWCD Convention will be Dec 3-5 at the Doubletree in Bloomington. Board will register and pay for themselves.
NEW BUSINESS:
STATE C-S RATES AT 75% VS 50% TO MATCH SOIL ORDINANCE:  SWCD cost-share rate was previously changed from 75% to 50% to make state cost-share funds go further. Now however, percent needs to be the same as the 75% for soil ordinance. Discussion. Motion by Mike Ludwig, second by Dick Peterson to raise the state cost-share rate from 50% to 75% effective with the 2018 state cost-share year. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

2018 LOCAL CAPACITY FUNDS – SET WORK PLAN:  BWSR will give us an additional $14,400 if the county will fund us at the 2017 budget amount. Our grant was increased by $18,000 in 2017 that way. Steve reviewed. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the 2018 Local Capacity work plan budget totaling $114,400.00 as set by Steve. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

CRWP 6,5,4 COVER CROP FUNDING:  Motion by Mike Ludwig, second by Dick Peterson to approve the following cover crops payments from CRWP’s 6,5,4 funding:

| CRWP 17-03  | Dave Buck - ABCD Dairy | 41.6 acres at $30/ac | $1,248.00 |
| CRWP 17-02  | Paul Liebenstein – Wolf Creek Dairy | 50.0 acres at $30/ac | $1,500.00 |

Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Balance of funding will be returned to Cannon River Watershed Partnership.

COVER CROP PAYMENT RICHLAND DAIRY:  Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the following District Capacity 17 cover crop payment:

| CC17-05    | Richland Dairy 21546 Jacobs Ave Kenyon Rich Sec 3&4 | $3,153.00 105.1 ac |

Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

2012 FR PHASE#4 CLOSE OUT AND REIMBURSEMENT TO BWSR:  Some flood relief contracts were completed with EQIP funds and no other contracts are eligible. Motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Dick Peterson to close out BWSR C-S 2012 Flood Relief Phase #4 Grant and return balance of $105,637.77 to BWSR. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

BWSR 2014 FR PHASE #2 DRAP EXTENSION $121,500.00:  One project for Meyer Trust is yet to be completed. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve extending the 2014 Phase#2 Flood Relief DRAP Grant deadline to 12/31/18. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

RETIREMENT OF ADMIN. ASSISTANT DEB SKARUPA:  Debbie handed in her retirement notification letter on October 27. Discussion. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Mike Ludwig to accept Debbie’s retirement notice with deep regrets. Retirement open house/party ideas were discussed.
**AUTHORIZE HIRING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:** Steve is updating job description. Discussion on hiring a person with QuickBooks experience from a temp service, or running an ad for job interviews, etc. Motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Dick Peterson to start the hiring process for the administrative assistant position. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**1W1P DAKOTA SWCD PAYMENT:** Rice SWCD is the fiscal agent for the One Watershed One Plan Grant and Dakota SWCD is doing the overall administration and eLink. Motion by Dick Peterson, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the payment to Dakota SWCD for $10,598.33 from the One Watershed One Plan Grant as approved by the policy committee. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**1W1P THREE INVOICE PAYMENTS TO EOR:** Motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Dick Peterson to approve three invoice payments to Emmons & Olivier Resources totaling $39,042.94 for the One Watershed One Plan Grant. Ayes: Michael Ludwig, Richard Peterson and Jim Purfeerst. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** Dick Peterson said the Zumbro Watershed District is having a hard time with cash flow, but did get some small grants to stay solvent for six months or so. If money does run out, would lose paid staff and need to use volunteers. Mike Ludwig said he had impressive yields on his aerial seeded cover crop fields. Discussion on cover crops, white mold, and the benefit to county lakes and streams. Later, Mike showed his climate account on his iPad and spoke on white mold impacts. Cover crops and less ponding on cover crop fields with no-till versus conventional till were discussed.

**ACTING D.C. REPORT by Leslie Diaz-Alvarez:**

**FEDERAL PROGRAMS (NRCS)**

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP-EQIP)
- Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification- Funding pool
- Lower Mississippi River Feedlot Management in Minnesota- Funding pool
- Application acceptance deadline for FY 2018 funding will be on Friday March 2, 2018.

Conservation Compliance/Planning (plans, tract splits, 1026’s)
- Received 5 AD-1026 requests this month and addressed 5 previous/current AD-1026 requests
  - Completed 2 - Maintenance Requests
  - Completed 1 - Small Area Exception (open land into production)
  - Completed 2 - Highly Erodible Land determinations

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.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- NRCS accepts CSP applications on a continuous basis.
- The CSP helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation, whether you are looking to improve grazing conditions, increase crop yields, implement no-till to reduce erosion or develop wildlife habitat. Adopting CSP
enhancements can help to achieve a higher level of conservation. The CSP is a 5-year contract.

- Sent 5 letters out regarding 2017 payments.

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**

- NRCS is conducting site needs- structural projects
- Eligibility and screening application deadline for FY2018 applications will be on **January 19, 2018.**

**DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT by Steve Pahs:** No written report. Steve said new office furniture was set up as of yesterday. Will get back out in the field now that crops are coming off. Steve and Teresa made a soil health video and did Rice County cover crop update.

**OTHER/ADDITIONAL STAFF REPORTS:** Travis is continuing with buffers as crops come off. Teresa intends to do one-minute interviews with farmers on what they did and how it turned out at harvest. Teresa developed a new district brochure and gave elementary schools an overview on tree give away similar to Lonsdale Elementary School program. May consider tree give-away similar to Nobles SWCD where individual tree seedlings are bagged and marked for about $80 for 300 seedlings. Dick Peterson said DNR could possibly give away tree seedlings also. Teresa spoke on the Chamber’s Agri Business Ag in the Classroom for third graders.

**RESOURCE SPECIALIST REPORT by Justin Fuchs:**

- Review Aldi distribution addition.
- TEP meeting for Solar Garden Site in Morristown.
- Meet with landowner about tiling in or around wetlands.
- TEP meeting for Koester Development in Northfield.
- Attended the 2-day Minnesota Water Resources Conference.
- Meet with landowner about wetland replacement Webster Township.
- Meet with delineator about wetland delineations on Hersche Road in Faribault.
- Pre-construction meeting on a RIM/WRP easement in Wheatland Township.
- Meet with landowner about Circle Lake/Wolf Creek Cleanout & potential bank sites.
- Stopped ditching and tiling project in wetland in Webster Township near Webster.
- Multiple delineation reviews for the Rice County Highway Department.
- DNR observation well monitoring.
- Drill rentals.

**DISTRICT TECHNICIAN REPORT by Emmie Peters:**

- Around 77 CRP contracts that need to be done by December 15th.
  - 52 re-enrollments
  - 25 new enrollments
- Four state cost share projects that are currently being worked on.
  - 2 fall constructions (hopefully)
  - 2 being constructed next year
- 17 projects on the needs list that need to be looked at for estimates and designs.
NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST REPORT by Travis Hirman:

- I used some vacation time this month.
- Began an MMP update for Dale Spindler (Owatonna).
- Visited Richland Dairy cover crop site, wrapped up cost share plan.
- Most of my time this month was spent on the buffer law. I sent out a 3rd round of buffer letters early in October. Since that time, I have continued to work with landowners over the phone and in office to come into compliance. Weather has delayed harvest, but I was still able to complete some site visits and flag buffers.
- Looking ahead: finish Spindler plan. Continue buffer work, which will include more field visits. May begin targeted efforts to reach landowners who still have not developed a plan for buffer compliance.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Open house for Deb or going out to eat as a group was mentioned. MASWCD Convention registration, Sunday night, and silent auction were discussed.

SOIL HEALTH TOPIC: Steve showed the video he and Teresa made about soil health. It is also on the website.

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

Submitted by: ____________________________
Debbie Skarupa – Admin. Assistant

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Board Member – Dick Peterson