Rice Soil and Water Conservation District
1810 30th St. NW  Faribault, MN 55021
Phone: (507) 332-5408  www.riceswcd.org

RICE S.W.C.D.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY – July 10, 2019 - 9:00 AM

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:  Mike Ludwig, Tim Little, Dick Cook, Dick Peterson and Jim Purfeerst.

Others in attendance: Steve Pahs, Travis Hirman, Emmie Peters, Chris Schmidt, Jarett Spitzack, Jeff Docken, Teresa DeMars.

Absent: none

Chairman Dick Peterson called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. A quorum is present.

MINUTES: Motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Tim Little to approve the June 12, 2019 minutes. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL/BILLS PAYABLE: May program summary available, June is not. June bills payable reviewed.

Motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Jim Purfeerst, to approve the May program summary and the June bills payable, subject to audit. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND FORESTY STEWARDSHIP AWARD

NOMINEES: Steve Pahs, District Manager and Dick Peterson, Board chairman toured the properties of a couple of our award nominees and have determined that Randy and Lori Stangler are the best candidate for the Forestry Stewardship Award for 2019. No Wildlife Conservationist Award will be given this year.

A motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Tim Little to approve Randy and Lori Stangler as the 2019 Forestry Stewardship Award winner. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Ron Wegner #LC18-12, payment of $1,358.00
B. Jeff LaCanne #LC18-11, payment of $875.00

A motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Tim Little to approve the contract payments to Ron Wegner of $1,358.00 and Jeff LaCanne of $875.00, as listed above. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:
**DAN HONKEN #LC18-10, PAYMENT AMENDMENT:** acreage amount was less than anticipated so contract needs to be amended to reflect the change.

A motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the contract amendment for Dan Honken. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**DAN HONKEN #LC18-10, PAYMENT OF $2,009.00:**
A motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the payment of $2,009.00 to Dan Honken. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**MN CREP OUTREACH AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANT AGREEMENT – APPROVE:**
A motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Tim Little to approve the MN CREP Outreach and Implementation Grant Agreement. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL OPTIONS:** The current health insurance plan is up for renewal on September 1. Our current plan is a high deductible of $2200.00, 100% coverage after deductible met. Premium increase is 12%.

A motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the current Health Insurance Plan renewal for September 1. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Discussion: It was suggested that becoming part of a larger group, such as all SWCD’s from the state could possibly reduce premium costs. Or, joining Rice County’s health insurance group. These options will be explored for future renewals.

**2020 DRAFT BUDGET:** The 2020 Draft Budget was due to Rice County by July 6th. District Manager is asking for a 4% increase. We haven’t received an increase in 3 years. On August 20th, the District Manager is scheduled to present the 2020 draft budget to the County Board.

A motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Tim Little to approve the 2020 Draft Budget. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**INTERSEEDER PROGRAM UPDATE:** the leased tractor was returned to the MN Ag Group on July 9th. 488 acres were seeded. 500 acres was the goal. The interseeder worked great with zero mechanical issues, other than a blown fuse. There has been some interest for some fall seeding into soybeans after leaf drop. Names are being taken to see if there is enough interest. Would like to hire someone to operate the seeder next year with one SWCD staff assisting. It really takes two people.

It was suggested that signs be made to advertise the cover crop plots to draw attention to the practice. District Manager will look into this.

**2018 WCA FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT – CLOSEOUT:**
A motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Mike Ludwig to approve the 2018 Final Financial Report All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**LEONA PITTMANN – GRASSED WATERWAY – APPROVE CONTRACT #19CS-02 FOR $1275.00:**
A motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the Leona Pittmann Grassed Waterway contract for $1275.00. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.
LEONA PITTMANN – TERRACES – APPROVE CONTRACT #19CS-01 FOR $5800.00:

A motion by Jim Purfeerst, seconded by Dick Cook to approve the Leona Pittmann Terraces contract for $5800.00. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

RICE COUNTY FAIR CONSERVATION BUILDING VOLUNTEERS JULY 16-21, 2019: Teresa DeMars presented opportunities to be at the conservation building during the Rice County Fair to answer questions, present information and discuss with patrons what soil and water conservation is all about. We will have a butterfly display, a tv showing videos of various practices and a booth with informational flyers.

SUPERVISOR REPORTS:

Mike Ludwig: very happy with the cereal rye cover crop and the weed control. Hoping his cover crop practices will inspire other farmers to cover crop.

Jim Purfeerst: Ed McNamara from Goodhue SWCD has invited all to attend their July 22nd mtg. There will be a tour of his plot prior to the meeting. All are welcome to stay for the meeting.

Recently there have been some articles in the paper regarding the Cedar Lake area septic systems. Is this something the SWCD Board gets involved with, or should be involved with? Provide guidance. Commissioner Docken will make some inquiries.

Also concerned about prevent plant acres with weed problems. Who controls that? Commissioner Docken will look into this.

Dick Cook: nothing to report.

Tim Little: trying to figure out what is happening with cereal rye because it appears the longer the fields are in cover crops, the cereal rye doesn’t look as good. Attended the Legvold field day. About 49 people in attendance showing lots of interest.

Dick Peterson: attended the resolutions meeting at the end of June. Very poorly attended. 8 total resolutions were presented but only 4 passed. Our resolution did not pass. Attended the Zumbro 1W1P kickoff event which had moderate attendance. The next meeting will be in August and he will be unable to attend. Alternate will attend in his place.

DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT: Attended the resolutions meeting with Dick Peterson. Very disappointed that this meeting has become more than just a resolutions meeting. So little time is spent reviewing and discussing the resolutions. He has made suggestion that the focus of this meeting changes.

The cover crop field day at Legvold’s was well attended and successful. It was questionable that the demonstrations of interseeding methods would not take place because of the amount of rain received the previous day but they were able to demonstrate.

July 27th Minneapolis is hosting a World Ag Reporter’s Day and they are looking for a site to host that would showcase cover crop practices.
NRCS REPORT presented by Chris Schmidt, Soil Conservationist:

General:
⇒ Chris Schmidt started as the new Faribault Customer Service Team Lead July 8 serving the counties of Carver, Scott, Le Sueur, Rice, Dakota, Washington, and Ramsey
⇒ Leslie Diaz-Alvarez is on a 60-day detail in Puerto Rico, started June 24

Farm Bill Updates:

EQIP:
⇒ 19 applications have been pre-approved, 4 left to obligate

RCPP-EQIP:
⇒ 1 of the 2 applications was pre-approved, has been obligated

CREP:
⇒ CREP sign-up June 3 through August 23

CRP:
⇒ Continuous CRP sign-up June 3 through August 17, limited practice options

WETLAND/HEL:
⇒ Rice County has 10 drainage requests awaiting a certified wetland determination from the wetland team

ACEP (WRP/RIM):
⇒ Sticha WRP contracts need wetland restoration-planned for summer 2019, prescribed burn and seeding planned for June 2019, working on ownership change and contract transfer

CSP:
⇒ 1 application, application has been ranked, awaiting the CSP pre-approval list

Upcoming Events/Deadlines:
⇒ EQIP application deadline is July 12 for cover crop for prevent plant acres
⇒ August 26 deadline for ranking of EQIP cover crop applications
STAFF REPORTS:

Emmie Peters: working on a CREP application. Will visit a site near Circle Lake where the culvert blew out.

Travis Hirman: working on a manure management plan for DeGrood Brothers. Seeding deadline has been extended to July 14th – still hoping to get the NoTill Drill out to everyone who has reserved it.

Jarett Spitzack: received a number of 1026 forms. Has 3 new wetland delineations to review. Closed out the 2018 WCA grant. Continually learning.

Teresa DeMars: did a radio interview regarding the Rice County Fair with John Dvorak from the fair board and Claire LaCanne from extension office. Working on Fair prep and set up.

Commissioner Jeff Docken: nothing to report.

Motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Tim Little to adjourn the meeting. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Time 11:10 am.

Submitted by:

Sue Erpenbach – Admin. Assistant

Board Member – Richard Peterson