RICE S.W.C.D.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY – September 18, 2019 - 9:00 AM

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

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

Absent: none

Chairman Dick Peterson called the meeting to order at 9:07 am. A quorum is present.

MINUTES: Motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the August 14, 2019 minutes. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL/BILLS PAYABLE: August program summary was reviewed. August bills payable reviewed.

Motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Tim Little to approve the August program summary and August bills payable, as presented, subject to audit. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

CONSENT AGENDA:

A. John Becker #LC18-08 cover crop payment $7294.00
B. Peter Little #LC18-07 cover crop payment $2523.50
C. Stevan Johnson #18CS-01 grass waterway final payment $2992.33

A motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Jim Purfeerst to approve the consent agenda items listed above. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

LAWNS TO LEGUMES PROGRAM UPDATE – DISCUSSION: This program is an opportunity to work with more urban residents focusing on conservation with pollinators in an urban landscape. The window for application will open in November. More information forthcoming.

COVER CROP BWCSR GRANT APPLICATION: New grant opportunity with 1 million available. RFP open now. Grant would fund 4 to 6 projects for first time cover croppers. Total funding per project would be $125,000 to $250,000. This could be more of a regional project, or similar to the Rice Creek Project
where other entities are involved. No guarantee we would get funding. Requires a 10% non-state match. Funding could help facilitate partnerships with other entities. October 24th is the deadline for application. Suggestions or recommendations should be presented at the October 9th Board meeting.

**DISCUSS WINTER COVER CROPS WORKSHOP:** Al Kraus from CRWP was present to speak about a winter cover crop workshop. Discussion revolved around agricultural practices and how that affects the urban drinking water. Limited funding available thru the City of Faribault. Many ideas were tossed around. In the end, further discussion between Al, Steve and Teresa, our outreach and education staff member will take place. Target date will be the first week in December.

**REQUEST EXTENSION OF CANON 1W1P GRANT:** the planning phase of this grant expires at the end of 2019. We need to request an extension.

A motion by Tim Little, seconded by Dick Cook to request extension of grant agreement for the 1W1P grant with BWSR and give the District Manager the authority to sign extension. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Discussion: District Manager will also work to firm up the agreement with consulting firm EOR.

**2018 AUDIT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER – NEEDS SIGNATURE:** This letter states everything we provided to the audit management company for them to complete the annual audit. It will accompany the draft audit when it is sent to the State Auditor.

A motion by Dick Cook, seconded by Tim Little to authorize signing the 2018 Audit Management Representation letter. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**ONE WATERSHED ONE PLAN – RESPONSE NEEDED:** BWSR is requesting a slight change in the boundary for 1W1P and asking all parties in the 1W1P to provide comment and give approval for proposed boundary change.

A motion by Mike Ludwig, seconded by Dick Cook to approve the proposed 1W1P boundary change. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

**SUPERVISOR REPORTS:**

Mike Ludwig: attended the Budget Proposal to the County Commissioners meeting in August. Interesting process. Steve did a very nice presentation. Attended the CRWP field day at Roger Helgeson’s farm on Rice Creek. Very interesting and learned some things, like how water temperature can affect the brook trout. Attended the SEMASWCD Area 7 meeting at Mike Peterson’s farm. He is a great speaker and did a great job speaking on interseeding.

Jim Purfeerst: attended the same meetings with Mike Ludwig. Nothing to add.

Dick Cook: attended 1W1P meeting in September. Committee has addressed corrections BWSR requested, tying up loose ends. Also attended the field day and found it to be very informative. Learned how water temp and nitrates affect the trout.

Tim Little: attended the same meetings as other supervisors. Really feels that John Becker is doing a great job with his land and is very deserving of the Outstanding Conservationist Award.
Dick Peterson: helped Steve build a frame for the new “entering Rice SWCD area” sign for Hwy 60. “Entering Goodhue SWCD area” is on the other side of the sign. Steve, Jarett and Emmie installed the sign.

**DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT:** has returned from his two week vacation but still trying to catch up. Congratulations to Travis Hirman for his 5 year anniversary on September 10th. District manager would like to implement a years of service recognition system for 5, 10, 15 years, etc. Personnel committee will work on establishing a system. The National Convention will be February 8-12 in Las Vegas. BWSR Academy is end of October.

**NRCS REPORT presented by Chris Schmidt, Soil Conservationist:**

**Rice SWCD Board Meeting**

**General:**
- Leslie Diaz-Alvarez is on a detail in Puerto Rico, will return next week
- CST attended a team building training last week in New Prague
- The DC in Waconia and Jordan accepted another position, her last day was August 30, myself and team members will be staffing those offices until a replacement is hired

**Farm Bill Updates:**

**EQIP:**
- 24 contracts have been obligated
- 5 of 30 cover crop for prevent plant applications were pre-approved and obligated

**RCP-EQIP:**
- 1 of the 2 applications was pre-approved, has been obligated

**CREP:**
- 2 CREP applications received and both were approved

**CRP:**
- Continuous CRP sign-up ended August 23
- Emmie completed all plans by the deadline

**WETLAND/HEL:**
- Rice County has 14 drainage requests awaiting a certified wetland determination from the wetland team

**ACEP (WRP/RIM):**
- Sticha WRP contracts wetland restoration work should start next week, had pre-construction meeting last week, prescribed burn and seeding planned for Fall 2019, ownership change and contract transfer are complete

**CSP:**
- 1 application, it has been obligated

**Upcoming Events/Deadlines:**
- NRCS SE area all employee meeting scheduled for October 23
- End of the FY activities to complete include performance reviews, finish obligations
STAFF REPORTS:

Teresa DeMars: has been working on marketing events. KEYC TV out of Mankato attended the Field Day on Sept 16th. We watched both videos they used on their evening news. Completed an article about John Becker for the local newspaper. Also working on the newsletter and her educational outreach tools.

Travis Hirman: No-till Drill is still getting used. Going to Freeborn Cty as much as he can when weather permits.

Jarett Spitzack: Finishing up a few RIM easements. Had jury duty last week so playing catch up.

Emmie Peters: Assisted NRCS completing some CRP applications. Will be meeting with Katie in FSA and these landowners. Has 2 CREP applications. Finished some construction projects before all the rain last week. More projects after crops are off.

ADJOURN: Motion by Tim Little, seconded by Mike Ludwig to adjourn the meeting. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Time 11:13 am.

Submitted by:

Sue Erpenbach – Admin. Assistant

Richard J. Peterson

Board Member – Richard Peterson