

MINUTES FOR THE September 9, 2021, BOARD MEETING OF THE SUPERVISORS FOR THE CLAY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, HELD AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE IN MOORHEAD MN.

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Hildebrandt at 12:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Members present: Joel Hildebrandt, Chairperson
Paul Krabbenhoft, Vice Chairperson (electronically attended)
Carol Schoff, Treasurer
Randy Schellack, Secretary
Robert Anderson, Reporter (electronically attended)

Others present: Kevin Kassenborg, District Manager
Amanda Lewis, District Coordinator
Gabe Foltz, District Technician/ CAI
Tony Nelson, Natural Resources Management Technician
Robert Guetter, NRCS Team Lead
Jenny Mongeau, County Commissioner

Absent: Craig Halverson, District Technician/CFO
Jenna Kahly, County Commissioner

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVE AGENDA: M/S/P, Schoff/Anderson, to approve the September agenda. Motion carried.

MEETING AND MILEAGE FORMS COMPLETED BY SUPERVISORS.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: A draft copy of the August 12, 2021, meeting minutes was emailed to the Supervisors prior to the September meeting. **M/S/P, Krabbenhoft/Schoff to approve the August 12, 2021, minutes.** Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: See Mandy's report.
M/S/P, Schoff/Anderson, to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

APPROVE CLEAN WATER FUND CONSERVATION PRACTICE CONTRACTS REQUESTING AMENDED:

CWF 21-05 D. Watt for a Toe-Wood Sod Mat in the amount of \$24,206.40
CWF 21-04 B. Colbeth for a Toe-Wood-Sod Mat in the amount of \$45,819.90

M/S/P, Schellack/Schoff, to approve the above listed Clean Water Fund Conservation practice Contracts requesting amendment. Motion carried.

APPROVE COVER CROP COST SHARE CONTRACTS REQUESTING PAYMENT:

CC21-01 J. Aakre for Cover Crop in the amount of \$6,750.00
M/S/P, Schellack/Schoff, to approve the above listed Cover Crop Contract payment. Motion carried.

APPROVE VOUCHERS PAID: The list of vouchers from Elect # 2170- 2175 and #20990 - 21011 were reviewed, and credit given to have been paid by due date. **M/S/P, Schoff/Schellack, to approve the vouchers that had been paid as listed.** Motion carried.

HEALTH INSURANCE: See Kevin's report.
M/S/P, Schellack/Schoff, to approve signing the insurance renewal form. Motion carried.

2022 STATE COST-SHARE WORK PLAN OPTIONS: See Kevin's report. Kevin discussed the funds allowed for T/A. Billable rates have increased however the amount allowed from BWSR for T/A has not increased since 2013. The

amount would change from \$3,294 to \$6,468, which would leave \$10,000 for projects. If approved by the Clay SWCD board, BWSR would still have to approve the increase.

M/S/P, Schellack/Anderson, to approve the T/A Cost Share dollar amount increase to \$6,468. Motion carried

Kevin also discussed the option to increase our State Cost-Share rate. The current rate is 50% up to \$5,000 for projects and 50% up to \$1,000 for well sealing. The increase requested would be 75% up to \$5,000 for projects and the well sealing would remain the same as the maximum allowed is 50%.

M/S/P, Schoff/Schellack, to approve increasing the Cost-Share amount to 75% up to \$5,000 for projects and leaving the well sealings at 50% up to \$1,000. Motion carried

CWF: See Craig and Gabe's report.

BUFFER LAW: See Gabe's report.

2022 BUFFER FUNDING: See Kevin's report

2022 COUNTY BUDGET REQUEST: See Kevin's report

BRR 1W1P: See Kevin's report.

WRM 1W1P: See Kevin's report. Kevin discussed Cost-share rates for these projects. Currently we Cost-Share 90% of the total cost to the landowner.

M/S/P, Schellack/Schoff, to approve setting our Cost-Share rate for the 1W1P projects at 90%. Motion carried

REVIEW 3-YEAR TREE/EQUIPMENT STORAGE LEASE WITH STEVE SCHROEDER: See Kevin's report. There was a discussion held on the new lease and what it would entail.

M/S/P, Schellack/Schoff, to approve the 3-year lease at a rate of \$1,500 per year. Motion carried.

SELL ONE NO-TILL DRILL: There was a discussion held. The board decided to table the discussion until next board meeting.

CRESTWOOD POLLINATOR HABITAT PROJECT: See Tony and Mandy's reports.

CREP: See Tony's report

COVID-19 UPDATE: See Kevin's report.

SEASONAL HELP UPDATE: Mandy stated that it has been a joy to work with Jenna Hansen. At the beginning of her employment, we set a salary cap for the season which has been reached. Friday, September 10th will be her last day.

NRCS ITEMS: See Sharon's report. Bob Guetter, NRCS Team Lead, stated that one of the engineer techs from Detroit Lakes moved to Nashville. There was a discussion on the flag protocol for the Federal agencies.

REPORTS:

COUNTY COMMISSIONER: Jenny Mongeau stated that they have been working on the budget. She discussed the budget process.

MASWCD: Paul and Randy have been working on the annual convention plans as well as the Area meeting plans.

PLANNING COMMISSION: Joel stated there was one building permit approved near Ulen. There was a discussion held about the potential storage building for Red River Valley Electric Service on the Buffalo River Aquifer. More to come.

CFO/TREE/NO-TILL DRILL REPORT: See Craig's report.

URBAN CONSERVATION: See Mandy's report.

CAI UPDATE: See Gabe's report.

WCA/LWM/AIS: See Tony's report.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- September 13-17 – Wetland Training – Brainerd
- September 28 – Basic Survey Training – Detroit Lakes
- September 29 – TSA Board Meeting - Mahnommen

ADDITIONAL ITEMS: Carol gave a brief update on the TSA Executive Committee meeting she attended on August 20th. They discussed the PRAP that will be conducted for the TSA as well as revamping employee job descriptions. There will be another Executive Committee meeting on Sept. 20th and a full Board meeting on Sept. 29th where they will be discussing staff evaluations.

NEXT MEETING DATE: October 14th, 2021 @ 4:00 pm at the Clay SWCD District Office.

ADJOURN: Supervisor Hildebrandt called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. **M/S/P, Schoff/Schellack, to adjourn the meeting at 1:27 p.m.** Motion carried.

BY: Amanda Lewis
District Coordinator

Randy Schellack
Secretary

Signature after approved Date

Mandy's September 2021 Report

Financial Reports – I will send the budget vs actual with the agenda. We made our first payment for our clean water grant in the amount of \$43,860.99. I had to transfer \$100,000 from our savings to our checking to make sure our checking account stayed positive.

Pollinator – Tony and I went out to the Crestwood site last Monday to clean up and check out the species that were growing out there. We also went to the flower beds outside of Scheels to do the same thing. Both sites are looking very nice with a lot of desirable species. They have reached their potential for the year but will be back next spring and just as beautiful as ever. If you haven't seen them stop by and check them out.

Office – I have been working with Jenna to get out file cabinets scanned. She has almost finished the file cabinets in my space and has freed up a lot of physical space. Hopefully she will be able to return next summer to complete the rest of the scanning. I will be using the space she freed up for the files from the past 6 years of things that I need to have on file according to our records retention. I submitted all my 2020 financial information to Amy, and she has started our 2020 audit. I will wait to hear from her for our final audit. I was out of the office from Aug 17-30 for a trip to Alaska, and what a trip it was. We went halibut and Salmon fishing while we were there, and I was able to make the guys a halibut lunch one day last week. If you have never been and you have the opportunity, I would not pass it up. Kevin, Gabe, Craig, and I attended a health insurance meeting September 7th with Justin Kroeger. Justin went through the differences between Blue Cross Blue Shield and Medica. Blue Cross isn't offering a plan to small groups for 2021. Medica is not increasing our rates this year and will have basically the same amount of coverage as we have now. The girls in the area attended a Envirothon meeting on Monday Aug. 30th. I was unable to attend the meeting, but it sounds like they are moving forward with having the Junior Envirothon on Oct. 6th at the Prairie Wetlands Center in Fergus Falls. I will take Mary Jo's place to be the MC for the event.... Some pretty big shoes to fill but I will do it in honor of Mary Jo.

Urban Conservation – Tony and I held our last Pollinator Habitat class on Tuesday, August 31 this was the 2nd night of our two-part class which took place out at our Crestwood Pollinator site. There were 18 people registered but only 4 attended. This class was rescheduled from the 17th due to personal reasons so I think that may be why the numbers were so low. Kim and I have scheduled a barrel cleaning at Muscatell on the 5th of October from 1-6:30. We will be working on cleaning the barrels she has at the Riverkeeper storage. There are 39 barrels there. After we complete these barrels, we will move onto the barrels in our storage. We should have enough barrels for our 2022 workshops. Tony and I have been working on getting things ready for the Pollinator Pint night that will be held on Sept 9 from 4-7. Though the event was cancelled through the SWCD, Junkyard will still be having the event and giving out door prizes as well as releasing the Money Honey beer that they brewed special for the event. I will be attending the event as I feel someone from the office should be there encase of questions and to help with the event.

Tour – I cancelled the bus with The Fargo Party Ride. They do not accept cancellations, so we will be on the hook to pay for the bus we reserved. I worked on the flyer for the tour and printed it out thinking we would be able to keep it scheduled, however, it was cancelled so we supplied you all with the tour pamphlet for your information. Hopefully we can hold the event next year.

Craig's September Report

Trees- I am waiting for the 2022 price list. Once I receive that we will discuss prices and get the tree order form ready for 2022.

CFO – I have 4 compliance checks left to complete.

No Till Drills – The drills are moving again for cover crops and alfalfa. One of the drills is currently being stored in Randy's shed.

CWF- We received bids back on the 4 toe-wood sod mat projects. Dave Watts and Bill Colbeth's projects came back significantly different from the estimate so we will amend those contracts to get them 90% of the new cost. With the new bids coming in higher we will not have enough funds in our Clean Water Grant. There was a discussion to use our Dist capacity dollars to help fund the remainder of the projects. Contractors are planning on getting to these projects next spring/summer.

Gabe's September 2021 Board Meeting

CAI:

- Leo has started doing some more spraying, we have 70 more miles planned to complete this Fall. The main focus is on thistles in the Western part of the County, also some areas of leafy spurge, parsnip and tansy
- Craig and I sprayed CR 77 and also did some spot spraying at Crestwood
- MACAI Board Meeting yesterday

Buffer:

- Have done some more monitoring and compliance checks.
- No word from the landowner that the corrective action notice went out to.
- Concerns about our pooling agreement with WOT SWCD not being able to be extended

Cover Crops:

- Jon Aakre planted his 5 species cover crop mix following wheat harvest. Thanks to the recent rains, that is looking good.
- His 3-year payment needs to be approved. He will have two more years to plant cover crops under our contract.



RIM:

- All spot checks are completed and form was sent to BWSR

CWF:

- Bids came back for the 4 toe-wood sod mat projects. Greg Johnson's was close to the estimate, Sidney Smith's was a few thousand above the estimate, and Bill Colbeth's and Dave Watt's were well above the estimates. These two need amendments to increase the price.
- The price increases put us over our CWF budget, so we are planning to use some district capacity dollars to help out.
- Contractors plan on getting to these projects next Spring/Summer depending on conditions.
- Bill Colbeth, Dave Watt, and Greg Johnson want to move forward with their projects. Sidney and Peggy Smith have some concerns about the project and we plan to meet with them on site with the engineers and contractor

Tony's September Report

Re- Invest In Minnesota Projects - Ongoing

- Thompson, Robert – **No Change** - Mowing for MCM, Posted, need RIM signs
- Thompson, Steve – **No Change** Need posting
- Herbranson, Dave – **No Change** Land for sale, working w/ landowner to complete removal of old equipment and clean up farm sites, Need posting
- Hough, Ryan – **No Change** - Grazing plan for RIM Management
- Thompson, Jake – **No Change**-Haying/Grazing plan for RIM

CREP III –

- **CREP application and batching period closed**

- New projects:**

- Jennen-Wilkin Co – **No Change** - Completed CONSPLAN sent to BWSR; awaiting final easement document
 - Askegaard – **No Change** - Waiting for updated abstract; beginning title search/insurance process

- Ongoing projects:**

- G. Hess – **No Change**- Waiting on seeding completion confirmation
 - M. Halverson – **No Change**-Seeding complete; Waiting on seed tags and C/S information from FSA
 - J. Wang – **No Change** - Working w/ FSA to complete state C/S documents for submission

- Applications:**

- K. Olson – **No Change** - Hawley – Working w/ BWSR to finalize application and easement boundary; NRCS cultural resources complete, sent to FSA

- Future CREP:**

- **No Change** - Working w/ BRRWD to explore options for Stoney Creek restoration project on the north end of Barnesville TWP

- CREP Outreach/Implementation RFI**

- Elink Modifications to complete FY 21 Grant; 2022 Outreach and Implementation Grant information forthcoming

WIA Program

- Anticipate the updated atlas anytime

Pollinator

- Pollinator Habitat Workshop field work completed 8/31/21, 4 Participants
- Pollinator sites clean-up and fall maintenance

1W1P

- BRRWD – **No Change**
- WRWD – **No Change**

MN Wetland Conservation Act

-Board Decision Items

- Waiting on comment period for the updated Red River Structure Wetland Delineation, deadline 16 September

-WCA Ongoing

- FM Diversion Authority Red River Structure Wetland Delineation request
- Glyndon East Tributary Restoration Project – Ongoing; jurisdiction is not decided

- Completing wetland delineations; updates and addendums
- Oakport Creation Site 1 – approved updated management plan for cattail management
- Steve Opatril Replacement Site – **No Change**; Weather conditions and results of Site visits to determine COA moving forward
- Howard Pender – **No Change** - determining future course of action for restoration and credit deposit application
- Keene 34 Holte WPA – **No Change** - conducted site survey; sending information to appropriate agencies for review

-Wetland Conservation Act Training

- MN Wetland Professional Certification Program (MWPCP) **Basic Wetland Delineation and Regulation Course:** Brainerd, September 13-17, Central Lakes College; subject to COVID protocol

Aquatic Invasive Species

- Purchased additional outreach items for AIS Awareness
 - Received Coasters, Posters and Can Holders

Conservation Technical Assistance

- **N/A**

News/Meetings/Presentations (Completed)

- **N/A**

Upcoming events News/Meetings/Presentations

- **No Change**

Pheasants Forever

- **No Change** - No word on PF FBB replacement
- 4- Wheeler raffle completed 9/7/2021

Seasons

- **ND Early Goose** on going
- **MN Early Goose and early Teal Season** open

Kevin's Report – September 9th, 2021

Approval Items

Discussion Items

- **2022 Health Insurance** – I attended an informational session on August 24th and staff did a ZOOM meeting with insurance rep. Justin Kroeger on Tuesday. This year Blue Cross Blue Shield is not offering a plan to small pool groups (< 50 employees) such as SWCD's. Lakes Country Services Co-op is working with Medica for these small groups. Because we fall into a Low claims category the Medica plan being offered to us has no increase over 2021 premiums. This plan has basically the same coverage and deductible as the plan we are presently on. We would recommend the board signing the renewal form.

- **State Cost Share Workplan –**
 - FY 2022 cost share funds - \$16,468
 - BWSR allows 20% (\$3,294) for Technical & Administrative (T&A) services (staff time)
 - Staff time used for cost share projects must be charged at our “Billable Rates”
 - Staff billable rates increase/cost share funds have stayed the same since 2013
 - Request increasing T&A to \$6,468 (leaving \$10,000 for projects)
 - BWSR would still have to approve IF Board agrees to this
 - **Discuss & Set:** (we’ve briefly discussed this at recent meetings) –
 - Staff Recommendation -
 - Increase State Cost Share rate from 50% to 75% (Sealing Wells - 50% is the maximum allowed)
 - Keep Maximum \$5,000/project - Wells \$1,000
 - **2022 Buffer Funding – Legislative Follow-up**
 - In recent years - \$5M had been appropriated for SWCD use
 - 2021 - \$3.872M – reduction of \$1.128M
 - SWCD Allocations ???
 - County Riparian Aid funding – \$160,000 - same as in recent years (apparently safe for next year too)
 - **2022 County Budget Request Update –**
 - From Tuesday’s County Board meeting – evidently overall >7% Department requests
 - County Board wants each Department to revisit their numbers
 - Our request – 2.2% (\$5,328) over 2021 allocation
 - **BRR 1W1P** – No meetings lately. We continue to work closely with BRRWD/HEI staff.
 - **WRM 1W1P** – Steering committee members met September 1st to discuss project activity. Some questions again, as to the cost share rates for 1W1P practices. As we found out last month, these funds are treated differently than state cost share funds and if we wanted, we could cost share up to 100% of each project. We, Clay SWCD, have always told landowners we have 90% cost share funds available for structural practices (just as all of us in the Buffalo Red River 1W1P have agreed to). A couple of differences in the WRM 1W1P – Mahnomon SWCD has set their rate at 75%. Becker SWCD has set theirs at 75% unless landowners agree to add an “enhancement i.e., pollinator habitat” then it increases to 90%. Norman SWCD has set theirs at 90%.
- It was discussed and recommended that each SWCD set a policy (for the record) of the % they approve for Structural Practices. **In our case that would be 90%, for each 1W1P.**
- **Review 3-Year Tree/Equipment Storage Lease with Steve Schroeder –**
 - Since 2003, we’ve leased space for tree storage and cooler space in the barn on Steve Schroeder’s farmstead. In addition, we’ve been allowed to store our tractor, tree planters, matting, & matting machine in a shed on the west side of his yard. Steve is adjusting his lease agreement to list both buildings, for insurance purposes. In addition, he’s offering another side of the west shed which would be able to house our rototiller & mower. Since 2014 we’ve been charged \$695/year. With the new lease, Steve is including the additional space and looking to raise the rent somewhere between \$1,200 - \$1,500/year (he said it’s “up to the board”).
 - **Sell One No-Till Drill? –**
 - Do we need 2 drills any longer? Though the program is still popular, Craig’s seeing more & more landowners owning their own no-till drills.
 - Our oldest drill was purchased new in 2009 for \$51,500
 - Has planted about 6,000 acres
 - 2021 Model new cost - \$70,000
 - Selling Price - \$35,000 ??
 - **COVID Update –**

- County Department Meeting as of 9/8/21 – Public Health reports things are ramping up in Clay County
- Clay County has developed a Remote Working Policy
- Some of the Public Health Department staff are partly working remotely already
- USDA offices are still locked down to customers. They are required to wear masks in the office. The producers also must wear a mask when visiting the office.
- **Review Equipment Storage Needs** – discussed briefly last month, we estimate we would need 1,025 ft.² to store the equipment we presently have at Craig's place
- **Seasonal Help Update** –
 - Friday will be Jenna's last day as the time we allocated to her position will be done
 - Still work to do and may look at hiring her again next summer if she's available
 - She's been a pleasure to have around this summer