



STEELE COUNTY
Soil and Water Conservation District

235 Cedardale Drive SE
Owatonna MN 55060
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www.steeleswcd.org

The regular monthly meeting of the Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was called to order by Mike Klecker at 5:00 PM on Wednesday February 8, 2023 at the Steele County SWCD Office, 235 Cedardale Drive SE, Owatonna MN, 55060.

<u>SWCD Supervisors Present:</u>	<u>SWCD Staff Present:</u>	<u>Others Present:</u>	<u>Absent:</u>
Mark Ihlenfeld, Treasurer	Eric Gulbransen	Jim Smith, NRCS	Mark Ditlevson, Chairman
Dan Hansen, PR&I	Adam Arndt	Rick Gnemi, County Commissioner	
Dave Melby, Secretary	Adrienne Gransee	Teddy Moreno-Santos, NRCS	
Mike Klecker, Vice Chair		Dave Copeland, BWSR	
		Roger Wacek	

The February agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

The January minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Melby, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

The January Treasurer’s Report was read by Ihlenfeld. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Melby, to approve the January Treasurer’s Report. Motion was carried by voice vote.

Bills: (See attached) Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Hansen, to approve paying the bills. Motion was carried by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Meeting Reports – Dan Hansen reported on the Cannon River Watershed JPB meeting that he attended on February 1. They reviewed office positions and made no changes for the upcoming year. They selected a lawyer to represent them from those that submitted a bid for the position and they reviewed the projects completed in 2022.

Mark Ihlenfeld and Eric Gulbransen attended the JPB meeting. They reviewed the personnel and financial reports. They also went through the existing grants and the projects that have been completed. Ihlenfeld reported that they are going to be applying for a PRAP grant that they intend to use to complete a workload analysis.

Mark Ihlenfeld reported on the RC&D meeting. They have officially voted to disband. They will be conducting a final financial audit and remaining funds will be disbursed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Updated Policies – Cover Crop Cost Share and No-till/Strip Till Incentive Program - Adam Arndt presented each of the policies and outlined the changes from the original policies. After discussion the following changes were agreed upon for the cover crop cost share policy; the payment for 3 or less species will be \$50 per acre, the payment for 4 or more species will be \$60 per acre and the maximum number of acres will be increased to 160. For the No-till/Strip till policy the following changes were decided upon; payments for strip till will be \$40 per acre, no-till will be \$50 per acre, maximum acres enrolled will be 160 and priority will be given to those who plan to keep the practice on the same field for the entire 3 year contract. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the updated policies as discussed. Motion carried by voice vote.
2. Contract Amendments – Adam Arndt presented three no-till/strip till contract amendments, listed below, to the Board. The contracts are funded through the FY22 Local Capacity grant, are in their first year, and no payments have been made. The amendments would increase the payment rate to match the new policy and increase the acres under contract. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Melby, to approve the contract amendments. Motion passed by voice vote.
 - 1-NT, Amended total \$24,000
 - 1-ST-21, Amended Total \$15,600
 - 2-ST-21, Amended Total \$15,600
3. FY23 Local Capacity Workplan – Eric Gulbransen reviewed the work plan for the FY23 Local Capacity grant with the Board. They were happy with the plan as it was laid out.
4. FY23 Soil Health Grant – Tech Option – Gulbransen requested approval to use the entire FY23 Soil Health grant for technical assistance. These will be staff hours spent working with landowners on a variety of programs designed to help improve the quality of their soil. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the tech option for the grant. Motion carried by voice vote.
5. SCFF Fair Booth – August 15-20, \$225.00 – Adrienne Gransee presented the Board with the contract for the SCFF fair booth for 2023. It will be the same booth that has been used by the District in past years. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the contract and secure the booth for the 2023 fair. Motion carried by voice vote.
6. Day at the Capital – There was discussion about who wanted to attend and which legislators they wished to set meetings with for the March 8 event.
7. Legislative Priorities Review – Dave Copeland provided the Board with an overview of BWSR’s legislative priorities for the current session.
8. New District Laptop & Software – Adrienne Gransee presented the Board with prices for a new HP laptop as well as updated software. The Current District laptop is 8 years old and in need of replacement. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Melby, to approve the purchase of the new laptop and software. Motion carried by voice vote.

Agency Reports

Dave Copeland spoke about the turn out at the Stewartville soil health event. He reported a good turnout, approximately 80 attendees most of whom were producers. He let the Board know that he intends to attend the event in Owatonna on February 21. He gave a brief review of what BWSR is hoping to see accomplished during this legislative session.

Rick Gnemi spoke again about the expected tax changes for next year and the year after.

Teddy Moreno-Santos let the Board know that the EQIP application deadline has been extended so they will not know about funding until after the deadline has passed. The CSP deadline is also approaching, there are 10 applications waiting to find out about funding. He also spoke about a female farmer focused event that he attended in La Crosse on February 7.

Jim Smith informed the Board that there was work being done on some of the permanent easements in the county. They are adding reinforcement to the berms to prevent damage from animals.

Staff Reports

Eric Gulbransen told the Board that the District has come to an agreement to be reimbursed for CRP contracts again this year. The District will complete 20 plans, 10 certifications and 25 site reviews.

Adam Arndt brought an article in the People's Press to the attention of the Board. He also informed them that his time has been spent completing his eLink reporting and some engineering training. He also gave them a status update on the tree program.

Adrienne Gransee reported that she has completed her annual grant reporting and began the financial for 2022. She also reported that the new District apparel has been dropped off to be embroidered and should be completed in a reasonable amount of time.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Melby, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Adrienne Gransee,
Administrative Assistant

February Bills

Spectrum		Internet		\$64.99
Cedardale Development Co.		February Rent		\$792.00
Laura's Lane		Deposit		\$275.00
Elan		Gas	\$65.52	
		Postage	\$7.30	
		Phone	\$84.09	
		Quickbooks Subscription	\$589.49	
		Website	\$12.00	
		Office Supplies	\$7.70	\$766.10
			Total	\$1,898.09