

235 Cedardale Drive SE
 Owatonna, Minnesota 55060-4417
 Telephone (507) 451-6730 Ext. 3



**MINNESOTA
 SOIL and WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

The regular monthly meeting of the Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairman Dan Hansen at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday March 12, 2019 at the Conservation Office located at 235 Cedardale Drive SE, Owatonna, MN.

<u>SWCD Supervisors Present:</u>	<u>SWCD Staff Present:</u>	<u>Others Present:</u>	<u>Absent:</u>
Mark Ihlenfeld, Reporter	Adam Arndt	Jim Smith, NRCS	
Dan Hansen, Chairman	Eric Gulbransen	Roger Wacek	
Jim Klecker, Secretary	Adrienne Gransee	Gary Kurer, NRCS	
Kyle Wolfe, Vice-Chair			
Dave Melby, Treasurer			

The March agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

The February minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Melby, to approve the minutes as written. Motion was carried by voice vote.

The February Treasurer’s Report was read by Melby. Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Klecker, to approve the February Treasurer’s Report. Motion was carried by voice vote.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Legislative Day – March 5-6 – Mark Ihlenfeld, Eric Gulbransen and Dave Melby attended the event and met with legislators. One of the major topics of discussion was the need for Districts to have a stable source of funding which could be provided by moving the Local Capacity Building grants into the general fund budget.
2. Meeting Reports – 1 Watershed 1 Plan Open House – Mark Ihlenfeld, Eric Gulbransen, and Dave Melby attended this event. Ashley Gallagher presented a broad overview that included the 34 measurable goals. There was also discussion about the implementation plan.

RC&D – Mark Ihlenfeld reported on the wrap-up of an ongoing project. The project testing using goats to clear noxious weeds, specifically buckthorn, was reaching its end. The initial results of the project look positive and it is likely that a viable business could be established using this concept.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Local Work Group – A work group packet had been distributed to the supervisors prior to the meeting. They had them completed and turned them in at this time. There was discussion about the current problems with CRP and the lack of an available sign up for landowners. A priority area that they identified for focus is the Maple Creek watershed.
2. Walk-In Access Program – Joint Powers Agreement – Adam Arndt presented the agreement with the DNR that will allow the District to enroll interested landowners in the program. Landowners receive a payment per acre and the District receives \$250 pre agreement. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Wolfe, to approve signing the agreement. Motion carried by voice vote.
3. 2018 Financial Report – Adrienne Gransee presented the 2018 Financial report. Overall the District is in better standing than it was at the end of 2017. A large part of the change is making the best possible use of the grant funds provided through the state. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the 2018 Financial report. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. FY19 Capacity Grant – Amendment – Eric Gulbransen presented the amendment to the FY19 Local Capacity grant. The amendment was for an additional \$14,400. Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Klecker, to approve and sign the amendment. Motion carried by voice vote.
5. Insurance Options – Gransee presented the new options for Dental and Short Term Disability insurance. The short term disability was a change in policy but staying with the same provider. The policy change was an extension of the time before benefits would begin. The result was a savings to the District on the monthly premium.
There were several options that the staff had reviewed for Dental. Gransee presented the one that provided benefits equal to the current plan but offered a lower monthly premium. Gransee and Arndt also approached the Board with the idea of covering a percentage of the cost above and beyond the single dental coverage rate. Due to the change in both plans the District could cover 50% of the extended Dental coverage and still be saving money overall.
Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the changes to the Dental and Short Term Disability policies and begin covering 50% of the extended Dental premiums for staff that elect to have those. Motion carried by voice vote.
6. MN Association of Drainage Inspectors Annual Meeting – March 25 – Wilmar - \$30 registration – Gulbransen and Arndt requested Board approval to attend this meeting. Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Melby, to approve their attendance and have the District cover the registration fee. Motion carried by voice vote.
7. Profitable Farming for a Changing Climate – March 21 – 8:00 to 3:00 – Owatonna VFW – Adam Arndt presented the information about the meeting to the Board and extended an invitation for those interested to attend.
8. Cover Crop 201 – Farm and Tractor Show – March 16 – 11:00 to 1:00 – Owatonna 4 Seasons – Arndt presented the information about this training and informational opportunity to the Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

9. Other – Roger Wacek brought a couple of letters to the Board that he had written regarding the Area Envirothon. He is in support of the event and is interested in seeing it grow. He also spoke about the Goat project that Ihlenfeld had presented on earlier in the meeting

Kyle Wolfe spoke on the article that Arndt had published in Sparks, and informed those present that Owatonna has adopted a pollinator friendly policy.

Agency Reports:

Jim Smith stated that the EQIP application are being scored and ranked. The results should be available shortly. He also informed the Board that the new Soil Conservationist, Kelly Berkee, will be starting on March 20.

Jim Brady reported that the SE MN Water Resources Board will be disbanded by the end of the year. He also spoke about the County Road 12 reconstruction project.

Staff Reports

Eric Gulbransen reported to the Board that the new truck has been picked up and he is getting accessories quoted. He also told the Board that we got the District cell phone up and running to take with when in the field. Gulbransen requested that the Board approve him attending a water storage training in Mankato on April 4. The registration fee is \$40. Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Melby, to approve the District covering the cost of the registration. Motion passed by voice vote.

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

Respectfully Submitted by,



Adrienne Gransee,
Administrative Assistant

March Bills

Cedardale Dev. Co	March Rent		\$716.40
Khimaira	Website Hosting		\$165.00
Adrienne Gransee	50 miles @ .545		\$27.25
Jaguar	Internet		\$54.95
Verizon Wireless	March		\$45.45
Eric Gulbransen	Mileage 70 @ .545		\$38.15
Elan	Meals	85.66	
	Gas	119.61	
	Postage	167.42	
	QuickBooks Payroll	671.09	\$1,043.78
		Total	\$2,090.98