



STEELE COUNTY
Soil and Water Conservation District

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The regular monthly meeting of the Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was called to order by Dan Hansen at 5:00 PM on Tuesday March 9, 2021 via conference call.

<u>SWCD Supervisors Present:</u>	<u>SWCD Staff Present:</u>	<u>Others Present:</u>	<u>Absent:</u>
Mark Ihlenfeld, Reporter	Eric Gulbransen	Dave Copeland, BWSR	
Dan Hansen, Chairman	Adrienne Gransee	Kelly Burke, NRCS	
Dave Melby, Treasurer	Adam Arndt	James Smith, NRCS	
Mike Klecker		Mark Ditlevson	

The March agenda was reviewed, one item was added to the bills.

The February minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. There were no corrections needed. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried by roll call vote.

The February Treasurer’s Report was read by Melby. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Klecker, to approve the January Treasurer’s Report. Motion was carried by roll call vote.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Meeting Reports – RC&D – Mark Ihlenfeld reported that RC&D has hired a Robert Harris to fill their open leadership position.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Appointment of Board Member – Dan Hanson asked for nomination to fill the open position on the Board. Dave Melby nominated Mark Ditlevson. Ditlevson accepted. No other nominations were made. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to appoint Mark Ditlevson to the Board of Supervisors. Motion passed by roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

2. Ideas for Acknowledgement of 75th Anniversary – Staff requested Board feedback about who they would like to acknowledge the 75th anniversary of the District. They Board was in favor of putting together a newspaper spread or a newsletter. They also liked the idea of recognizing it at the fair and holding a banquet in late summer.
3. Legislative Briefing – March 18 – Gransee provided the information about the virtual meeting to the Board and requested that anyone who is interested in attending let her know so that she can get them registered.
4. District Technician Laptop – The Board had previously approved \$1500 for a replacement laptop. The cost of the laptops has increased since the initial approval and staff requested an additional \$300 to cover the increased expense. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Klecker, to approve the additional amount. Motion carried by roll call vote.
5. 2021 NRCS Local Work Group – Kelly Burke reviewed the resource concerns that had been established for the four county area. Ponding and flooding was at the top of the list. She informed the Board the ranking is currently in progress for applications. She let the Supervisors know that there is training available for anyone interested in gaining more knowledge about the process. It is encouraged that Districts hold open meetings to give local landowners and operators the chance to weigh in on what the primary resource concerns should be in the future. There is a tentative meeting set for 6pm before the April Board meeting.
6. 2021 Local Capacity Budget Ideas – Gulbransen presented a proposed budget that included funds for 4 new 3-year cover crop contracts, a portion of the cost of a new truck, and funds to be used for staff hours and direct expenses related to education, outreach, and 1W1P. The Board expressed no objections to the plan.
7. Memorial for Kyle Wolfe – The Board and staff discussed ideas for a memorial in honor of Kyle Wolfe. Monetary donation, a tree planting at the Owatonna Gun Club, and a dedicated bench were all presented as possibilities. The bench is the idea that the Board felt was the most appropriate. The cost of a bench of that type will be researched before a final decision is made.

Agency Reports

Dave Copeland informed the staff and Board that BWSR's Spring Training event is open for registration and will be taking place on March 30. He also gave a brief legislative update stating that there has been call for a 1% increase in funding coming from the general fund.

Kelly Burke gave the Board the current status of the office. It has been mandated that we are to maintain 25% capacity until further notice. She stated that the Equip ranking deadline has been extended and all associated dates have been moved back to match the change.

Jim Smith stated that he has been completing a variety of training and getting prepared for spring and summer projects.

Staff Reports

Adrienne Gransee reported that she has been assisting with the tree program. As well as, completing website updates and beginning to search for historical photos and information regarding the District that may be stored by the Steele or Minnesota Historical Societies.

Eric Gulbransen stated that WCA has continued to be active. He has also been working on getting a ditch repair arranged and just presented the bids to the County Board. In addition he informed the Board that the MPCA report regarding the Owatonna treatment plant project was available for comment.

Adam Arndt informed the Board that the District has sold out of trees, far ahead of the usual schedule. Beyond the trees he has been doing site visits for potential projects and reaching out to those who have requested information about cover crops.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Melby, 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
Jaguar	Internet		\$54.95
Brian Bakalyar	Tree Refund		\$45.09
Elan	Cell Phone	88.33	
	Intuit - Payroll	719.41	
	Wix - Website	24.85	
	Postage	7.60	
	Supplies	4.29	\$844.48
Gary Etherton	Tree Refund		\$46.16
Patrick Noble	Tree Refund		\$41.87
Mark Hanson	Tree Refund		\$27.92
Ag Week	Subscription		\$64.00
Kevin Deml	Tree Refund		38.66
		Total	\$1,879.53