

**POPE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MEETING MINUTES
Supervisory Board Meeting 7:00 am March 26, 2013
Meeting site: USDA Service Center,
1680 N. Franklin Avenue
Glenwood, MN 56334**

Supervisors: Mike Billehus, Keith Nygaard, Randy Pederson, Tom Talle **Absent:** Gary Reents

SWCD Staff: Kelly Erickson, Matt Fischer, Luan Johnsrud, Justin Stangler

Guests: Paul Gerde, Commissioner, Jeff Hellermann, NRCS-DC, Grant Herfindahl, FSA Director

1. Meeting called to order by Chair Nygaard at 7:03 a.m.
2. Motion by Billehus, second by Pederson to accept the agenda as presented. Carried.
3. Motion by Pederson, second by Billehus to accept the February 19, 2013 meeting minutes as presented. Carried.
4. Motion by Talle, second by Pederson to accept the Financial Reports as presented. Carried.
5. Old Business
 - o Nygaard presented an update on the West Central Technical Service Area activities. Pope SWCD will not sign the Service Agreement at this time. Motion by Billehus, second by Talle to pay TSA engineer(s) for projects as they are completed. Carried.
 - o Motion by Talle, second by Pederson to approve 2012 Financial Statement as prepared by Michael Peterson, CPA. Carried.
 - o Motion by Pederson, second by Talle to sign the service agreement with Darren Newville to complete PRAP activities per work plan. Carried.
6. Reports-
 - o Paul Gerde, County Commissioner
Jim Berg, DNR, will be presenting the Pope County Atlas to County Commissioners May 14, 2013.
The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) is working with counties to encourage Legislators to review the Vulnerable Children and Adult Act so that rural county funding is not cut so much. Legislators are discussing option to raise more funding for projects; \$10Million bonding bill will be introduced in the House & Senate for an underpass by the railroad tracks at the intersection of HWY 55 & 29 north of Glenwood. The Parks and Trail program is attempting to secure additional funding for rural Minnesota. Two years ago the funding was 40% DNR, 40% metro and 20% rural Minnesota.
 - o Kelly Erickson, Technician
WCA: Landowner's writ of Mandamus hearing will be March 26, 2013; met with USFW, Wetland Specialist and Matt Fischer to discuss Cease and Desist order; two other WCA contacts this month.
Twenty-three (23) grass plans for spring seeding have been sold: 600 acres total. More plans pending.
Continuing to process requests for tree plan: 16 potential tree plans for 2013; purchased and received 100 rolls of weed fabric.

Discussed bids received to place a storage shed by the USDA Service Center office building. Motion by Billehus, second by Pederson to set a building budget at \$4000 or less, whatever is most convenient, to build a storage shed with preference given to local contractor(s). Carried
Drill parts to repair/rebuild the two drills have been ordered.

The 3010 need repair. A guaranteed price of \$1154 to repairs has been submitted. Board approved repairing the 3010 as quoted.

Rosholt Farm Update. Partner meeting was held February 28th. Motion by Talle, second by Pederson to purchase remote tracker software for the irrigator and retrofit the pump on the irrigation well. Carried. Motion by Billehus, second by Pederson to renew the five (5) year rental agreement with Prairie Lakes Coop for Rosholt Farm @\$250.00 per acre and cement the shed on site that includes insulation/vapor barrier. Carried. Pope SWCD will replace some of the nozzles on the irrigator this year. Erickson is also checking into additional research opportunities for cover crops and cuphea (oil seed) for Rosholt Farm.

Supervisor Talle left at 8:20 a.m.

- Matt Fischer, District Technician
Participated in several meetings and training sessions. Attended Day at the Legislature with Supervisor Pederson and Manager Johnsrud. Representative Rick Hanson has proposed a \$5.00 fee on recorded documents to fund conservation administration /projects at the county level.
Expect the go ahead on CRP contracts sometime in April. Contacting expiring CRP contract landowners to encourage re-enrollment. Working on CRP mid-contract modifications.
Discussed potential MASWCD Contribution Agreement to complete site reviews on WRP easements. Motion by Billehus, second by Pederson to enter into the Agreement. Carried.
Completed 1 conservation plan amendment and cost-share request for landowner.
Working on CWF AIG grant for S. Shore Lake Minnewaska and contacting landowners for EQIP signup.
- Justin Stangler, Land & Lake Specialist
Participated in County Water Plan meeting, Soil Health webinars and coordinated the March TMDL meeting.
Discussed the MPCA Clean Water Partnership grant proposal for a Lake Minnewaska Resource Concern Investigation. Motion by Pederson, second by Billehus to ratify the Resolution to submit the application to Carried.
Submitted resignation to Johnsrud, March 15th. Last day will be Thursday, March 28th.
- Luan Johnsrud, District Manager
Arranged for Pope County Water Plan Work Group meeting March 11th and April 2nd, Public Meeting with County Commissioners. Working with Janelle Miersch, DNR Hydrologist, to host Pope County Geologic Atlas information and training session May 14th.
Coordinated PRAP activities with Darren Newville, East Ottertail District Manager.
Friday, March 29th set for the date to interview PSCWMA 2013 Interns. Nygaard, Billehus, Pederson plan to attend. Johnsrud will also ask project partners to participate in the interview process. Motion by Pederson, second by Billehus to speed up to \$1,400 PSCWMA grant funds for education activities that included Weed Watchers Booklets, Weed identification books, and news releases for education and cost share to treat invasive species. Carried.
Presented 2013 'Where does Your Watershed?' poster contest information to 5th & 6th grade students.
Discussed staffing for the spring tree and seeding; we may need to hire additional part-time help.
- Jeff Hellermann, NRCS DC

Currently working through Wetland and HEL compliance issues for Pope County. Heather Funk, Wetland Specialist for the Area office has been in Glenwood to log requests into a new Pope County Ledger. Once complete, the ledger will be reviewed and assistance for a SWAT team will be requested.

Chuck Rose, Miscellaneous Assistant from the Alexandria Area Office has been reorganizing compliance files cabinets using a township filing system.

Reviewed and approved 9 CRP plans for mid contract management. General Signup is scheduled May 20 through June 14.

Five applications have been approved for 2013 EQIP technical and financial assistance. Staff has been notified that the Gilchrist Watershed has been tentatively selected for \$300,000 in EQIP National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) funds. The application deadline for the Gilchrist NWQI funds 'should be' extended into June.

Dave Jungst has completed WRP bid packages for 5 seed and seeding, 4 prescribed burns, 2 seed (owners have seeding already set up). Bid packets should be out by April 1st.

Mark Kulig, Area Conservationist, has approved an Administrative Assistance position for the Glenwood office. This position is temporary and contracted through an employment company.

- o Grant Herfindahl, FSA
Outlined CRP re-enrollments and current rental rates.

Johnsrud left at 9:45 a.m.

7. New Business

- o Discussed the Water Plan Public Meeting, April 2, 2013 @ 9:30 a.m. Commissioner's Room, Courthouse. Encouraged supervisors to attend.
- o Motion by Pederson, second by Billehus to be a 2013 Pope County Fair Sponsor at the \$220.00 level. Carried.

8. Motion by Pederson, second by Billehus to adjourn at 10:00 a.m. Carried.