



MEETING MINUTES

Meeting will be held USDA Service Center at 1680 Franklin Street North, Glenwood, MN 56334

Supervisory Board Meeting 7:00 am

June 18, 2024

Attendance: Randy Mitteness, D. Gary Reents, Randy Pederson, Holly Kovarik, Nicole Brede, Kimberly DeMorett, Mason Stewart, Christopher Borash, Jeff Hellerman, Don Bajumpaa, Commissioner Paul Gerde, Keith Nygaard (joined remotely only listening in not participating due to Open Law Meeting Requirements), Earl Hauge (public).

1. **Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance-**The Secretary Randy Pederson called the meeting to order at 7:05 a.m. Kovarik shared that Chairman Nygaard was listening in on the meeting but would not be able to participate or chair the meeting today due to Open Meeting Law requirements. He was unable to be at this meeting in person. Kovarik also shared that Tom Talle is still in the hospital and will keep the board informed on his status. If he is feeling up to it, we may notice and provide a virtual opportunity for him to participate in the July board meeting.

Introductions were made of the board and staff present due to having Don Bajumpaa from BWSR at the meeting.

2. **Consent Agenda (approved by one motion)-**A motion was made by Randy Mitteness to approve the consent agenda items as presented. D. Gary Reents seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

- o *May 21, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes*
- o *Resolutions-None*

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>

- o *Contract/Applications for Approval-*

<u>Number/Name</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Total Application \$\$</u>

- o *Appropriations/Payments-None*

	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Description of Payment</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Payment Code/Description</u>
1.				
2.				

- o *Grant Payment/Project Approvals-None*

<u>Contract Code</u>	<u>Grant Name</u>	<u>Landowner</u>	<u>Type of Project</u>	<u>Project Location</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Payment</u>

3. **Commissioner Update-**Paul Gerde

4. **Old Business**

- o June 12th Area II Meeting update was shared with the members. Everything went well and we have had good feedback on the Buckthorn project presentation. We will be getting a little press from the newspaper's attendance at the Area II meeting.



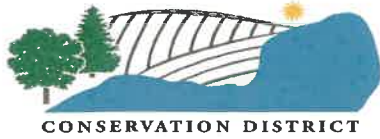
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- DNR CPL Phase III update-D. Gary Reents made a motion to authorize Kovarik to sign the agreement once it is received from the DNR. Randy Mitteness seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.
 - Eagle Bank CD has been created and will be reflected on the June bank information.
5. New Business
- 2024 PRAP Update-brief BWSR staff-Don Bajumpaa gave a report to the board and staff present. This information was included in the board packet. He shared that the Pope SWCD is a high performing district and is doing a good job. There are a few items mentioned that the SWCD could work on but overall, the SWCD is doing a good job. The formal report was reviewed with the group. The SWCD will need to respond in writing to BWSR and that response will also be included in the final report. Kovarik will prepare a draft letter to be discussed with the board at the July meeting. This letter would then be submitted to BWSR after that meeting.
 - End of quarter/per diems-Kovarik shared that board members should submit their time information for per diem reimbursement.
6. Treasurer Report-D. Gary Reents made a motion to approve the treasurer report and Randy Mitteness seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.
- Monthly Checking Account Report #11247
 - Monthly Savings Account Report #870903
 - Treasurer Report (3-year comparison)
7. Reports
- Holly Kovarik, Manager
 - Soil Health Delivery Grant RFI-Randy Mitteness moved to approve the request as Kovarik submitted for the full amount available. D. Gary Reents seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.
 - D. Gary Reents made a motion to approve the cancelation of the Baycrest project per the information received from the group. They have had a more pressing septic issue come up and will not have enough financial resources to do both projects. Randy Mitteness seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.
 - CRWA Updates were shared with the board. The subcommittee of the TAC is working on documents needed for implementation which will be brought to the full TAC and JPB when ready for further discussion and approval. The plan is off to BWSR for review and our meeting with BWSR will be in August.
 - BWSR Regional Meeting Rescheduled-We are working to reschedule this tour.
 - Kimberly DeMorett, Resource and Outreach Technician provided a written report which was included in the packet. She has been assisting at Rosholt with sampling and analysis. She has been working on the poster contest, Rosholt Field Day planning, Water Fest planning, tree sales, precipitation monitoring, and DNR Well Observation.



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- Christopher Borash, Conservation Technician-His report was included in the board packet. He shared that he is continuing training. He attended the Area II meeting. He has been working on trees and sales program items including drill rentals. They have finished tree plantings this season. He has been working on MAWQCP site visits with Grant Pearson and has been working on a few Irrigation Water Management project sign ups. He has worked on trailer repairs, coordinated with CHS on spraying at Rosholt, and the Irrigation system is running.
- Mason Stewart, Conservation Technician-He has been working on tree programming and plantings, Rosholt sampling and analysis, and attended the Area II meeting this past month.
- Abigail Meyer, Intern-no report
- Jeff Hellerman, NRCS-He shared that they are working on CRP, EQIP, and that he was out of the office on vacation.
- Alexander Fellbaum, FSA CED-He shared that certifications are due by July 15th. They are unsure at this time how much prevent plant there is until certifications are finished.

8. Board Member Meeting Reports

- Randy Pederson-North Fork Watershed IWIP meetings & staff update, Glacial Lakes Trail -He shared this group received a PRAP update as well.
- Randy Mitteness-Chippewa River Watershed Board & staff update-He shared that the last meeting was in April and that they have not had a board meeting this past month.
- D. Gary Reents-Sauk River Watershed IWIP Committee meetings & staff update-He shared that this report was given at the last board meeting. They will meet again on July 16th.

9. Upcoming Meetings:

<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Meeting Description</u>	<u>Meeting Location</u>	<u>Meeting Time</u>
7-16-2024	Pope SWCD Regular Board Meeting	USDA Service Center Building	7:00 a.m.

10. FYI Items-none

- II. Public Comment-Earl Hauge presented a letter to Keith Nygaard and the Board on June 14th, 2024. The board received a copy of this letter by email on June 17th as Kovarik was out of the office on vacation. Hauge shares in this letter that he is calling for the Board Chairman to resign due to malfeasance. Mr. Hauge's argument is about the violation in Chippewa Falls



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Township which went to court and settled as he removed the culvert and met the conditions for the proceedings to stop. The legal fees, consultant fees, etc are due to his actions taken that affected a wetland on this parcel. He has asked the SWCD on multiple occasions to pay all his costs which in this letter state \$14,500. The Pope SWCD does not agree that we have done anything wrong, and these fees are not something that we will pay. When Mr. Hauge asked to address the board under public comment this letter was the basis for his discussion. A copy of the public meeting procedure protocol was referenced, and Randy Pederson asked if he should read that protocol. Mr. Hauge stated it did not need to be read. He proceeded to address the board here are the points he made during his address to the board:

- We have had differences in the past.
- He will take no action of any kind and it is all in the past.
- He shared about a bad accident that he was involved in a few years ago which caught them off guard. When there is an accident there is no blame. He was inferring what happened with his violation to be a bad accident.
- He shared information about a personal experience about the gift we have of questioning.
- In this case he shared there is no blame and set us in a difficult attack mode and blame mode and that has nothing to do with who we are in the world.
- He shared that all of us are about being kind and doing good in the world.
- In the past four years he shared that he has not been about making this world better regarding the Pope SWCD.
- He does not apologize for it but feels this was an accident and had a lot of pain to deal with.
- He appreciates all the board members.
- In reading the wetland law several times he is amazed at the atmosphere in which it was written.
- He shared that somewhere he read that the Chairman should ask questions. By asking questions we can see how to work things out. He stated that it is the responsibility of the board to provide guidance to staff as we work on projects. By asking questions we can work things out and to assist staff with whatever is going on to operate as smoothly as possible.
- Not all board Chairmans can ask good questions.
- He thanked the board for their public comment time and said that we were doing a good job.
- Mr. Hauge also shared that he appreciated the conversation he had with D. Gary Reents last week as well.

Randy Pederson expressed that he hoped that Mr. Hauge could heal and let go of his animosity and move forward now.

Kovarik shared that Mr. Hauge learned that his District is the same District Office held by Keith Nygaard. When Mr. Hauge learned this and that this position was not up for election for two more years that this letter was sent.



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Nicole Brede provided her report to the board at this time.

- o Nicole Brede, Habitat Resource Specialist-she has been working on RIM projects for 3 landowners. There are 96 inspections needing to be completed by November. She has 2 CREP/CRP projects she is working on and 20 CRP projects. She has had discussions about the Emerald Ash Borer which was now found in Pope County. She assisted with sales and poster contest programming.

12. Adjourn- The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 a.m. by Randy Pederson.

Randy Pederson

6-18-24

Keo Aggy

7-10-24

