



Clearwater Soil & Water Conservation District

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING JULY 16, 2009

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Robert Bilden, John Gunvalson, Paul Rydeen & Harlan Strandlien

SWCD Staff: John Knisley & Stacy Cooper

Guests: Brooke Knisley, NRCS
John Nelson, County Commissioner

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m. by Chair Bilden in the Clearbrook City Council Chambers. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

It was noted that Supervisor, Leonard Stinar's absence was due to a trip to Uruguay.

Chair Bilden expressed condolences on behalf of the Board to Member Gunvalson on the passing of his father-in-law.

Agenda: Chair Bilden called for additions or corrections to the agenda. A motion was made to accept the agenda as written by Strandlien, 2nd by Rydeen. Motion carried 4-0.

Minutes: Minutes of the regular June meeting were reviewed. Rydeen requested that the minutes regarding the tree planting by the staff be modified. A motion to accept the June Minutes with corrections was made by Rydeen, 2nd by Strandlien. Motion carried 4-0.

NRCS: Brooke Knisley informed the Board that the past month had no trainings to attend but she did attend a grazing tour on the 15th. Looking at the month ahead, Knisley will attend several trainings. Also at month's end, Cari Rebischke will be returning from maternity leave so the NRCS office will be at full staff again.

Knisley announced that the EQIP sign-up has concluded with 16 applications funded thanks to the receipt of additional funds. Out of the 16 applications, 14 require invasive species/pest management as a component. The EQIP Organic Initiative program had 5 inquiries resulting in 2 applications and the WHIP program had 9 applicants with 2 claims funded so far.

It was also noted that the invasive species management cost share is part of the pest management practice in the EQIP program. This year NRCS is cost-sharing \$20/acre on invasive species/pest management. The signup has ended, but there's a possibility that another signup could transpire in the fall. Signup and subsequent funding, happens at least once a year, but applications can be taken continuously and plans can be drawn up prior to fund approval.

Strandlien asked about the spraying program and stated that he'd not seen it publicized anywhere but had heard about it through word-of-mouth.

Resource Technician Report:

John Knisley, District Manager, read the Resource Technician's report as Kathy Rasch was attending a WCA training in Grand Rapids.

Citizen Lake Testing: It was noted that citizen lake test samples are still coming in a relatively timely manner to be shipped down to Detroit Lakes for testing.

Knisley explained to the Board the 24-hour window that these samples need to be tested in. If there are traces of phosphorous and nitrogen registering, the source should be tracked - which usually is linked to erosion/land management issues. Knisley explained that if it is a "man-made" problem, the SWCD would step in and help find resolution to the problem.

Ob Well Monitoring: Ob well monitoring is the observation and data recording of shallow wells of the ground water that they hold. The SWCD surveys 5 wells in the county. It was noted that the annual DNR payment for the ob well monitoring was just received in the SWCD office. Strandlien questioned if the wells were being tested for chemicals; Knisley reported that they are not.

Rasch's report states that she has been asked to speak at an association meeting for Long Lake on the 18th of this month and is currently preparing for the presentation.

Cost Share: Rasch just completed surveys with Jon Hodgson of the Lost River and Silver Creek sites. Rydeen inquired about a follow-up information report on the sites done earlier in the spring. The Board is interested in updates of those sites.

Conservation Farm: It was decided that thistle control needs to be done on the Conservation Farm before it seeds out. It would be beneficial to manage the weed now in an attempt to restrain growth. The Board determined that a chemical should be used on the farm and a licensed sprayer should be contacted.

Rydeen spoke of his efforts to contain thistle in the "bloom stage" proved fruitless and that a chemical should be employed. Nelson talked a bit about the weed spraying that the County does and that some landowners request that their property be skipped during spraying. However it is the responsibility of that landowner to contain and manage any noxious weeds on the property that might otherwise have been sprayed.

Forest Stewardship: Rasch's report also informed the Board that she is currently wrapping up the writing of a stewardship plan for a landowner and is also finalizing invoicing and payment details for the past grant period.

Other: Rasch plans to complete the last homework assignment for the upcoming final Leadership training scheduled for August 5th & 6th.

Water Projects / Technical Reports

Water Plan: John Knisley met with Matthew Dyrdaahl of the Headwaters Regional Development Commission. A timeline and a tentative completion date of 3/23/2010 have been established. Thus far, things are on schedule.

DER 319 Grant: Knisley has been consulting with BWSR regarding watershed and lake analysis for over 350 lakes in 20 counties. The water plan is currently being amended to include this grant process to provide a guideline in the future for further lake protection.

Native Buffer Cost-Share: Knisley reported that Native Buffer Grant money has not been allocated to a project yet and is currently seeking interested landowners for this project. Some solicitation may be required.

Clearbrook Urban Runoff Project: Knisley reported that he is working with Myron Jesme of RLWSD and Mike Stenseng of Clearwater County Environmental Services to get the stormwater pond near the Gourmet House permitted as per WCA requirements. Currently the pond was delineated and situated in a wetland which needs permit approval to be modified or constructed. The permit application is currently being reviewed by WCA.

It was also noted that the 2-3 acres of purple loosestrife near the stormpond should be controlled as well, but by that landowner.

AWR Grant: Knisley is currently working on scheduling visits to some animal producers to within the Silver Creek sub-watershed area to get some information on herds and herd practices.

Other: Knisley reported that he and Mike Stenseng made a visit to a landowner in Pine Lake to try and resolve a drainage issue. Nelson made mention of his appreciation to help these landowners with their problem because he knows that it has been an ongoing problem.

District Budget Update: Knisley reported that he presented the SWCD budget to County Commissioners on June 30th. He also said they appreciated receiving the budget early. Nelson stated that the Board of Commissioners has set aside 3 days to review the budget. The dates are the morning of July 22nd, and all day July 29th and 30th. If further discussion is needed, notification will be made by the Commissioners to the SWCD office.

SWCD Wage & Benefit Survey: Wage and benefit survey information was submitted to the SWCD of Minnesota's County SWCD offices. Board members received a copy of the wage survey information prior to the meeting. Knisley pointed out a few varying counties figures and thought it should be considered a topic of discussion for the Area VIII Meeting.

District Manager's Report

Financial Reports: The financial statements showing all revenue and expenditures for the month of June were presented to the Board for review. Knisley reported normal payment of the bills for the month of June. A motion to accept the financial reports was made by Strandlien, 2nd by Gunvalson. Motion carried 4-0.

Area VIII Fall Tour & Meeting Updates: A dialogue was held on tour visit prospects since one landowner declined the request to tour his facility. The SWCD office is waiting to hear back from another prospect. Rydeen was going to talk to Mayor, Mike Gibeau about the use of the banquet room in the Clear Waters Life Center building. The tour details are almost complete.

Ground Water Level Monitoring Agreement: Knisley presented to the Board for signing the renewal agreement for ground water monitoring between the SWCD and DNR. A motion to approve the renewal was made by Strandlien, 2nd by Rydeen. Motion carried 4-0. Chair Bilden signed the agreement.

Other: Knisley asked the Board to set aside a day sometime in November to meet and review long-range plans and goals for the Clearwater SWCD. The intent is to cover parliamentary procedure, bylaws and public process as well as long-range goals for the SWCD - just to name a few. This request falls on the heels of Knisley returning from training in hopes to streamline procedures and increase efficiencies.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 was made by Rydeen, 2nd by Gunvalson. Motion carried 4-0.



Paul Rydeen, District Secretary