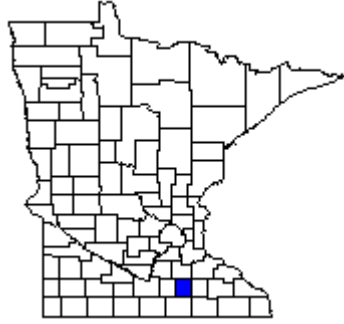


STEELE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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**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 Kyle Wolfe at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 11, 2013 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>
Kyle Wolfe, Chrnm.	Dan Arndt	James Smith, NRCS	
Dave Melby, Vice-Chrnm	Sue Condon	Bruce Kubicek, Commissioner	
Mark Ihlenfeld, Secretary	Eric Gulbransen	Tom Gile, BWSR Bd. Con.	
James Klecker, Treasurer			
Dan Hansen, Reporter			

The December agenda was reviewed. No adjustment to be made.

The November minutes were mailed to the Supervisors to be reviewed. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Klecker to approve the minutes as written. Motion was carried by voice vote.

The November Treasurer’s Report (see attached) was read by Klecker. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld to approve the October Treasurer’s Report. Motion was carried by voice vote.

Bills: (see attached.) Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Melby to approve paying the bills as listed. Motion was carried by voice vote.

Wolfe welcomed Tom Gile, BWSR Board Conservationist to the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. State MASWCD Convention, Dec. 1,2,3, 2013 at the Double Tree Hotel in Bloomington, MN: Supervisors Ihlenfeld, Klecker, Hansen, Melby and Wolfe were all in attendance. Staff included: Arndt, Condon and Gulbransen. Convention was hosted by Area 7 – SE Area in MN. There was an excellent speaker on soil health. The convention’s theme was on soil and the nitrogen issues. Discussion followed on the meetings and mini session attended.
2. Other: RC & D meeting on November 25th was attended by Ihlenfeld and Kubicek. Current Director turned in her notice to leave. John Beckworth will be acting Director. Also mentioned are that some of MN RC&D’s are dissolving. Discussion followed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Tom Gile, BWSR Board Conservationist: report will be in agency reports.
2. Personnel Committee Report:
 - a. Approve the hiring of a new Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper: There were 25 applications, of those applicants 6 were interviewed by Personnel Committee – Hansen, Wolfe and Arndt on December 4th. Personnel Committee recommends the hiring of Adrienne Justman. Arndt reviewed her application. Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Ihlenfeld to hire Adrienne Justman. Motion carried by voice vote. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Klecker to approve a starting wage of \$11.87 Hr. for Adrienne. Motion carried by voice vote.
 - b. Annual Employee Renewal: Wolfe commended Condon for her 28 plus years of service at the District, she will be greatly missed. Personnel Committee reported all employee reviews were very favorably.
 - c. Employee Health Insurance Renewal: Moved by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Klecker to approve the renewal of Blue Cross Blue Shield high deductible HSA with the District paying ½ of the \$2,650 deductible. Motion carried by voice vote.
 - d. Negotiate Wage Scale – COLA Increase for 2014: tabled.
 - e. Review 2014 PERA Phased Retirement Agreement with Sue Condon: Arndt reviewed the agreement; which indicates that Condon’s employment status will change from permanent part-time to intermittent working approximately 10 hour per week. Moved by Hansen, seconded by Klecker to sign the agreement. Motion carried by voice vote.
 - f. Revise Personnel Policy Handbook as follows: I. 2.2 Full time and permanent part-time employees shall be provided medical insurance after 90 days of employment. The SWCD will pay the premium for employees only if accepted by the insurance carrier. Employees must pay all of his/her dependent premium. Arndt reported that this change must be made because of the implementation of Obama Care. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld to approve this change. Motion carried by voice vote.

Agency Reports: Tom Gile, BWSR Bd Con. reported that BWSR will soon be voting on applications for the Clean Water Fund. Over \$40 million requested and only \$8million available. More grants will be closing soon. BWSR Academy was very well attended. There are 5 new BWSR Conservationists hired in 2013.

Commissioner Kubicek reported that the District’s 2014 budget remains as requested. There will be a board meeting next Tuesday to make final decisions on the 2014 budgets. Steele County is applying for a grant to help with the establishment of a soil erosion ordinance.

Smith, NRCS: Smith stated all water and sediment basin projects are completed. There will be an EQIP sign-up next month. Dave Copeland was hired to take Kasey Taylor’s SE MN AC position. Without a current farm bill, staff is just doing estimates on projects for next year.

Staff Reports:

Arndt reported on attending a meeting at the convention on Well Water Testing Project through the MN Dept. of Ag. This will be done in several townships in Steele County. Everyone in those twps. will be receiving well testing kits. Next Tuesday, December 17th, there will be a meeting in Blooming Prairie at the City Hall at 9:00 a.m. sponsored by the Cedar River Watershed District. This meeting will be on TMDL problem solving strategies. Arndt reported on speaking with the manager from East Otter Tail SWCD about their contract management services with Wadena SWCD. He gave copies of the contract to the Supervisors. This may be helpful with Waseca SWCD’s problem, if we enter into a management contract with them. Wolfe discussed the problems Waseca SWCD has been encountering with Commissioner Kubicek.

Gulbransen reported on the convention. He reported on a few projects for next year. He is now working on two grants due soon. One of which is where the invasive parsnips are growing in the road ditches of Summit township specifically. The parsnips are now starting to spread into the permanent easements.

Wolfe declares recess at 8:40 p.m. during which the supervisors will review: the wage scale COLA increase for 2014.

Wolfe opens meeting at 8:48 p.m.:

Tabled 2.d. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Klecker to approve a 3% COLA increase for all existing staff and to incorporate it into 2014 wage scale. Discussion had then followed on the starting wage for the new administrative position. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Klecker to rescind the motion that was made earlier to start the new Administrative Assistant at \$11.87/hr. Motion carried by voice vote. Discussion followed. A motion was then made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Hansen to approve a starting wage of \$12/hr. This would be for a period of 6 months. After a favorable review the hourly rate would then go to \$12.22 or the next step on the 2014 wage scale for District employees. Motion carried by voice vote.

Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Hansen to adjourn at 9:23 p.m. the meeting. Motion carried.

Submitted by
Sue Condon, District Admin. Sec.