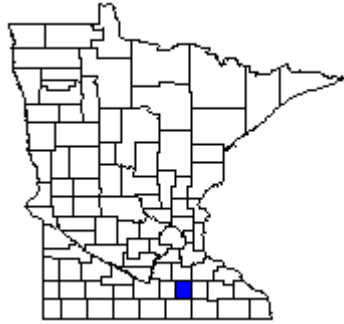


STEELE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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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 Vice-Chairman Dave Melby at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 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>
Dan Hansen, Reporter	Dan Arndt	Bruce Kubicek, Commissioner	Kyle Wolfe, Chrmn.
Dave Melby, Vice-Chrmn	Sue Condon	Noel Frank	
Mark Ihlenfeld, Secretary	Eric Gulbransen	Jeannine Vorland, DNR	
James Klecker, Treasurer		Karl Hakanson, CRWP	

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

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

The August Treasurer’s Report (see attached) was read by Klecker. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Hansen to approve the August Treasurer’s Report. Motion was carried by voice vote. Arndt read letter from bank stating the new pledges for securities to cover the District’s account.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

1. 2013 Steele County Fair: Arndt read a thank you from Michelle Hoffmaster, the 4-H Conservation Award winner. Discussion followed about the low interest in the 2014 tree program. Tree winner poster was shown.
2. Other: Arndt reported that the District is still having a lot of travel through the office from the Waseca SWCD clients. They are coming in with questions because they can’t contact anyone from the Waseca District Conservation Office. Discussion. It was suggested that a letter be sent to the Waseca Commissioners concerning this matter. But it was decided to wait for another month before this is done.

Ihlenfeld attended the MN MASWCD finance meeting, September 11th. The MASWCD finances seem to be very adequate. This is mainly due to the NRCS contribution pass through of funds.

Melby welcomed Jeannine Vorland, DNR Wildlife and Karl Hakanson, CRWP.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Local EQIP Work Group met: Frank, DC lead the discussion on the 2014 Program. Frank stated that the usually priorities are: 1. Soil erosion. 2. Water quality. 3. Wildlife habitat. 4. Invasive species control, but these have very low incentives. Discussion followed. It was stated that windbreaks have been getting some funding, but 60% of the EQIP money in 2013 went to livestock farmers. Cover Crops were discussed, but Frank stated that no contracts for cover crops were accepted in Steele County. All agreed that the program needs to be streamlined and less complicated and locally controlled. Also stated, that no-till needs to get more funding. Hakanson stated that the CRWP may possibly have a meeting this winter on cover crops. More discussion followed. Priorities will stay the same, but with the suggestions stated.
Hakanson leaves meeting – 7:45 p.m.
2. 2014-15 BWSR Grant Agreement: Arndt presented the agreement to the supervisors. General Delivery - \$20,014, State Cost-share - \$10,609 (down 3,000), Easement Delivery (RIM)- \$2,683. Moved by Hansen, seconded by Klecker to sign the agreement. Carried by voice vote.
3. 2014 Proposed SWCD Budget: Arndt stated that the District staff need a little more time to review budget. Arndt reviewed easement maintenance program with supervisors. Discussion. Arndt presented Condon's letter of intent to be on 5-10 hours a week by May 1, 2014. Personnel Committee – Wolfe and Hansen will need to meet later this month. 2014 Budget will be presented next month.
4. New computer for Gulbransen: Condon's main computer has to be off the USDA server by the end of September. USDA IT person, Chris Foss, has given District spec's for needed computer. Condon will get Gulbransen's old computer and he will get new CCE spec's computer. Bid was acquired by Abraham Consulting for \$855, this meets price from CCE (USDA). Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Ihlenfeld to purchase this computer. Carried by voice vote.
5. 2014 Clean Water Fund Grants for 2 projects: JPB engineer Pete Fryer has been at the sites of the 2 projects. The grant needs to be applied for between Set. 6th and October 4th on e-link. Discussion followed. Vorland stated that there are wood turtles and their habitat at the one site. This information will be used in the application. Both projects involve gully erosion and stream bank erosion. Discussion followed.
6. Letter to state legislators on Easement Real Estate Taxes: MN legislature has just passed the 2014 tax bill which includes higher taxes on the RIM easements approved after May 23, 2013. This will not affect riparian easements adjoining lakes or streams. Discussion followed. Arndt will compose a letter to the legislators for the supervisors to sign. Vorland suggested sharing the letter with the Izaak Walton League, Pheasants Forever Chapter and MN Pheasant local chapters.
7. "Cultivating Conservation in the Cannon River Watershed" meeting will be on Sept. 12th. Cannon River Watershed Partnership is coordinating the meeting.
8. SE MASWCD meeting, Sept. 16th for supervisors and employees at Eagle Bluff. Motion made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Klecker to pay for \$14 registration of any supervisors or employees wishing to attend. Kasey Taylor, NRCS AC will be leaving area for Delaware as State Conservationist.
9. Flooding & Water Management mtg., Sept. 25th: Arndt stated that it will be an informational and brainstorming meeting on the 2013 flooding in Rice County and how to manage it.
10. Other: Vorland asked for the District's permission to burn a permanent RIM easement that has over grown trees on the easement. Discussion. Arndt will work with Vorland (DNR) on this issue. Supervisors thought it was a good idea.

Agency Reports: Commissioner Kubicek reported that the soil erosion control ordinance will be started this winter and Dale Oolman will be asked for input from staff and supervisors.

Frank stated that the big easement east of town is nearly completed. All the scrape work is done and most of the seeding. Vorland stated that a lot of rare bird species are being seen on the easement. Frank stated that there will be over 75 acres of permanent water located on the site.

Smith stated that NRCS has just completed a large waterway seeding, but we really need rain for it to sprout. Staff has been focusing on next year's projects.

Staff Reports: Arndt stated that he will be calling the personnel committee to meet at end of the month.

Gulbransen stated that more waterways are complete. He also stated that all the Federal easement sprayings are done and staff are now doing the RIM easements where there is spraying needed for trees.

Condon reported that she has started the 2014 calendar. Melby reminded District that any donations given to the convention raffles will be recognized in the calendar and the web page.

Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Ihlenfeld to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. the meeting. Motion carried.

Submitted by
Sue Condon, District Admin. Sec.