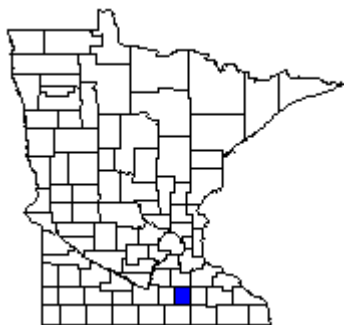


STEELE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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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 Dave Melby at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday July 8, 2015 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>
Dave Melby, Chairman	Dan Arndt	Jim Brady, Steele County Commissioner	
Mark Ihlenfeld, Vice Chair	Adrienne Justman	James Smith, NRCS	
James Klecker, Secretary	Eric Gulbransen	Noel Frank, NRCS	
Dan Hansen, Treasurer			
Kyle Wolfe, Reporter			

The July agenda was reviewed with no additions.

The June minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Klecker, to approve the minutes as written. Motion was carried by voice vote.

The June Treasurer’s Report was read by Dan Hansen. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Klecker, to approve the June Treasurer’s Report. Motion was carried by voice vote.

Bills: (See attached) Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Klecker, to approve paying the bills as written. Motion was carried by voice vote.

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. Area VII MASWCD Meeting – June 17 – Ihlenfeld and Gulbransen attended the area resolutions meeting. There were three resolutions presented. Two of the three passed after some discussion and adjustments to the phrasing. LeAnn Buck gave a review of the Legislative results for 2015. They also heard from Brenda Tomm, NRCS Area Conservationist, and Doug Thomas, BWSR.
2. Other – CRWP update – Wolfe gave a brief update on CRWP. They have hired a new director. He also reported that they received a \$5000.00 Mortensen Foundation Grant to be used for operational purposes.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. 2015 EQIP Local Workgroup meeting – Frank began by stating that the purpose of this meeting was to allow people to give their input about the EQIP program. He answered questions about who the suggestions from last year had been addressed and about the program details. There was discussion about the declining use of the program. The suggestions that were given for the upcoming year included stressing the benefit of a local allocation vs a state controlled one. There was also discussion about how the “shovel ready” requirement was causing there to be a lot of time and effort invested before an application could even be submitted.
2. State Cost Share Application – Larry Neubauer 1(15) – Cost Estimate \$1,100, Cost Share Estimate \$825 or 75%, whichever is less. Gulbransen presented this waterway project for Board approval. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Klecker, to approve funding this project through Cost Share. Motion carried by voice vote.
3. 2014 BWSR Flood Recovery Grant - \$74,700 – Arndt presented the information about this grant that will be received from BWSR to complete projects identified after the 2014 flooding. There were 8 projects identified after the flooding that will be eligible to use these grant dollars. Gulbransen and Arndt will be contacting landowners to verify if they are still interested in completing the identified projects. There was discussion about how to distribute funding for the projects. It was decided that the funds would be distributed following the guidelines established in the 2014-2016 State Cost Share Program. Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to adopt these guidelines in relation to the 2014 Flood Recovery Grant. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. Outstanding Conservationists Candidates – The Board was presented with an updated list for the Outstanding Conservationists. After discussion it was decided the recipients would be as follows:
  - Outstanding Conservation Farmer – Brad Hagen
  - Outstanding Windbreak – Jim Wencl
  - Outstanding Wildlife Conservationist – Daryl and Phyllis GrossMotion was made by Hansen, seconded by Wolfe, to accept these as the award winners. Motion carried by voice vote.
5. Southern MN Land Use Expo – July 20 – Arndt presented the information about the planned Land Use Expo on July 20. He stated that there will be elected officials attending as well as conservation staff and area landowners. There will be presentations on current practices and structures that are being used on the site. The main focus of the day will be the listening session on water use and control. There will also be a recap of the results of the 2015 Legislative session.
6. SWCD Governance 101 – September 16-17 – Arndt presented the information for this training session. The registration fee is \$145 for the 2 day training. It was decided to revisit this topic in August and see if there was interest at that time.

**Agency Reports:**

Jim Brady stated that he has had a rather quiet month. There have been complaints from a private party about the Thistles that are not being controlled. He also has been speaking with landowners who are unhappy about the pallet chipping plant that is going to be built. He has been listening to their concerns but most of what they are concerned about is beyond his control.

Agency Reports (Con't)

Jim Smith told the Board about the story that his recently completed basin project was featured in. The article was written by Julie McSwain.

Staff Reports:

Adrienne Justman gave a brief report on the meetings that she attended this month. These included the Area 7 MACDE Board meeting to plan for the fall meeting; the MCIT safety policy training; and the Affordable Care Act compliance reporting meeting put on by the SE Co-op.

Eric Gulbransen reported that there has been lots of paperwork to handle this month. He is planning to get started on waterway projects shortly.

Dan Arndt reported on the native prairie seeding that was done at Hospice, near the recently installed windbreak. The seed was donated by Shooting Star nursery. He also reported that Central Valley Co-op has purchased a 16 row strip till machine that will be available for landowner use. He also announced a Saturated Buffer Field day being held on July 21 in Kasson, MN.

At this time Dan Arndt excused himself from the meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS - CONTINUED**

7. Approve Hiring New SWC Technician – Eric Gulbransen reported on the results of the interviews that were held on July 7. There were 5 interviews scheduled but 2 candidates withdrew before the interview. There were concerns about the attitude of the first candidate as well as her commuting distance presenting a future problem. The second candidate was strong in some areas but was going to need training on the details of some conservation programs. The third candidate, Adam Arndt, was the one chosen by Gulbransen and the Personnel committee to recommend for employment. His back ground with NRCS gives him the needed training and experience with the conservation programs. He is also proficient with the necessary software and will need very little training.  
The Board discussed what pay level they would like to offer. The recommendation from the Personnel committee was to start him at step 9 based on his level of education and experience. The Board decided that this was a fair starting wage.  
There was also discussion about the health insurance. Under the current policy the District contributes 50% of the deductible into an H.S.A account for each employee. The District also contributes 100% of the monthly premium for single coverage, any employee choosing family coverage is responsible for paying the difference in premium. The current family plan offered is quite expensive. After much discussion it was decided that the District would deposit \$3000 into an H.S.A. account for Adam Arndt after he became eligible for District insurance coverage and other insurance policy options would be considered at renewal time.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Hansen, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Adrienne Justman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully Submitted by,".

Adrienne Justman,  
Administrative Assistant

July Bills

<b>Cedardale Dev. Co</b>		<b>July Rent</b>		<b>\$619.20</b>
<b>Jaguar</b>		<b>Internet</b>		<b>\$39.95</b>
<b>Eric Gulbransen</b>		<b>Mileage 87@.575</b>		<b>\$50.03</b>
<b>Dan Arndt</b>		<b>Mileage 95@.575</b>		<b>\$54.63</b>
<b>Adrienne Justman</b>		<b>Mileage 289@.575</b>		<b>\$166.18</b>
<b>DeWitt</b>		<b>Matting</b>		<b>\$486.94</b>
<b>Harland's Tire &amp; Auto</b>				<b>\$86.13</b>
<b>Ramsey County</b>		<b>Native Flower Packs</b>		<b>\$849.66</b>
<b>Elan</b>		<b>Gas</b>	<b>\$152.54</b>	
		<b>Postage - Waseca</b>	<b>\$20.58</b>	
		<b>Office Supplies</b>	<b>\$119.76</b>	<b>\$292.88</b>
<b>Supervisors</b>		<b>Per Diem</b>		<b>\$1,452.53</b>
<b>Supervisors</b>		<b>Expenses</b>		<b>\$313.60</b>
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,645.59</b>