



**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 7:10 p.m. on Thursday February 11, 2016 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	Eric Gulbransen	Jim Smith, NRCS	
James Klecker, Secretary	Adrienne Justman	Jim Brady, Steele County Commissioner	
Mark Ihlenfeld, Vice Chair	Adam Arndt		
Kyle Wolfe, Reporter			
Dan Hansen, Treasurer			

The February agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

The Januray minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. Wolfe noted one correction to the date of the CRWP meeting. Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Klecker, to approve the minutes with the stated correction. Motion was carried by voice vote.

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

OLD BUSINESS

1. Meeting Reports – Joint Powers Board – January 21 – Ihlenfeld and Gulbransen attended this meeting. There was review of past work and discussion of the currently active grants. Ihlenfeld stated that the JPB is considering hiring an engineer and having them based on Mower County.

Soil Health Workshop – January 19 – Ihlenfeld, Melby, Arndt, Gulbransen, and Justman attended this meeting. There were several presenters and the covering topics including looking at soil health as a long term investment and presenting their own experiences of what has and has not worked for them. The speaker from University of Minnesota presented initial findings from the trials that have been conducted.

Buffer Law Webinar – January 20 – Wolfe, Ihlenfeld, Gulbransen, and Arndt attended this event. They reported that there was no new information but the DNR mapping is running on schedule.

RC&D – January 26 – Ihlenfeld attended this meeting. There was a presentation by the Rochester city mayor. He has set a goal of Rochester being energy neutral by 2025. There was also discussion during this meeting about the direction that RC&D should go in the future.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Meeting Reports Cont. – CRWP Budget meeting – January 25 – Wolfe attended this meeting. HE reported that the plan for the 2016 budget is to use 2/3 of the funds for staff and the remaining 1/3 for projects. He also stated that CRWP ended 2015 good financial standing.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Compensated Absences CD Options – This topic was tabled at the January meeting for further investigation. Details about the new options discussed in January were presented and it was decided that Community Bank Owatonna was the best option for a new CD.
2. 2016 Plan of Work Options – Gulbransen presented a new option for completing the Plan for Work to the Board. The new option fulfilled BWSR requirements but would not include a full written report as had been done in the past. After discussion it was decided that continuing with the current format would be the best option since it is easily accessible and understandable for anyone interested in reading it.
3. 2016 Dues – The 2016 Dues were presented to the Board for approval. There was discussion about how the MASWCD due have been handled in the past. It was decided to split the payment for this bill, half now and half in July. There was also discussion about if the Soil Health Tehnician had been a benefit in the last year. It was decided that due to low involvement and feedback from landowners the SWCD would not be contributing to support that position this year. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Klecker, to pay the dues as discussed.
 - NACD - \$775.00
 - MASWCD - \$3743.48 (Total)
 - SE MASWCD - \$500.00
 - RC&D - \$300.00
 - SE SWCD JPB - \$500.00
 - Envirothon - \$175.00
 - Soil Health Tech Support - \$500.00
4. Local Capacity Services Grant – Work Plan Draft and Grant Agreement – Gulbransen presented the Draft Work Plan to the Board review and approval. Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Hansen, to submit the Draft Plan as written. Motion carried by voice vote.
Gulbransen also presented the Grant Agreement for signature. Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Klecker, to sign and submit the agreement. Motion carried by voice vote. Agreement was signed and will be submitted.
5. BWSR Grant Closeouts – See below – Justman presented the Final Financial reports for completed grants. Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Klecker, to sign and submit the reports.
 - 2014 Cost Share – ID P14-0855 – Amount \$10,609.15
 - 2015 Easement Delivery – ID P15-0468 – Amount \$2,537.00
 - 2015 Conservation Delivery – ID P15-8468 – Amount \$20014.00
6. Steele County Farm Family of the Year – Gulbransen asked the Board for their recommendations for candidates for this award. There were 3 Steele County families named. These candidates will be submitted for consideration.
7. Legislative Day at the Capital – March 21 & 22 – Gulbransen presented the information about this to the Board. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Hansen, to approve the District paying for registration and hotel for those interested in attending. Motion carried by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

8. Cover Crop Workshop – March 8 – Gulbransen presented the information for this event to the supervisors. It will be held at the Owatonna Community Center from 2:00-4:30.
9. Gulbransen Probationary Review – The Personnel Committee met prior to the Board meeting and completed the Probationary Review for Eric Gulbransen. They presented their recommendations to the Board. After discussion it was decided that due to the favorable review Gulbransen would move up to Step 13 on the pay scale beginning the first full pay period after his probationary period. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Klecker, and carried by voice vote.

Agency Reports:

Jim Smith reported that there will be an Altima employee starting in the office on Wednesday. She will be assisting NRCS with administrative duties. He also reported that he currently has 4 Cover Crop EQIP applications.

Jim Brady reported on a bridge west of the Mayo Clinic that is in need of repair or replacement. The work isn't scheduled to be done until spring of 2017. For the time being a weight restriction has been placed on the bridge. He also reported that the projected sales tax income was incorrect. This is going to delay projects and reduce the amount available for repairs.

Staff Reports:

Adam Arndt has put together a couple of project estimates for local cooperators. He stated that he has been working on the tree program and contracting interested landowners about windbreaks.

Adrienne Justman completed the BWSR eLink reporting and has begun the End of Year financial now that the updated information is available.

Eric Gulbransen presented the information about a few meetings including a Technology meeting and an Ag Water Quality training. Gulbransen reported that we currently have one application for this program. He gave the Leadership training information to the Board. He also reported that he would be submitting projects for the phase 3 Flood Recovery grant at the end of February.

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

Respectfully Submitted by,



Adrienne Justman,
Administrative Assistant

February Bills

Cedardale Dev.	February Rent		\$619.20
Jaguar	Internet		\$39.95
Elan	Quickbooks 2016	219.95	
	Office Supplies	43.30	\$263.25
Adrienne Justman	Mileage 175 @ .54		\$94.50
Eric Gulbransen	Mileage 105 @ .54		\$56.70
Agri News	1 year Subscription		\$36.82
		Total	\$1,110.42