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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 April 13, 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>
James Klecker, Secretary	Eric Gulbransen	John Glynn, Steele County Commissioner	
Mark Ihlenfeld, Vice Chair	Adrienne Justman	Noel Frank, NRCS	
Dan Hansen, Treasurer	Adam Arndt		
Dave Melby, Chairman			
Kyle Wolfe, Reporter			

Melby welcomed Lawrence Svien to the meeting.

The April agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

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

The March Treasurer’s Report was read by Dan Hansen. There was a correction needed to the beginning checking balance noted by Justman. Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Wolfe, to approve the March Treasurer’s Report with the correction. Motion was carried by voice vote.

Bills: (See attached) Motion was made by Wolfe, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve paying the bills. Motion was carried by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Dean Thomas – Area Cover Crop Advisor – Gulbransen presented the idea of supporting the Soil Health Technician position for another year. It had been decided at the February meeting to pass on the \$500 contribution this year as we did not benefit from it much in 2015. Gulbransen stated that with the new Cover Crop program that the District is going to be doing Dean Thomas could be utilized as a consultant to help those new to cover crops, or those looking for a new way to use them, get started in the right direction. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Klecker, to approve the \$500 expense. Motion carried by voice vote.
2. Tim Wilson – Assistant State Conservationist of Field Office Operations – Noel Frank stated that the Assistant State Conservationist position has been filled by Tim Wilson. Wilson will be staying in this position for the next several years. He is stationed in Bloomington and will be covering a 30 county area.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Meeting Reports – Legislative Day – Gulbransen, Klecker, Melby, and Ihlenfeld attended the Legislative Day at the Capital event. Monday evening there was a review of the MASWCD platform and a questions and answer session. On Tuesday those in attendance met with Representative Daniels, Senator Sparks, Representative Petersberg, and Senator Jensen. They thanked each for the new Local Capacity grants that have been received, talked about the importance of funding RIM and the upcoming CREP programs, and expressed an amount of disappointment in the exclusion on private ditches in the Buffer Law.

CRWP – March 14 – Kyle Wolfe attended this meeting. He stated that the Annual meeting will be held on Mar 9th. There was discussion about the budget; at this time they have 10 months of operating income available. CRWP has decided to create a program that will distribute the Busch grant funds to Soil and Water Districts to complete erosion projects. There will be 6 counties, that each receive \$5000 to complete the project that they submit.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Lawrence Svien – Executive Director, Zumbro Watershed Partnership – Lawrence Svien introduced himself and gave a brief description of the Zumbro Watershed District. He also stated that at this time there is not a representative from the SWCD attending the meetings. The meetings are held at Cascade Meadows in Rochester on the second Thursday of the month. He talked about the work that they have been doing including the WRAPS for the Cannon River, and they are beginning the WRAPS for the Zumbro. They have received an LCCMR grant that they will be using to increase the number access points on the Zumbro River. The goal of this is to increase community engagement through more recreational use of the river. They are currently involved in a water monitoring project. They monitor what is occurring during the peak flow periods of storm events. They started 3 years ago and have a new contract for 2 more years. They are planning to pursue the One Watershed One Plan program after the Zumbro WRAPS is completed.
2. Supervisor Election Filing – 5/17-5/31 – Districts 2 and 5 will be up for election this year and candidates must file between May 17 and May 31.
3. Steele County Free Fair
 - Exploring the Environment Champion - \$25 – Gulbransen presented the information from the Extension office regarding the Exploring the Environment 4H competition that is held yearly at the Steele County fair. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Klecker, to approve sponsoring the program again for 2016. Motion carried by voice vote.
 - Fair Booth - \$115 – Gulbransen presented the information from Izaak Walton League regarding the fair booth for 2016. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Wolfe, to approve the expense of the booth. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. DNR Buffer Maps – Gulbransen informed the Board that the preliminary maps are available for review on the DNR website. Those interested in reviewing and making comments will need to request access to the program that has been designed.

NEW BUSINESS:

5. Sauk River Watershed District Buffer Cost Share – Gulbransen spoke to the Board about the cost share program that the Sauk River Watershed District has developed to help landowners install buffers on eligible lands. This program could be used as a model for a future buffer cost share if the District chose to pursue one.
6. CRWP Annual Meeting – May 9 – The annual report will be held in Northfield. There will be a speaker on cover crops and they will be giving an update of the status of the Cannon River Watershed Partnership.
7. District Capacity Grant
 - Cover Crop Cost Share – Gulbransen presented a draft of the District Cover Crop Cost Share Program. The target group is going to be those who will be growing canning crops. The program will follow NRCS specifications and regulations. The District plans to offer \$30 per acre for a single species cover and \$40 per acre for multi (4 minimum). The Board decided to place an 80 acre maximum on the contracts. There will be no minimum size requirement. No fall tillage will be allowed. Payments will be made in December. Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the program as discussed. Motion carried by voice vote.
8. United Prairie Bank – Collateral Resolution – Gulbransen informed the Board the new Collateral Resolution has been received from United Prairie Bank
9. SMC Pit Expansion – Gulbransen let the Board know that this project has been approved and will be moving forward.

Agency Reports:

John Glynn reported that he attended a One Watershed One Plan meeting. He also spoke about Destination Medical Center in Rochester. He stated that it is expected that the project will create 45,000 new jobs.

Noel Frank reported on his activities. He stated that he has been completing an inventory of the NRCS property in the office. He also stated that it may in the future be required for the SWCD to reimburse NRCS for some of the services received. He also announced that the Equip Local Workgroup meeting will be held next month.

Jim Smith reported that the cover crop applications that he had have been scored and ranked. He has been performing site visits for potential waterways. He has also been measuring CRP filter strips.

Staff Reports:

Adam Arndt continues to spend much of his time on the tree program. There are still orders arriving. At this time there are approximately 9,000 trees sold.

Adrienne Justman has been assisting with processing tree orders. She also has been assisting with the Biennial Budget Requests for both Waseca and Steele counties.

Eric Gulbransen reported that the number of meetings he is attending has reduced in the last month. The New Richland flooding project continues to move forward. He has been working on the cover crop cost share programs for both counties as well as the Biennial Budget Requests. WCA has still been taking up a significant amount of his time.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion was made by Klecker, seconded by Hansen, to adjourn the meeting at 8:50. 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 above the typed name.

Adrienne Justman,
Administrative Assistant

April Bills

Cedardale Dev.	April Rent		\$619.20
Jaguar	Internet		\$39.95
Elan	Office Supplies	78.35	
	Gas	54.49	
	Legislative Day Hotel	396.16	\$529.00
Eric Gulbransen	Mileage - 329 Miles @ .54		\$177.66
Adrienne Justman	Mileage - 180 @ .54		\$97.20
Harland's Tire & Auto	New tires for Truck		\$674.24
Khimaira	Website Hosting - 2016		\$165.00
DeWitt	Matting		\$796.36
		Total	\$3,098.61