



STEELE COUNTY
Soil and Water Conservation District

235 Cedardale Drive SE
Owatonna MN 55060
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www.steeleswcd.org

The regular monthly meeting of the Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was called to order by Mark Ditlevson at 5:00 PM on Thursday March 14, 2024 at the Steele County SWCD Office, 235 Cedardale Drive SE, Owatonna MN, 55060.

<u>SWCD Supervisors Present:</u>	<u>SWCD Staff Present:</u>	<u>Others Present:</u>	<u>Absent:</u>
Mark Ihlenfeld, Treasurer	Eric Gulbransen	Jim Smith, NRCS	
Dan Hansen, Secretary	Adam Arndt	Teddy Moreno-Santos, NRCS	
Dave Melby, Vice Chair	Adrienne Gransee		
Brad Hagen, PR&I	Ian Pringle		
Mark Ditlevson, Chairman			

The March agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

The February minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Hansen, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

The February Treasurer’s Report was read by Ihlenfeld. Motion was made by Hagen, seconded by Melby, to approve the February Treasurer’s Report. Motion was carried by voice vote.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Meeting Reports – Soil Health Winter Tour – February 22 – This event was held at Torey’s in Owatonna. Mark Ihlenfeld, Dan Hansen, Dave Melby, Brad Hagen, Eric Gulbransen, Adam Arndt, Ian Pringle and Adrienne Gransee all attended. The supervisors agreed that the event was improved from the one held last year. The speakers were interesting, especially Martin Larson. They also liked the variety of people chosen for the farmer panel.

Brad Hagen reported on the Practical Farmers of Iowa event that he attended on March 4 in Mankato. There were presentations on small grains and cover crops as well as breakout sessions for more discussion. They talked about the small grain incentive program in place in Olmsted county as well as nitrate testing in caves in the southeast area.

2. Day at the Capital – March 12-13 – Mak Ihlenfeld, Mark Ditlevson, Dan Hansen, Dave Melby and Eric Gulbransen attended this event. There was good representation from SWCD’s around the state. They visited with several of the legislators and were able to discuss what the District does and what we need from the State to continue our work. The buffer law and nitrate issues were common topics that came up while visiting with the legislators.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. NACD Dues - \$775 – Gransee presented the options for the NACD annual dues. There are a variety of funding levels that the District can adopt. After discussion it was decided that they would remain at the same level as previous years. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Melby, to pay the \$775 NACD dues. Motion was carried by voice vote.
2. Area Employee Meeting – April 2 – Oxbow Park – Gulbransen presented the information about the meeting to the Board and requested that the District cover the registration fee of \$15 per person and allow staff to attend the event. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the registration expense for any staff interested in attending. Motion carried by voice vote.
3. Conservation Cooperation for Working Lands (CCWL) Program Grant – Up to \$30,000 – Gulbransen informed the Board that the District had applied for and been awarded this grant. It is a reimbursement grant for staff hours spent on soil health related activities. The hours that we are charged for easement work through the agreement with Freeborn SWCD are also eligible for reimbursement through this grant.
4. Cannon 1W1P Annual Report - Gulbransen informed the Board that the annual report for the Cannon 1W1P was available and to let him know if they would like a hard copy of the report.
5. Personnel Committee Meeting – District Technician Ian Pringle is reaching the end of his probationary period. The Personnel committee will meet on April 10, immediately before the next Board meeting, to conduct his review.

Agency Reports

Teddy Moreno-Santos has been covering a Detail for the State office. He has also accepted a District Conservationist position in the Austin field office. He anticipates transitioning to that position in late May or early June after the detail is completed.

Jim Smith Gave the Board an update about the CSP applications that have been submitted. They include both forestry and structural practices. He also gave a brief update about the EQIP program. Smith will be conducting site visits for potential projects as well as attending a variety of CSP trainings.

Staff Reports

Eric Gulbransen continues to work on the county ditches. He is currently working through some issues with the railroad. The WCA project near Hope is still moving forward, the final paperwork is waiting for approval by the TEP committee.

Staff Reports

Adam Arndt told the Board about the ArcPro training that he has been doing as well as site visits that he has been making to view potential projects. He intends to submit a portion of them for funding through the Cannan 1W1P.

Adrienne Gransee has been focused on completing and submitting the application for the CCWL grant. In addition she is still assisting with trees and general office needs.

Ian Pringle reported that the delivery date for the trees has been set and the majority of the stock is sold. He is waiting on confirmation about the student help. He has continued to complete a variety of trainings. Pringle also stated that they are beginning to get calls to use the drills.

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

Respectfully Submitted by,



Adrienne Gransee,
Administrative Assistant

March Bills

Cedardale Dev. Co	March Rent		\$716.40
Spectrum	Internet		\$89.99
Elan	Meals	87.19	
	Gas	159.33	
	Hotel	291.38	
	Supplies	125.25	
	Postage	6.60	
	Phone	87.25	
	Wix - Email & Hosting	53.85	
	QuickBooks Payroll	590.56	\$1,401.41
		Total	\$2,207.80

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