



STEELE COUNTY
Soil and Water Conservation District

235 Cedardale Drive SE
Owatonna MN 55060
507-451-6730 Ext. 3
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 Wednesday October 11, 2023 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	Mike Klecker, Vice Chair
Dan Hansen, PR&I	Adrienne Gransee	Rick Gnemi, County Commissioner	Adam Arndt
Dave Melby, Secretary	Ian Pringle		
Mark Ditlevson, Chairman			

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The October agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

The September minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. One change was noted in the motion to approve the August minutes. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Melby, to approve the minutes with the noted correction. Motion carried by voice vote.

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

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

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Meeting Reports – Area 7 Fall Employee Meeting – September 27 – Dundas & Northfield – Mark Ihlenfeld, Dave Melby, Eric Gulbransen, Adam Arndt and Adrienne Gransee attended this meeting. Ihlenfeld and Melby reported that there was a lower than typical turn out for the Supervisors. They gave a brief update from the Supervisors meeting and informed the Board that area dues will be going up to \$500 per year to help maintain the budget. They also spoke about the visit to Salvatierra Farms, a Tree-Range regenerative poultry farm. The owner was a good speaker and the presentation was interesting.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2024 Board Meeting Date and Time – The Board discussed the options for meetings in 2024. It was proposed to keep the meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 5:00pm, with adjustments made as needed for holidays and other events. Motion was made by Melby, seconded by Hansen. The motion passed with 4 in agreement and Mark Ihlenfeld voting nay.
2. Resolution Packet – The packet was distributed to the Board prior to the meeting. The Board was given the opportunity to ask questions about the process and any of the resolutions specifically. Gransee requested that ballots be returned by October 27 so that they can be submitted to MASWCD on time.
3. Personnel Policy Updates – Gransee informed the Board that the portion of the Personnel Policy regarding drug testing was removed upon the recommendation of the Wabasha County HR representative and with the approval of Eric Gulbransen. She also informed the Board that there will be changes coming regarding the District sick leave policy. These changes are in response to the Earned Sick and Safe Time law that will be going into effect on January 1, 2024. Gransee plans to have these changes ready to present to the Board at the November meeting.
4. Governor’s Pheasant Opener – Eric Gulbransen gave an update on the event. The District participated by helping to identify land for the Governor and Lt. Governor to hunt. Gulbransen also assisted the Historical Society with locating and identifying native plants for a display. Gulbransen also reviewed the agenda for the weekend events with the Board.
5. Other – HSA for part-time employees – There was discussion about how the Board wanted to handle the District contributions to employee HSA accounts. IT was agreed that pro-rating contributions to 50% for a half-time employee was the best solution. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to pro-rate the District HSA contributions for October and November and revisit the issue after that time. Motion passed by voice vote.

Agency Reports

Jim Smith reported on the projects that are being completed. He has also been verifying the cover crops that have been planted, as well as doing evaluations for future projects. A portion of his time has been spent assisting the Dodge county Technician with ongoing work there.

Rick Gnemi gave an update on the round-a-bout, it currently has an estimated finish date in November. He also reported on anticipated staff changes at the County.

Staff Reports

Adrienne Gransee reported that water monitoring has been completed. This was the 2nd year of a 2 year cycle so it is not expected that there will be monitoring planned for next summer. She gave the Board an update on the 2024 calendar, as well as the changes that have been made to how payroll is being processed. She also gave the Board a report on the ESST training that she attended.

Staff Reports

Eric Gulbransen has been focused primarily on WCA concerns and attending to the county ditches. In addition he has been working on preparations for the Governor's pheasant opener and beginning on Ian Pringle's training.

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

Respectfully Submitted by,



Adrienne Gransee,
Administrative Assistant

October Bills

Cedardale Dev Co		December Rent		\$792.00
Spectrum		Internet		\$89.99
Cedardale Dev Co		Garage Rent		\$600.00
Pererson Company		2022 Audit		\$4,025.00
Elan		Gas	\$345.47	
		Phone	\$87.24	
		Convention Registration	\$2,310.00	
		Postage	\$9.15	
		Credit Card Reader	\$63.29	
		Website - Email campaign	\$29.00	\$2,844.15
Tri-M Graphics		2024 Calendar Postage		\$1,616.56
Schlatters Inc		Tile Probes & Tips		\$568.00
MN Dept of Ag		2024 Tree Dealers License		\$450.00
Dagry		Tree planter repair		\$101.20
			TOTAL	\$11,086.90