



KANABEC SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2008 Mahogany St. Ste. 3
Mora, MN 55051
(320) 679-3781
www.kanabeccounty.org

OUTCOME DOCUMENTS FROM THE DECEMBER 15, 2015 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Johnson, Gene Carda, Betty Wilkens, Paul Hoppe,
Kevin Belkholm

OTHERS PRESENT: Deanna Pomije, Shannon Rasinski, Kristal Krueger

Chairman Hoppe called the meeting to order at 3 p.m.

M/S/Approved Wilkens, Johnson to approve the November 10 meeting minutes and the Nov. financial report. **M/S/Approved** to approve the Nov. vouchers for payment. Correction to the Mapping Solutions payment Ch.# 9752 should be \$231, not \$34.

Informational:

AIS Update: Held 2 meetings in Dec. with the budget decisions made for 2016 (\$72,870). The committee decided not to purchase a decontamination unit at this time. County wide decided to set aside 7% as a contingency fund for invasive outbreaks, 10% for education and 15% for administration by the Kanabec SWCD. The remainder is split equally between the 6 lake associations to be used for preventing the introduction of invasives or limiting their spread. The associations can be reimbursed via work invoices submitted for review to the SWCD board.

Campaign finance disclosures required by the SWCD individual board members regardless of new changes, due 1/25/16. Information on this will be mailed from the Disclosure Board to each of the board members. If you don't receive this information contact Pomije.

Informational: 2015 Billing rates set at \$36.54 for Deanna, \$38.89 for Jan. This is updated annually using an approved BWSR calculator, factoring in infrastructure costs.

NRCS Report given by Shannon Rasinski. Update given on technical assistance, the EQIP program deadlines and CSP program activity.

Discussion:

MASWCD dues discussed. Dues increasing \$589 in 2016, up to a total of \$2838. The average co. increase for 2016 is \$620. Discussion on the benefits we get from the MASWCD membership. Some other surrounding counties have shown discontent. Pine Co. has sent MASWCD a letter asking for further clarification on the dues and the benefits received. Will invite Kurt Beckstrom to our next meeting to discuss dues further. Beckstrom is the current Vice President of MASWCD and also a Mille Lacs SWCD board member.

Wilkens brought forward this item for discussion: The gathering of the Kanabec Co. public land data on the history of the land over time, purchases in regards to county comprehensive planning. She stated that

part of the Co. board was in favor of this study. Wilkens and others were in favor of this public lands study taking place.

County Water Plan discussion, current plan expires Dec. 2016. A good comprehensive County Water Plan will increase the likelihood of acquiring additional grant opportunities county-wide for multiple groups and agencies. Up for a 10 year revision with public and agency input included. The re-write can take 10-17 months. Tomorrow, Dec. 16 the Co. Board has on the agenda to review a resolution to start this process. Hoppe said he's attend the Co. Board meeting to stress the importance of this plan.

M/S/Approved Wilkens, Johnson approved the support of a letter stressing the importance of Reinvest in MN (RIM) easement protection of forested land in this NE area of the state for water quality protection. The surrounding four counties have already expressed support of this letter. The letter is addressed to the easement section of BWSR.

Decisions:

M/S/Approved Belkholm, Wilkens approved the revised building lease agreement at the new 382 SF, prorated from February, 2016 forward. The rate remains the same at \$12/SF. This is an annual lease Oct. 1 through Sept. 30.

M/S/Approved Carda, Belkholm approved \$875 for the 2015 fiscal year close out by the Peterson Co. They will assist the SWCD with setting up the books with the new PERA retirement accounting system. This new system is a state requirement and will show a negative balance when the state PERA retirement earnings are down. In the future we may be asked to contribute additionally to PERA to make up for retirement losses.

M/S/Approved Johnson, Carda approved \$165 for the Co. contracted human resources (MRA Truth Site) to review the technician position description for equitable pay.

M/S/Approved Johnson, Wilkens approved the signing of the grant agreement covering both \$10,000 for the buffer law implementation over 2 years and \$4000 for the promotion of the AgCertainty Program through May of 2016.

M/S/Approved Carda, Wilkens approved the new lab-top and computer upgrade expenses (with a total estimate of \$2000) for the new shared Administrator position. Funding from the \$100,000 capacity grant.

M/S/Approved Johnson, Carda approved the presented draft of the Capacity Funds plan for the \$100,000. Some details yet to be added as clarification on spending is obtained. A work plan for this funding will be entered into e-Link and then presented again for board approval. The work plan is entered under listed natural resource concerns with the requested capacity funding (ex: staffing and equipment needs) behind each concern. For example the riparian zone management resource concern may list funds needed for staffing, GPS equipment and added vehicle needs.

Discussion over plans for the District Land: The donated deed has a restrictive covenant stating the land shall be managed for conservation purposes and its' wetlands preserved and maintained. Soil health demonstration sites and education were considered. Access into the land is a minor issue, may look into upgrading the pull off to allow for vehicles and bus traffic. May look into grant options for demonstration projects. Also working with the local school on projects, for example an educational bog walk installed. Will need to consider the current renter of the 16 acres – 3 fields. It was mentioned to put a proposal together for soil health practices to be used on the land and distribute it to the neighboring farmers for their interest in renting or contracting this management. As this is public land, transparency will be a key component in utilizing this land for demonstrations and educational purposes. If the land is not rented (no income on the land) then there will be no taxes due. More planning is needed. An option to plant Konsa, a new perennial grain was mentioned.

M/S/Approved Wilkens, Carda approved the latest revised 2016 budget. It now includes the expected Capacity funds from BWSR of \$100,000.

M/S/Approved Johnson, Wilkens approved in concept the shared contract with Mille Lacs Co. for the Administrator position. To be reviewed yet by the Kanabec Co. lawyer. The template for the contract was reviewed by a Mille Lacs lawyer and has had a cursory review by MCIT with some suggestions.

M/S/Approved Wilkens, Johnson approved the technician position description. The payment range may vary after the Kanabec Co. human resources review it for pay equity.

M/S/Approved Wilkens, Carda approved the shared (with Mille Lacs Co.) Administer's position description. The payment range for the position is still under review by Mille Lacs human resources for pay equity.

District Manager's Report:

Update on civic organizing case study presentation in Woodbury, MN at the Kowalski Market 11/19. Very good presentation on multiple water quality organizations within the St. Croix watershed practicing civic organizing and their results.

Surveys have been done on a few Ann Lake projects such as lakeshore restoration at the Pink Diamond and township erosion ditch project along Forest Shores Rd. Construction planned for 2016 funded under the Ann River Clean Water Fund (CWF) grant.

Due at the end of Dec. Conservation Partnership Legacy (CPL) grant reports. Currently 2 grants: Elm and Butternut tree planting on the District land and WMA land & burning grassland for wildlife management.

Mora Stormwater CPL Grant to meet with the city of Mora in Jan. on the preliminary modeling report. The report will proposing stormwater treatment sites.

M/S/Approved Johnson, Belkholm approved Pomije as the signature authority to sign the upcoming Ann Lake Loading 319 (MPCA) grant. The finalized grant paperwork expected soon. Work may begin once the contract is signed and finalized.

Committee Reports:

Belkholm gave a report on his attendance to the MASWCD Convention 12/7. The new Buffer Law was explained. The buffers to be required will be 50' on Public waters and 16.5' on county ditches. The deadlines to have them in place are Nov. 2017 for public waters and Nov. 2018 for county ditches. The DNR is currently working on mapping these water courses with input from the SWCD. The final maps are due out July 2016. Seasonal flow was mentioned not to be included in the mapping. The impact on Kanabec County will be mostly in the southern half where currently buffers don't exist. Perennial vegetation / pasture counts for an existing buffer. Alternative practices for buffers, for example could be waterways or sediment basins where concentrated flow runs into the water course. The SWCD is being contracted to assist with the technical aspects of this buffer law and not the enforcement. Other entities, either the county or BWSR or DNR will handle the enforcement of the buffer law.

Staff Meeting Attendance:

- Technical Service Area TSA mtg. Duluth 12/16
- AIS Mini Summit, Palisade Aitkin Co. 12/28
- Dec./Jan. AIS workshop, Andover
- Jan. 13 McNight Foundation, Mpls. Lands and Legacy Grant Workshop

Next Meeting Date set for 2 pm on Tues. Jan. 12, 2016 at the Kanabec SWCD office in Mora.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM

Christmas potluck followed meeting.

_____ approved _____ date