



North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District

Special Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2017

Northland Office Building

307 First St S, Suite 118

Virginia MN 55792

Supervisors Present: Chuck Bainter, Peggy Pearson, Mark Peterson

Staff Present: Phil Norvitch, Resource Conservationist; Anita Provinzino, District Administrator

Others Present: Dale Krystosek, BWSR Performance Review & Assessment; Erin Loeffler, BWSR Board Conservationist

The meeting was called to order by Chair Peggy Pearson at 10:30 a.m. A quorum was present.

1. Agenda - Motion by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to add item 21b: FY2016-1 Cost Share Contract with Landowner Request for Board Review and 26b Highway Signage to the agenda.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
2. Minutes – Motion by Mark Peterson/Chuck Bainter to approve the minutes as written.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
3. Treasurer's Report – Motion by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the Treasurer's Report as updated on 5/17/17.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson.
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
4. Accounts Payable & Accounts Receivable – Motion by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable as updated on 5/17/17.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson.
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
5. Ratify Email Votes – Motion by Mark Peterson/Chuck Bainter to ratify email vote on tree planting for 17 DNR CPL Grant.
6. Guest Introductions & Comments – Dale Krystosek presented the draft performance review & assessment to the Board. The draft report will be final after it is reviewed by all three agencies involved, currently planned for late June. Motion by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the District's response letter.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson.
Opposed: None
Motion Carried

Gary Rantala arrived at the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

REPORTS:

7. Supervisor & Committee Reports

The mission of the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District is to provide leadership and programs that protect our natural resources by uniting people and organizations to overcome obstacles while protecting and maintaining the diversity of our environment.

- a. Chuck's reported on Earth Fest booth and the District Tree Sale. He stated he is thankful for the current staff of the District.
- b. Mark reported on the Earth Fest booth, He suggested the Northwoods School Forest could be a place for the District to donate trees. He attended a presentation on sustainable farming by David Abazs of Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center in Finland. He encouraged Board members to tour Wolf Ridge if they have the opportunity as it is a diverse center.
- c. Peggy reported she plans to attend the RC& D meeting is in Duluth on Monday.
- 8. NRCS District Conservationist Report – See report on file.
- 9. District Administrator Report – See report on file, plus
 - a. Anita reported on the conference on Risk Management hosted by MASWCD and Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust that she attended on May 11. It was a worthwhile conference that will benefit the District now and in the future. Immediate information useful to the District:
 - i. Should an employer provide sunblock and bug spray to its employees who work outside? According to MCIT weather is not a consideration – OSHA does not require employers to provide sunblock. Bug spray is considered a best practices of SWCD's. The Board recommended the District provide bug repellent to each regular or temporary employee serving in an outdoor capacity.
 - ii. Do email votes violate the open meeting law? According to MCIT, there is case law prohibiting phone meetings and they feel email votes are in the same category because they do not allow public participation. Board members discussed this as they had been advised that email votes were acceptable as long as there was not an email discussion among the Board. The Board asked for clarification from the County Attorney.
- 10. Resource Conservationist - See report on file plus Phil is seeking technical approval authority and now has access to NRCS' AgLearn system for that purpose.
- 11. Water Resources Specialist Report - See report on file.
- 12. Forester Report – See report on file.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 13. Regional Forester Funding Request – Discussion was held regarding the request from Aitkin County to provide matching funds or in-kind. The District does not have a lot of interaction with the regional forester. Anita will provide information to Aitkin SWCD regarding a tree care workshop that Beth held in February – perhaps some of that time could be used for in-kind match.
- 14. MASWCD Dues – Anita received phone calls from Paul Krabbenhoft, MASWCD Secretary/Treasurer, indicating that MASWCD will research the District's request to calculate property tax value and population based on District boundaries in St Louis County and determine an appropriate dues rate – rather than calculate dues for the whole county and split them in half. He stated that Kurt Beckstrom will begin calculating this. Paul suggested that a MASWCD Board member will visit with our Board.
- 15. Existing Shared Services Agreement with SSL SWCD – Motion by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the forester rate change from \$25.99 to \$28.27 per hour with the caveat that Anita notify SSL SWCD that the District requests rate changes be available for budgeting in the fall and be done in advance.

Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala

Opposed: None
Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS:

16. Audit Committee Appointment – Peggy appointed Chuck Bainter and Gary Rantala to the audit committee for the purpose of interviewing potential auditors and bringing a recommendation to the Board.
17. Board Appointment from nomination district 3 – There were no applicants. The District will continue to seek applicants for the Board.
18. Billable Rate – Motion by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to approve the 2017 BSWR Billable Rate chart.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
19. BWSR RIM Easements Master Joint Powers Agreement – Motion by Chuck Bainter/Gary Rantala to approve the RIM Easements Master Joint Powers Agreement.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
20. Buffer Law – DNR Summary Waters List. Motion by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2017-4.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
21. Cost Share Contracts
 - a. Community Partners Cost Share Contract with Landowner – Motion by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to approve Community Partners Cost Share Contract 17-01 with Retreat Lodge Resort on Lake Vermilion.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
 - b. Cost Share Contract Review FY2016-1 – Motion by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to deny John Sweet's request to increase contract amount to accommodate high quoted cost of barging. It was felt the cost was unreasonable. Landowner was asked to obtain a second quote.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
22. District Administrator time – Motion by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to approve Anita's request to go full-time based on needs of the District effective 6/4/17. This was budgeted.
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
23. Upcoming Meetings and Trainings
24. Area 3 Resolutions Meeting – June 2 – Carlton
25. Statewide Administrative Training – June 28 & 29 – Walker – Anita
26. Area 3 Annual Meeting – September 20 & 21

- a. Hosted by Mille Lacs SWCD.
- b. Highway Signage – Mark Peterson indicated that the SWCD sign near Keewatin had blown over and needs better bracing. He found heavy duty posts on craigslist. He would like the District to purchase the posts and pay mileage. He and Chuck will donate their time to add additional bracing to all three highway signs in the County. Motion by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to purchase 27 posts at \$7 each and pay mileage.

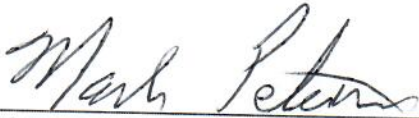
Affirmative: Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

27. Confirm Next Meeting Date – The next meeting date was set for Wednesday, June 14.

28. The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m. with motion by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter.



Mark Peterson, Secretary

June 14, 2017
Date