



North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District
505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792

Special Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2021

The meeting was held in person at the St. Louis County Public Works Building in Virginia and via Zoom.

Supervisors Present at Roll Call: Peggy Pearson, Mark Peterson and Gary Rantala were present in-person. Frank Modich joined via zoom.

Staff Present: Anita Provinzino, District Administrator; Lauren Soergel, Forester; and Zach Evans, Regional Farm Bill Forester were present in-person. Becca Reiss and Natalya Walker joined via Zoom.

Others Present: Amy Mustonen, Environmental Specialist, MPCA Watershed Division was in-person; Erin Loeffler, MN Board of Water & Soil Resources; and Allison Praet, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service joined via zoom.

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 a.m. by Chair, Peggy Pearson.

1. Agenda - Moved by Mark Peterson/Frank Modich to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
2. Minutes of June 9, 2021 Regular Meeting – Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to approve the minutes as written. Motion Carried
3. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve the financial report and program summary. Motion Carried
4. Accounts Payable & Accounts Receivable – Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable adding bills from Mesabi Outdoor Adventures for \$350; Repellex for \$137.50, and SWCD Forestry Association for \$26.00. Motion Carried

Chuck Bainter joined the meeting via Zoom.

5. Guest Introductions and Comments
 - a. Zach Evans was introduced and welcomed as the new Regional Farm Bill Forester.
 - b. Amy Mustonen gave an informative presentation on the draft Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies document for the Rainy River Headwaters & Vermilion River Watersheds. The draft is expected to be released in mid-August for a 60-day public comment period. The watershed has a few impairments and several water bodies that are nearly/barely meeting the water quality standards. Amy encouraged public comments and reminded us that we can choose what areas to target.

Chuck Bainter left the meeting mid-presentation and arrived in-person near the end of the presentation.

NEW BUSINESS

6. Accounting Technician – Moved by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to allow Anita to offer the accounting technician to either of the top two interview candidates contingent upon successful background check and satisfactory resolution of out-of-state employer requirements. Motion Carried.
7. AIS Program Coordinator Wage Review effective 8/5/21 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Gary Rantala to approve a 3.5% increase effective 8/5/21 for Natalya Walker. Motion Carried. Natalya was thanked for her two years of excellent service to the District.

The mission of the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District is to encourage sustainable use of our natural resources by engaging people in soil and water conservation in northern St. Louis County.


8. Cost Share Project Discussion – Anita advised the Board of a potential group cost share project where all but 1 landowner with adjoining properties intend to participate. The non-participating landowner is at the top of sub-watershed. While it would be most desirable to have all property owners involved, the TSA indicates the project is still worthwhile. Conversation was held regarding the need to assess each project on its own merits at the time it is presented.
9. COVID-19 Impacts Update, if any – Discussion was held regarding potential changes to the District's COVID 19 Preparedness Plan and Fieldwork Protocols. Caution was recommended.
10. Credit Card Authorization for Zach Evans, \$1500 limit – Motion by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve a credit card with a \$1,500 limit for Zach to use on work-related purchases. Motion carried.
11. DNR Groundwater Monitoring Contract & Board Resolution 2021-6 – Moved by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to adopt Board Resolution 2021-6 for ongoing groundwater monitoring. Motion carried.
12. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings
 - a. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – A short video by [Syngenta](#) on this topic was shown.
 - b. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – July 26
 - c. St. Louis River 1W1P Policy Committee – July 22
 - d. SWCD Forestry Association – July 15
 - e. Other – St. Louis County Fair is August 4-8. Becca is awaiting confirmation from the DNR about our ability to share a booth. She will send a sign-up sheet.

REPORTS

13. District Administrator Report – See report on file
14. Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator Report – See report on file.
15. Community Conservationist Report – See report on file
16. District Forester Report– See report on file
17. Resource Conservationist Report– See report on file
18. NRCS District Conservationist Report- Allison reported that Mike Hup, forester, is no longer with NRCS. There were 4 CSPs approved in the county. The ranking deadline is 7/16 for RCPP applications.
19. Supervisor & Committee Reports
 - a. Technical Service Area 3 – June 23 – Gary reported the TSA board evaluated all employees. All but 1 received a 4% increase and that person had just received an increase. He also indicated they TSA will be moving to the airport park area.
 - b. Other - none

CLOSING

20. Next Meeting Date – The next meeting will be on Wednesday, August, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.
21. Adjourn – Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to adjourn the meeting at 12:08 p.m. Motion Carried



 Mark Peterson, Secretary

8/11/21

 Date



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Virginia MN 55792
(218) 749-2000
www.nslswcd.org

Resolution to Authorize FY22 DNR Groundwater Contract

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has four observation wells they desire to be monitored within the District boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District's Strategic Plan identified Provide Services: Improve Water Quality as a priority; and

WHEREAS, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors recognizes the \$30 reimbursement rate per reading does not cover costs if staff were to take readings; and

WHEREAS, Chuck Bainter, Frank Modich, and Mark Peterson volunteer to take the measurements and may use district vehicles to do so; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota DNR has authorized Board Supervisors to take the readings eight times per year at \$30 per reading;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors supports DNR Groundwater measurements and authorizes the District Administrator or Board Chair to sign all documents related to such funding.

Motion Made by: Rantala

Seconded by: Bainter

Affirmative: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson + Rantala

Opposed: none

Certification of Recording Officer

I, the undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the North St Louis SWCD Board held on the 14th day of July 2021 and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.

Mark Peterson, Board Secretary

Date 8/11/21