

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

Special Meeting Minutes
October 20, 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: Chuck Bainter, Frank Modich, Peggy Pearson, and Mark Peterson were present in-person.

Staff Present: Anita Provinzino, District Administrator, Natalya Walker, AIS Program Coordinator, Lauren Soergel, Forester, and Tuomas Sivula, MN GreenCorps staff were present in-person. Zach Evans, Regional Farm Bill Forester; Phil Norvitch, Resource Conservationist, Becca Reiss, Community Conservationist and Diana Stanojevich, Accounting Technician all joined via Zoom.

Others Present: Erin Loeffler, MN Board of Water & Soil Resources, Michael Peterson, Peterson Company LTD, and Allison Praet, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service each joined via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by Chair, Peggy Pearson.

1. Agenda - Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
2. Minutes of September 8, 2021 Special Meeting – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried
3. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve the financial report and program summary. Motion carried
4. Accounts Payable & Accounts Receivable – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable. Motion carried
5. Guest Introductions and Comments
 - a. Tuomas Sivula was introduced as the new GreenCorps staff member. He will assist with stormwater and urban forestry outreach as well as local food forests. The Board welcomed him to the District.
 - b. Kelli Saunders, International Rainy Lake of the Woods Watershed Sustainability Foundation was unable to access Zoom either by computer or phone. Anita will reschedule her for another time.

Gary Rantala joined the meeting at 10:39 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS

6. Appoint ad-hoc budget committee – Frank and Mark were appointed to the ad-hoc budget committee.
7. Aquatic Invasive Species Grant Application & Board Resolution 2021-9 - Moved by Frank Modich/Gary Rantala to approve Board Resolution 2021-9. Motion carried.
8. Audit 2020 Draft – Scheduled Presentation at 10:45 by Peterson Company Ltd – Michael Peterson presented the 2020 draft audit to the board. Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve the management letter and draft audit. Motion carried.
9. COVID-19 Impacts Update, if any –
 - a. Discussion was held regarding a draft policy in response to the request from State of Minnesota to Provide Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination or Testing Policy #1446. Erin provided background information. Anita was asked to seek additional input. No action was taken.

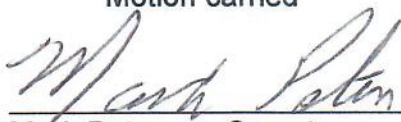
10. MASWCD Resolutions and Voting – Supervisors turned in their ballots to Anita to compile and send to the Association.
11. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings
 - a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – November 22
 - b. St. Louis River 1W1P Policy Committee – October 28 – Chuck reported this is canceled until January.
 - c. SWCD Forestry Association – November 18
 - d. Other - None

REPORTS

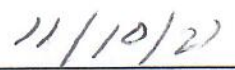
12. District Administrator Report – See report on file.
 - a. Commendation Letter
 - b. Technical Service Area 3 Hours Contributed 3Q21
 - c. Accounting Technician – Diana indicated she is busy learning. She thanked Anita for training and welcoming from the staff.
13. Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator Report – See report on file.
14. Community Conservationist Report – See report on file
15. District Forester Report – See report on file
16. Regional Farm Bill Forester – See report on file
 - a. Job Approval Authority Areas
 - b. Resource Conservationist Report– Phil reported he has been completing field work, reviewing wetland applications, shoreland violations and completed some shoreline planting plans for landowners on Lake Vermilion so the Conservation Corps could plant when they were here (Becca's project). He may need to remove stream monitors in the Little Fork Watershed remaining from the sediment sampling project.
17. NRCS District Conservationist Report- Allison Praet indicated 106 applications were received. There is a mid-November cutoff for EQIP, eligibility letters are going out today. The Duluth office welcomed a new soil scientist and an engineer.
18. Supervisor & Committee Reports
 - a. Area 3 Annual Meeting – September 21 – Duluth – Mark Peterson indicated the same officers were elected. There was a panel discussion on 1W1P's in the Area. There were 4 or 5 sites that were toured highlighting work to be done and work completed.
 - b. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – September 27 – See Chuck's report on file.
 - c. SWCD Forestry Association – September 16 – Mark and Lauren toured some of UPM Blandin Paper Mill's property. They are planting more diverse forests and trying various techniques for growth. They are now asking landowners, near Blandin land, if they would like to harvest at the same time Blandin does.
 - d. Technical Service Area 3 – September 22 – Gary attended via zoom. He reported the TSA had interviewed staff and that no one had accepted. They approved raising the salary cap in hopes of attracting a more experienced engineer.
 - e. Other – None this month

CLOSING

19. Next Meeting Date – The next meeting was set for Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. Location to be announced.
20. Adjourn – Moved by Gary Rantala/Frank Modich to adjourn the meeting at 12:02 p.m.
Motion carried



Mark Peterson, Secretary



November 10, 2021