



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

Regular Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2022

The meeting was held in person at the SWCD offices. A zoom link was available.

Supervisors Present at Roll Call: Chuck Bainter, Peggy Pearson, Mark Peterson and Gary Rantala were present in-person.

Staff Present: Anita Provinzino, District Administrator; Phil Norvitch, Resource Conservationist; Becca Reiss, Community Conservationist; Tuomas Sivula, GreenCorps Member; and Natalya Walker, District Forester were present in-person. Zach Evans, Regional Farm Bill Forester joined via zoom.

Others Present: Chris Freeman, supervisor candidate in nomination district 3 was present in person. Allison Praet, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service joined via zoom.

The meeting was called to order at 10:34 a.m. by Chair, Peggy Pearson.

1. Agenda - Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to approve the agenda adding purchase of truck and inter-seeder to new business. Motion carried.
2. Minutes of July 13, 2022 Regular Meeting – Moved by Mark Peterson/Gary Rantala to approve the minutes. Motion carried.
3. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to accept financial reports and program summary. Motion carried.
4. Accounts Payable & Accounts Receivable – Moved by Gary Rantala/ Mark Peterson to approve accounts payable and accounts receivable updated 8/10/22. Motion carried
5. Guest Introductions and Comments – Chris Freeman was welcomed to the meeting. He gave a brief overview of his background and reasons to run for office.

NEW BUSINESS

6. Bill from Landowner – Joanne Minnetti – Moved by Mark Peterson/Gary Rantala to table this item of business pending further information from MCIT. Motion carried.
7. 1W1P RRHW/VR Consultant Contract with Houston Engineering & Board Resolution 2022-15 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/ Mark Peterson to approve, pending contract acceptance by county attorney. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

8. Buy Local Discussion – Moved by Mark Peterson, seconded by Gary Rantala to have staff check into local ownership of stores before purchasing items and to pay a reasonable amount more to patronize those stores. Motion failed 1:3. Anita Provinzino was asked to provide a record of purchases for review at the next meeting.
9. Financial Review – 6 months – Anita Provinzino reviewed the profit and loss statement for the first six months of the year.
10. GreenCorps Member Recognition of Service – Tuomas Sivula – After hearing a presentation of his work, Chair Pearson and Anita Provinzino each thanked Tuomas for his year of service to the District. Tuomas' work will have lasting impacts. He worked on terrestrial invasive species removal and treatment, community forestry, stormwater stenciling, and food forests.
11. Home Office Expenses for Mark Peterson – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Gary Rantala to allow printer ink expenses for Mark Peterson to print SWCD forestry information. Motion carried.
12. Insurance for Future Cyber-Security – The board directed Anita Provinzino to seek quotes for cyber-security insurance in 2023, as MCIT isn't certain they will be able to provide it.


13. Staffing – Wage Comparison and Review – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Gary Rantala to increase staff wages by \$4.00 per hour and stipend by \$150 per month effective with the next payroll. Motion was amended to \$4.5 per hour and \$150 per month. Motion was amended again to increase by \$5.00 per hour and \$250 per month. Motion carried.
14. Strategic Planning Timeline – The board opted to complete strategic planning in October/November. The October board meeting was moved to October 19 and will be followed by a facilitated planning session.
15. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings
 - a. Area 3 Fall Meeting & Tour – Sept 8 & 9 – Palisade – Mark will attend on the 8th.
 - b. Rainy/Vermilion 1W1P Policy Committee – Sept 2
 - c. St Louis River 1W1P Policy Committee – Aug 25
 - d. Other
 - 15.d.i. Truck purchase – Anita Provinzino indicated staff were notified this morning that a decision needs to be made next week, if the SWCD purchases through the county. There are capacity funds budgeted for a truck purchase to replace the Ranger. Motion by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to authorize staff to purchase a truck through the county if unable to get quote through local dealer under the government purchasing program. Motion carried.
 - 15.d.ii. Inter-seeder purchase – Mark Peterson indicated he was asked by Jim Takala if the SWCD would like to purchase his inter-seeder. Phil was asked to check into feasibility.

REPORTS

16. District Administrator Report – See report on file
 - a. TSA hours
17. AIS Program Coordinator Report – See report on file.
18. Community Conservationist Report – See report on file. The board was invited to the public kickoff meetings for the Rainy River Headwaters/Vermilion River watershed planning area.
19. Forester Report – See report on file
20. Regional Farm Bill Forester – See report on file.
21. Resource Conservationist Report – See report on file.
22. NRCS District Conservationist Report - See report on file.
23. Supervisor & Committee Reports
 - a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development- July 18 – Duluth - Peggy Pearson indicated the RC&D will pay Ted a per diem as well as mileage. She also indicated the carbon credit program is in a pilot phase.
 - b. SWCD Forestry Association – July 21 – Marcell – Mark explained the materials in packet on the world's largest climate change experiment that has been going since the 1960's.
 - c. Other - none

CLOSING

24. Next Meeting Date – The next meeting was confirmed for Wednesday, September 14, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. at the District office.
25. Adjourn – Moved by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to adjourn the meeting at 12:47 p.m. Motion carried. Following the meeting, all board except Peggy Pearson took their meals to go.



Mark Peterson, Secretary
September 14, 2022