



Rice Soil and Water Conservation District

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Rice S.W.C.D. Regular Board Meeting Minutes December 17, 2008

PRESENT: Robert Borchert, Robert Duban, Wally Hildebrandt, Tom Coffman, Steve Pahs, Chris Hughes, Michelle Schaeffers, Danielle Waldschmidt, Adam Arndt and Debbie Skarupa.

ABSENT: Dick Huston and Gary Wagenbach

Chairman Duban called the meeting to order at 1:07 PM.

MINUTES: Motion by Bob Borchert, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt approve the November 19, 2008 board minutes. Aye: Borchert, Duban, and Hildebrandt. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

BWSR PERSONNEL: Chairman Duban introduced Chris Hughes and Michelle Schaeffers from BWSR. Chris was the interim BC and Michelle Schaeffers will now be the Board Conservationist filling Dave Peterson's position.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT: Motion by Bob Borchert, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to approve the November Program Summary and Bills Payable subject to audit. Aye: Borchert, Duban, and Hildebrandt. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Scott Marik was a partial feedlot payment. Project will be finished in the spring.

ADOPT-A-HWY SIGNS: Bob Borchert said we need to have a two-mile stretch of road to clean. Discussion followed. We will clean the ditches on CSAH #39 from CSAH #45 to a point approximately two miles west of #45, after the signs are up next year. Rice County furnishes and installs the signs at no cost to us, as we are a governmental unit. The normal cost would be \$150.00 for each sign. The state doesn't furnish signs on county roads.

ENTERING SWCD SIGNS: Dick Huston was going to meet with the sign company and order one dual-sided sign with LeSueur SWCD on one side and Rice SWCD on the other. Another sign will have Rice SWCD on both sides.

BIOMASS TECHNICIAN: Item was tabled from the November Board meeting. Steve Pahs has been working with Scott SWCD who hired Dave Rickert from Wisconsin as the new Biomass Technician. Dave will cover Rice, Scott, Dakota, Carver, and LeSueur counties finding people and sites to get native grasses established for harvesting. They need 5000 to 7000 acres of grassland and expect three to four tons per acre.

Discussion followed on benefits to Rice County, the Native Grass Buffer Grant, Faribault Energy Park, harvesting on CRP, competing with corn/beans, biomass yields from natives versus other sources, pallets, Waste Management recycling, and possible additional funding sources as \$10,000 is needed. Wally Hildebrandt wondered if grass on sides of freeways could be harvested. Chris Hughes said grant must be used in order to keep the T&A dollars and suggested Steve get a list from Dan Shaw of grant projects that have been funded in the past. Board in favor of waiting until we get more information. Item tabled and will be added to January's agenda.

AG ENVIRONMENT MEETINGS UMEX RICE CO. \$500: Tabled from November meeting. Brad Carlson from extension is looking for \$500 to offer Ag & environmental meetings for Rice County residents at the colleges with speakers from the U of M. Steve to ask Brad to come to our next meeting January 21 to explain further.

MASWCD CONVENTION: The state MASWCD Convention was held at the Crowne Plaza St. Paul Riverfront Hotel on December 7 – 9 where John and Riitta Hellerud received the 2009 Outstanding Conservationist Award from Rice SWCD. Sears tickets went for face value at the auction and Mary Kells from BWSR purchased the Timber Wolves tickets donated by Dick and Glenda Huston. Thanks again Huston's. Bob Borchert spoke on the "Sow, Harvest, Till Under" presentation by Kim Boyce and suggested we use convention session topics at the Strategic Planning Meeting to be held in March. Also discussed was BWSR's PRAP (Performance Review and Assistance Program), the Constitutional Amendment, election results, and resolutions. The poster resolution passed, but Root River's three resolutions failed. Next year's convention will be held in Duluth.

MICHELLE SCHAEFFERS AND CHRIS HUGHES from BWSR: Michelle Schaeffers will be our new board conservationist and will be attending the listening sessions for the referendum, Clean Water Council and Heritage Council. There should be competitive dollars, cost-share dollars and maybe some base share dollars, however, no-one is certain how dollars will play out with deficits. SWCD can hire private firms to do some legwork so could be economy stimulus for the public.

NEW BUSINESS:

RICE SWCD 2009 BUDGET: Motion by Wally Hildebrandt, second by Bob Borchert to approve the Rice SWCD budget for 2009. Aye: Borchert, Duban, and Hildebrandt. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

DITCHES: Staff is currently resolving disputes and few new buffers have happened. Steve and Adam will try to review and access once per year.

Bob Duban asked Steve to mail a letter to Tri-Lakes Sportsman's Club for \$500 towards education donations ASAP in December.

STATE COST-SHARE CANCELLATION: An amendment to extend the deadline past December 31, 2008 has not been received back from Rod LeVake. Motion by Wally Hildebrandt, seconded by Bob Borchert **to cancel** the following 2008 state cost-share contract:

CS#081021 Rodney LeVake 4400 240th St. W Faribault Warsaw Sec 21-2 Sed. Basins-\$4104.75.
Affirmative: Borchert, Duban, and Hildebrandt. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

CANCEL STATE COST-SHARE CONTRACT: Jim Feldman has decided not to do the project at this time. Motion by Wally Hildebrandt, seconded by Bob Borchert **to cancel** 2008 state cost-share contract #080628 as follows:

Jim Feldman-10993 Stanton Blvd-Northfield-UpperNor Sec 28-Cancel Basin - \$1550.90

Aye: Borchert, Duban, and Hildebrandt. All aye - None opposed - Motion carried.

EXTENSION OPEN HOUSE: Rice County Extension will be having an Open House on December 22 from 9:00 to 4:00 PM at their new location at 1900 Fairgrounds Drive #17.

FOURTH QUARTER VOUCHERS: Board will bring or mail in all receipts for payment through December 31, 2008.

SE SWCD TECH SUPPORT NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT JPB GRANT: Motion by Wally Hildebrandt, seconded by Bob Borchert to approve the JPB grant continuation from November 1, 2008 to June 30, 2011 in the amount of \$23,376.00. Aye: Borchert, Duban, and Hildebrandt. All aye - None opposed - Motion carried.

CRWP ANNUAL DUES: Motion by Bob Borchert, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to pay \$100.00 towards Cannon River Watershed Partnerships 2009 dues. Dick Carlander from State Bank is matching all dollars donated. Aye: Borchert, Duban, and Hildebrandt. All aye - None opposed - Motion carried.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: Motion by Bob Borchert, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to approve a 3% cost of living and the next available step increase for all employees. Aye: Borchert, Duban, and Hildebrandt. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried. Steve said staff would like to attend board meetings.

CLEAN WATER LEGACY COOPERATIVE WEED MANAGEMENT GRANT: Previous buffer technician received a grant for \$7500 for buckthorn removal and now no-one has the time to pursue it. Dan Shaw wants to know ASAP if this grant will be completed. Options are to let it go back to the state, ask if Boy Scouts or Eagle Scouts are interested, talk to Cannon River Wilderness Park group or the DNR- if they can use it. Bob B would like a list of who is on the committee and his name added to the list.

SUPERVISOR REPORTS: None given

D.C. REPORT By Tom Coffman:

1. EQIP Applications:

In continuation of November's report, the following projects have been completed:

Dan Melchert (Kolars Farm)

Brad Covert (Underground outlets in)

Dennis Doyle

Milt Olson

Dave Lippert

Dean Nechkash

Sherman Johnson

Marvin Borchert

Marv Chmelik (Nutrient Management)

Milt Olson

Tim Little (Underground outlet in)

Wally Krenz

Denny Krenz

Gary Hanson

2. NRCS Financial Audit:

We are nearing completion of a thorough review of 76 EQIP and WHIP contracts.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT by Steve Pahs:

A LCCMR report was discussed. Renville SWCD received a grant for protection of granite outcroppings. Steve said that only seven cents of every lottery ticket goes to LCCMR funds. Our office will go to a two-factor authentication with NRCS and staff may need fingerprinting and a swipe-card for entry into the building.

The workload in the office changes as often as the weather. Literally. During the month of November, we were busy with several construction projects including the Scott Marik feedlot improvement. We have been meeting with P&Z staff to provide input to the Rice County Water Plan and will continue to work on it throughout the next month or two. I have also put together a newsletter that will be published and mailed by mid-December. Adam and I continue to prepare drainage ditch reports and are surveying some of the ditches to help determine areas needing cleanouts.

Other activity this past month:

- Water plan meeting in Mankato to request time extension.
- Assisted Scott SWCD with interviews for Biomass Technician. Will be helping set a work plan for position in the next week. Scott SWCD is still looking for partner counties to contribute funds toward the one year position.
- Met with P&Z director Julie Runkel and Commissioners Plaisance and Gillen to discuss the Shoreland ordinance. They were hoping to get SWCD staff to provide a technical review of all projects that require engineered plans. Unfortunately, we do not have the expertise or resources available to work in this capacity.
- Adam and I attended a drainage management technical training session in Alexandria which covered ditch laws, when to use ditch viewers, and much more.
- Attended the MASWCD convention in St. Paul.
- Met with the personnel committee to discuss performance reviews and wage increases.
- Will be attending two hearings on drainage ditch repairs before the December board meeting.
- Attended a planning advisory meeting for the City of Northfield to review and recommend changes to the city's land development code.

My plans for the next month include finishing several grant reports and billing for services, work on the annual plan for 2009, the 2009 budget, and continue work with the ditch inspection program. There will be a listening session coming up on December 19th to comment on priorities for the new clean water amendment funding.

Tom Coffman left the meeting at 3:00 P.M.

MINNESOTA WATERS GRANT: Danielle Waldschmidt received a \$5,000.00 grant to provide educational workshops for landowners to learn how to design and install their own rain gardens in addition to helping ten people with their rain garden installation. She intends to start workshops in early spring. Bob Borchert mentioned that lawns are the largest crop using water and runoff goes directly into the stormwater. Fertilizer quantity and rotational grazing were discussed.

DISTRICT PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT by Tim Labs:

- ☼ Four Observation Well Readings taken.
- ☼ Attended monthly plat review meeting at Planning & Zoning

- ⊗ Met with Jenny Mocol, Rice County Water Planner, discussing the water plan updates.
- ⊗ Attended the MASWCD State Convention
- ⊗ Review of state cost-share contracts and processed a couple of cost-share amendments.
- ⊗ Continued processing of CREP easements.
- ⊗ Started reviewing the updated E-link state reporting system changes.
- ⊗ Wetland Conservation Act:
 - Reviewing WCA law changes and reporting requirements.
 - Met with Steve Lawler, the new BWSR wetland specialist in Rochester, on Rice County activities.
 - On-site with Ken Spitzack to view a Type 2 wetland that he wants to excavate.
 - Viewed a wetland delineation report for the Rice County Highway Department on the Co. Rd #1 upgrade.
 - Reviewed a wetland replacement plan application for the Bridgewater Commons, a commercial development in Northfield, and sent it out for the required comment period. Wetland impact requested was 2,613 square feet of Type 2.

MPCA STORMWATER TECHNCIAN’S REPORT by Danielle Waldschmidt:

I have been completing inspections and meeting with permit contacts to address issues on inspection reports. I have been working with the MPCA on several construction sites that have severe violations from the NPDES requirements on enforcement actions. I have also been working with the MPCA on sites that have other problems. Rice SWCD is the recipient of a grant from Minnesota Waters. I will begin to work on the grant and organizing workshops in the near future.

Accomplishments Include:

- Updated and organized case files for the stormwater program
- Conducted construction site inspections
- Worked with Contractors/Owners/Site Contacts to get their construction site activities in compliance with the NPDES/SDS
- Reviewed SWPPP’s for compliance with the NPDES/SDS
- Worked on enforcement cases with the MPCA
- Attended MASWCD’s Annual Meeting in St. Paul
- Attended Rice County Water Plan meeting

Nutrient Management Report by Adam Arndt:

- Surveying sediment basins with Tom Coffman on several different farms.
- Attended local water plan meeting.
- Surveying tile mains with Tom Coffman on Brad Covert’s farm.

- Surveying tile mains and sediment basins with Kelly Oliver on Lippert, Borchert, and Nechkash farms.
- Revised Frank Smisek's Nutrient Plan.
- Met with Jenny Mocal going over the water plan for the SWCD.
- Attended the luncheon for Dick Huston who received the Wildlife Enhancement award.
- Traveled to Wabasha to present Lehnertz and McMillin NM plans. Took plans to Wabasha office and went over them with Pat, the new DC there.

Nutrient Plans in Progress or Completed Last Month:

- Gary Lehnertz (Wabasha)
- Bill McMillin (Wabasha)
- Jim Balfe (Rice)
- Jim Bayster (Rice)
- Frank Smisek (Rice)

November Ditch Services:

- Talked with Joe Petricka about adding tile into CD 27.
- Attended Drainage Research Forum at Cabela's in Owatonna.
- Attended MN Drainage Conference in Alexandria.

JPB MONTHLY STAFF REPORTS: None received

OTHER/CORRESPONDENCE: Steve passed out an acronym sheet he had made. Thank you card was received from 2008 Outstanding Conservationists of the Year John & Riitta Hellerud. Upcoming events are the MN Extension Open House on December 22, the RC&D Value Added Conference January 22 and 23, and the Legislative Day at the Capitol February 23 and 24. Add Strategic Planning Meeting to the February agenda for a March meeting.

Chairman Duban thanked Chris Hughes and Michelle Schaeffers for attending the meeting.

ADJOURN: Motion by Bob Borchert, seconded by Wally Hildebrandt to adjourn. All aye - None opposed - Motion carried. Time: 3:09 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Skarupa
District Secretary

Wally Hildebrandt
Board Secretary