



Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday August 19, 2020 at the Becker SWCD Shop Facility located at 1366 Mallard Street, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Those present were Supervisors Travis Schauer, Tony Beck, Eugene Pavelko, Michelle Andresen and Curt Ballard. Staff members District Administrator Peter Mead, Office Manager Deana Westberg, SWCD Soil & Water Technician Ed Clem, NRCS District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz and County Commissioner Barry Nelson.

Call to Order

Chairman Schauer called the meeting to order at 8:33 AM.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda Items

(July 15, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes; Employee Program Reports)

Motion (Pavelko, Andresen) to approve the consent agenda items including the July meeting minutes and the employee program reports. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Financial Reports

Mead reviewed the Treasurers Report and the Bills for Approval.

Motion (Beck, Pavelko) to approve the July's Treasurers Report and August bills for payment. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

District Reports

Engineering Updates:

- Jerava photos shown and discussion
- Nelson erosion and gully discussion
- Andresen project progress
- Ostenson Intakes

District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz reported:

- Busy with various construction projects – few are finishing up and a few are starting up and preparing for this fall or next year
- Been getting out in the field and meeting with the landowners
- Working with the SWCD Engineers on construction and design work for fall and 2021 projects
- 5 additional Equip contracts were approved so now a total of 10 – including Cover Crops, No Till and Grazing Practices
- State Conservationist Troy visit to various local landowners was insightful for everyone. He is working on funding for structural projects for next year.
- Recommended the BWSR Tech Talk every Tuesday which is recorded and available to review at any time

District Administrator Peter Mead reported:

- Technical Training Team – Area 1 Chairman meeting – applied for the BWSR Technical and Training Grant
- Crow Wing 1W1P meeting – Hubbard county interested in coordinating – anticipating a 2022 start date
- Subsurface Training meeting
- Buffalo Red 1W1P Steering committee meeting
- Worked at the South Shore Access renovation of a DNR remodel from several years ago that needed leveling, matting, reseeding and plant plugs.
- Worked at the Dunton Locks final project. After the new bridge was installed, we hauled in lots of topsoil, leveled, seeded and added coir logs (in moving water) and plants to the stream embankment. The Brainard Conservation Corp was a great help for this project.
- Wild Rice 1W1P Steering Committee and policy committee meetings
- Budget committee meeting on August 2nd
- Zoning meetings
- CWL grant application successfully completed and submitted by the deadline. Targeted less than last year's application.
- Met with State Conservationist Troy
- COVID update – USDA Level 3 so doors are still locked to the public but do have public access through walk up windows.

Chairman Schauer closed the regular meeting and opened the public hearing at 9:33 a.m.

Public Hearing – Wetland Conservation Act

Wetland Replacement Plan for Burley & Entrekin shared driveway improvements

Date of Application: 7/01/20

SWCD Technician Ed Clem presented the project purpose and need, which involves widening and improving a private driveway so that it can be used as a shared easement driveway for 2 separate parcels, due to the closing of Anchor Road in Detroit Township. The construction improvements will result in filling and permanent loss of 0.12 acres of wetland. The applicant, which is the Pelican River Watershed District on behalf of the 2 landowners, proposes purchasing 0.24 acres of wetland credit through the MN wetland bank to replace the impacts.

Clem also presented the applicant's wetland impact avoidance and minimization measures. Discussion was held concerning the Rice Lake restoration project, which led to the closing of Anchor road and ultimately results in the need for this project.

Clem then read the Findings and Recommendation of the Becker County Wetland Conservation Act Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP). The TEP finds that the project purpose and need is reasonable and prudent due to the closing of Anchor Road. The TEP finds that wetland impact avoidance and minimization efforts were addressed adequately in the application. The TEP finds that special considerations such as threatened and endangered species, rare natural plant communities, and special fish and wildlife resources will not be significantly impacted by this project. The TEP finds that the proposed purchase of credits from the MN wetland bank will adequately replace the wetland loss from this project. The TEP recommends approval of this plan.

Chairman Schauer asked for comments in favor or against the application. Hearing none, the public hearing was closed and the regular board meeting was reopened at 10:04 a.m..

Discussion: Clem noted that the SWCD Board should make a decision on approval of this project based on its merits; including purpose and need, wetland impact avoidance and minimization measures, and proposed compensatory mitigation. The Board is under no obligation to follow or concur with the TEP recommendation. Also, the decision of the Board can be appealed to the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Motion (Beck, Andresen) for the SWCD serving as WCA LGU to concur with the findings of the TEP and approve the Wetland Replacement Plan for the Burley & Entrekin driveway improvements. Motion affirmative; unanimous, carried.

2021 Operational Budget

- **County Allocation Payment Schedule:** The county will begin a 2 year transition to fall in line with all their other tax appropriation payments. Beginning in 2021 payments will be in March and October and in 2022 and on in June and December.
- **Review of 2021 Budget Draft:** Mead and Westberg met with the Review Budget Committee (Pavelko and Beck) on August 4th, 2020 at 2:00 pm at the Becker SWCD Shop Facility. Recommendations and a 2021 Operational Draft Budget was presented today by Mead for tentative approval. Highlighted items discussed were:
 - No additional employees for 2021. Media & Outreach Coordinator and part time CET was combined to a full time Engineering Technician
 - No salary increases
 - Office and shop rent increased
 - Insurance and audit increased
 - Capital Outlay, supplies, postage, employee education and training decreased
 - Interest Income increased
 - Rim Easement Delivery and Local Capacity funds increased
 - CREP funding decreased and Farm Bill Assistance ended
 - AIS funds increased
 - New grants funded include Wild Rice
- **Approval of Tentative 2021 Budget :**

Motion (Andresen, Beck) to approve the CY 2020 Operational Budget. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Open Forum

No discussion

Grants and Agreements

- FY 2021 CWF Projects & Practices Application
 - Farming for the future in Becker County
 - Reapplication scaled back from last year and requested \$480,014
 - To build resilient agricultural systems and achieve non-point source pollution reductions
 - Participants will:
 - A) Eliminate fall tillage and minimize soil disturbance
 - B) Increase cover and residue to armor soil
 - C) Establish living roots through 90% of growing season
 - D) Add crop diversity
 - E) sustainably incorporate livestock where feasible

- DNR Walk-In-Access Joint Powers Agreement
 - \$250.00 for each landowner agreement executed
- DNR Farm Bill Assistance Amendment
 - \$40,000 total - \$10,000 invoiced and paid quarterly

Motion (Pavelko, Ballard) to approve the CY 2021 Grants and Agreements. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Fees for Service

Marsha Watland, County Ag Inspector, was approached by MN DOT and NAISA to provide Gravel Pit Certification in surrounding counties. After discussion the board agreed that if Watland has the time and resources it is allowed to provide this service at a charge of \$150 Certification Fee plus \$75.00 per hour including travel time.

Clean Water Legacy Contracts Amendment for Approval

#CWL-65-LP, South Shore Access, Increased Costs-Amended Total \$3,106

Motion (Beck, Andresen) to approve the Clean Water Legacy Contract Amendment as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

Clean Water Legacy Contracts for Approval

CWL-14-TD, Janet Olson, Critical Area Planting, Rain Garden-Total Project Cost:\$13,081 Cost Share: \$9,811

CWL-15-TD, Eric Zurn, Water & Sediment Control Basis -Total Project Cost:\$22,036 Cost Share: \$16,527

CWL-16-TD, Kraig Nelson, Water & Sediment Control Basis – Total Project Cost:\$156,167 Cost Share: \$140,700

Motion (Pavelko, Ballard) to approve the Clean Water Legacy Contracts as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

State Cost Share Cost Share Voucher for Payment

#SCS-20-1, Tim Lehrke, Cover Crop-Total Project Cost: \$2,162

Motion (Beck, Andresen) to approve the State Cost Share Voucher as presented. Affirmative: Ballard abstained from voting. Carried

Clean Water Legacy Vouchers for Payment

CWL-60-LP, Jim Snyder, Raingarden-Total Project Cost: \$4,146 Cost Share: \$3,110

CWL-65-LP, South Shore Access, Critical Area Planting-Total Project Cost: \$4,141 Cost Share: \$3,105

Motion (Andresen, Beck) to approve the Clean Water Legacy Vouchers as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

Closing Remarks

- RIM Easement questions and discussion
- Mead announced his resignation effective Friday September 18, 2020. He has accepted another position which requires him to relocate to the Minneapolis area. He would like to help with hiring his replacement and will stay on the payroll for up to 8 hours per week for as long as needed. The board regrettably accepted this resignation and wished Mead well.

Motion (Andresen, Ballard) to accept Mead's resignation and approve the 8 hours per week for as long as needed. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried

Adjourn

Seeing no further business, Chairman Schauer adjourned the meeting at 11:33 am.

Approved: Michelle Andresen, Becker SWCD Secretary

Date: September 16, 2020