

DISTRICT REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 19
4:30 P.M.

Conservation Building
912 Houston Street
Preston, MN 55965

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Gossman, Brian Hazel, Kathy Tesmer,
(Travis Willford joined at 4:53)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Laura Christensen, Sue Wiegrefe, Willis Goll, Jeff Weiss (DNR)

Gossman called the meeting to order at 4:41 p.m. A quorum was present.

I. AGENDA

Motioned by Tesmer and seconded by Hazel to approve the agenda. Affirmative: Tesmer, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

II. TREASURER’S REPORT

Motioned by Hazel seconded by Tesmer to approve the revised July 2019 Treasurer’s Report, recognizing the \$45 unresolved discrepancy and subject to audit. Affirmative: Tesmer, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Motioned by Tesmer seconded by Hazel to approve the August 2019 Treasurer’s Report, as presented and subject to audit. Affirmative: Tesmer, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Motioned by Hazel and seconded by Tesmer to approve the following consent agenda items:

- A. Secretary’s Report – August 2019 Regular Board Meeting Minutes.
- B. Payment of State Cost Share contract #FY18-04, Steve Canterbury, Well Decommissioning/ Well Sealing, in the amount of \$1,000.00
- C. Payment of District Program contract #WB 14-21, Katie Eickhoff, Farmstead Windbreak, in the amount of \$807.50

Affirmative: Tesmer, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

IV. REPORTS

A. Supervisor's activity reports

Willford – not present, no report

Hazel – nothing to report

Gossman – took part in first and second round interviews for the Water Management Coordinator position with successful outcome. Hosted 28th Annual Prairie Walk at his farm.

Pickett – not present

Tesmer- nothing to report

B. Staff reports

A written report was included in the board packets.

C. Administrator's report

1. Tree removal update.

The trees have been felled, Root River Hardwoods, removed the larger portions and the DNR foresters cleaned up the site

2. Technology update

The computers, monitors, and software have been installed and files migrated by Bluff Country Computers. Minimal disruption of work has been experienced.

D. NRCS

A written report provided by Jessica Bronson was projected onto the screen for reading. Appreciation for Jess'es work was expressed and it was reaffirmed that she has a standing invitation to attend Board meetings.

E. County

No report was presented.

F. DNR Hydrologist report – Jeff Weiss

- Jeff shared that he mainly attends SWCD Board meetings to learn what issues folks are dealing with. Jeff is currently doing multiple jobs. Bill Huber from Lake City (Winona Co) retired as of September 3rd and Jeff has been covering a portion of his former responsibilities and also mentoring Taylor Heinker (formerly from Two Harbors). In a few weeks he should be back to just his job.

- RCPP There is a new program perhaps within 1W1P which represents a new source of funds. The projects can extend from 3 to 5 years with funding up to \$10 million.

Q. Hazel asked about permitting for riprap on stream banks [and if these funds may be accessed for funding].

A. One criterion is that the project must include a water way on the Public Waters List. A permit is needed if below ordinary high water level. If above - fewer restrictions, if Designated Trout Stream more restrictions.
- It may be pertinent for some RCPP projects. An example of project that would qualify is a project funded by Lassard Sams Grant on the North Branch of the Whitewater River. Perhaps a comprehensive project from Preston to the Mississippi.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. _____ Consider Classification/Compensation study report
Christensen reported making contact with Baker Tilly on September 10th (Tuesday), prior to our original meeting date. The contact (Ann) said the survey was not complete and requested additional information and, if the materials were delivered promptly, at least some information would be forthcoming in time for the Board meeting on the 12th. Christensen sent the requested materials immediately following the call but has still not received any information and phone calls and emails to (for documentation purposes) the firm are not being returned.

It was decided we should have the County attorney examine the contract to determine what our options are. Already in the conversation on September 10th, Christensen had informed them that we would be requesting a discounted fee due to the tardiness of the promised report. Ann did say during the 10th conversation that she would be available to discuss the findings during the October Board meeting. It was agreed that it required resolution even if it means calling a special meeting of the Board in order to have a quorum to act. The lack of results has already delayed 2019 COLA and, if not resolved soon, will impact 2020 budgetary planning and 2020 COLA decision.

B. _____ Consider 2020 proposed budget.
The most recent revision of the 2020 budget was distributed for informational purposes. Two updates: we've received the 2020 Buffer Law Grant funds and 2020 Local Capacity funds. At present the books are projected to be \$12,000 in the black.
Christensen noted that it is becoming clearer that the disbanding of the Water Resources Board will result in an additional amount nearer to \$2,000 than the \$5,000 originally anticipated. It has not yet been received.

B.1 _____ Consider compensation of employees opting out of District health insurance.

Q. Gossman asked if this had been a question posed by an employee or why it is raised.
A. Christensen responded that, yes, an employee raised the issue
Gossman questioned whether it is legal to offer other compensation if an employee opts out of the health insurance offered. It was acknowledged that yes, the District does save

money when employees opt out. It was decided someone in the know at the County needed to be consulted to learn if it is even a possibility. If it is, it will be addressed later.

C. _____ Revisit contract agreement with Trevor Wangen for cleaning services

Motioned by Hazel and seconded by Willford to pay Wangen for up to \$1.5 hours per week and approved such payments retroactively (since the May meeting).

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

D. _____ Consider Bacteria Testing Services 2018 figures from Aaren Mathison

A summary sheet including income and expenses for 2018 for the water testing lab and prices for outsourcing the services was distributed. Gossman preferred to postpone action until both Mathison and Fischer could be present to more fully explain the significance of the figures. Mathison arrived a short while later (5:30) with the newly hired Water Management Coordinator, Nikki Shaw. After Shaw was introduced to the Board members who had not yet met her and was welcomed by the Board, Mathison further elaborate on the numbers, being careful not to slant the presentation to any one outcome.

Willford and the other Supervisors expressed some concern that in addition to the cost of materials not being covered, it represents over \$20,000 in staff time.

Motioned by Tesmer and seconded by Hazel to increase the charges for conducting a Bacteria Test from \$25 to \$30, to buy a new refrigerator, and to continue providing the service.

Hazel moved to amend the motion and was seconded by Gossman to increase the charges to \$50 per sample so as to cover the cost of consumables and regulatory expenses (certification and quality control testing).

Affirmative: Tesmer, Gossman, Hazel, Opposed: Willford. Motion carried.

The main motion was then voted on as amended with the rate at \$50 with the clarification that a discounted price for residences housing at-risk populations (pregnant women and/or infants under the age of 1 year) would be continued but doubled from \$10 to \$20, the services will be continued and the refrigerator will be replaced.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Gossman, Hazel, Opposed: Willford. Motion carried.

This will also be revisited after the 1st of the year/ at annual planning meeting. The new rate will begin October 1st to give us time to get the news out.

F. Consider payment of Bluff County Computer Works invoice of \$13,251.25.

Wiegrefe clarified that the question was not whether to pay the bill but from which account the funds were to be taken as the funds in Computer Replacement account were insufficient.

Gossman stated that transferring the funds to the Computer fund and then drawing from it created the cleanest audit trail.

Motioned by Tesmer and seconded by Willford to transfer \$11,000 from the Vehicle Replacement fund into the Computer/Tech Replacement to cover the invoiced amount.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Motioned by Hazel and seconded by Willford to pay the invoiced amount of \$13,251.25.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Gossman requested that it be determined if we received the version of MS Office that we wanted. And it's important that workers have the tools they need to do their job. The Office suite installed is the Office Home & Business version which does not include Access (database) nor Publisher (desktop publishing) applications. Goll noted he did not think it worth the expense to add Access for once a year use. Mathison, Wiegrefe, and the Summer Intern are those most impacted by the loss of access to Publisher. It was noted that in many instances Word can be made to perform the same function, but Publisher is much easier to use.

Gossman noted that the intent had been to improve productivity by upgrading the workstations not make it more difficult to do one's job.

Willford stressed the importance of tech support being done by outside contractors so the work time of the conservation staff is not unduly diverted from their primary responsibilities.

(This is where the information on Water Testing was provided by Mathison.)

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consider Peterson Company Representation letter

The auditors received all the necessary information and have found no irregularities.

Motioned by Tesmer seconded by Hazel to approve the Peterson Company Representation letter

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

B. Consider approval of BWSR FY2019 Drinking Water Protection in SE MN Sub-Agreement between Fillmore SWCD and Wabasha SWCD

Motioned by Tesmer and seconded by Hazel to approve the BWSR FY2019 Drinking Water Protection in SE MN Sub-Agreement between Fillmore SWCD and Wabasha SWCD.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

C. _____ Consider post-employment training time compensation for Jeanette Serfling

Motioned by Hazel and seconded by Tesmer to compensate Jeanette Serfling at her old rate (\$23.49/hr.) for time contributed in the ongoing training of Sue Wiegrefe, the new Administrative Assistant, and for the same services going forward through the end of the year.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

D. _____ Consider approval of amendment to contract #1470274 between Fillmore SWCD and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to extend the Noxious Weed grant end date from 12/01/2019 to 12/31/2020.

Christensen explained that due to high water this season some of the upper reaches of the Root River had been inaccessible.

Motioned by Willford and seconded by Tesmer to extend the grant end date one year.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

E. _____ Consider approval of Addendum to the Agreement between the SE MN Water Resources Board and Fillmore Soil & Water Conservation District for Well Network Coordinator Duties, transferring grant administration duties for the Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network from the SE MN Water Resources Board to Olmsted County

Motioned by Hazel and seconded by Tesmer to approve the addendum as presented.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

F. _____ Consider correction of Local Capacity contract number LC FY18-01, Wayne Pfremmer, to LC FY18-04 to avoid duplication of numbering.

Motioned by Hazel and seconded by Willford to correct the Local Capacity contract number LC FY18-01, Wayne Pfremmer, to LC FY18-04.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

G. _____ Consider correction of Local Capacity contract number LC FY18-02, Chris Boyum, to LC FY18-05

Motioned by Tesmer and seconded by Hazel to correct the Local Capacity contract number LC FY18-02, Chris Boyum, to LC FY18-05.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

H. _____ Recognize hire of Nikki Shaw as Fillmore SWCD Water Management Coordinator

Motioned by Willford and seconded by Hazel to recognize hire of Nikki Shaw as Fillmore SWCD Water Management Coordinator.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

I. _____ Consider transfer of \$2179.72 from Compensated Absences to District Account per year-end calculations per Peterson Company (auditor) recommendation

Motioned by Willford and seconded by Tesmer to approve the transfer of \$2179.72 from Compensated Absences to District Account.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

J. _____ Consider approval of Field to Stream Partnership Phase II Implementation contract FSP BC 19-04, Perry Omodt, in the amount of \$30,000.00 (Field Border Buffer)

Grant stipulates entire payment is up front (after installed to satisfaction of technician) for 10 years, enforcement is repayment of 150% of support received if not upheld. The Board felt that it is important to verify the job approval authority is accurate and perhaps additional teeth be put into verification and enforcement. This will be addressed next month when these items have been checked. Would like to require status review when complete, each year next 5 years and every second year thereafter.

Hazel motioned and Tesmer seconded to table for one month to be reconsidered with additional information obtained.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

K. _____ Consider approval of Field to Stream Partnership Phase II Implementation contract FSP BC 19-05, Perry Omodt, in the amount of \$23,400.00 (Grassed Waterway)

Motioned by Hazel and seconded by Tesmer to approve Field to Stream Partnership Phase II Implementation contract FSP BC 19-05.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

L. _____ Consider approval of Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-02, Anita Schissel, in the amount of \$3,995.12 (South Fork & Riceford Creek)(Grade Stabilization Structure)

Motioned by Hazel seconded by Willford to approve of Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-02

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

M. Consider approval of Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-03, Jacob Johnson, in the amount of \$2,363.54 (\$2,107.55 South Fork & Riceford Creek + \$255.99 RCPP) (Grade Stabilization Structure)

Motioned by Tesmer seconded by Hazel to approve Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-03.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

N. Consider approval of Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-04, Dan McKenna, in the amount of \$3,757.34 (South Fork & Riceford Creek) (Grade Stabilization Structure)

Motioned by Willford and seconded by Tesmer to approve Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-04.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

O. Consider approval of Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-05, Pat Troendle, in the amount of \$3,402.72 (RCPP) (Grade Stabilization Structure)

Motioned by Tesmer seconded by Willford to approve Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-05.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

P. Consider approval of Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-06, Bruce Thompson, in the amount of \$4,462.46 (RCPP)(Grade Stabilization Structure)

Motioned by Willford and seconded by Tesmer to approve Root River 1 Watershed 1 Plan contract RR 1W1P 19-06.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Q. Consider approval of Local Capacity contract LC FY18-06, Gary Grebin, in the amount of \$5,677.90 (Grade Stabilization Structure)

Motioned by Willford and seconded by Hazel to approve Local Capacity contract LC FY18-06.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

R. _____ Consider approval of Local Capacity contract LC FY18-08, Dave Markegard, in the amount of \$372.77 (Grade Stabilization Structure)

Motioned by Tesmer and seconded by Hazel to approve Local Capacity contract LC FY18-08.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

S. _____ Consider approval of FY 2020 State of Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Clean Water Fund SWCD Local Capacity Services & Buffer Law Implementation Program Grant Agreement in the total amount of \$145,669.

Motioned by Willford and seconded by Tesmer to approve

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

T. _____ Consider 2019 Resolution Packet

Supervisors need to review packet, vote and return at October Board meeting so it can be submitted prior to November 1st deadline.

VII. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Motioned by Tesmer and seconded by Willford to approve the September accounts payable.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Tesmer has volunteered to work with Wiegrefe on the statement opening and check review on October 1.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Willford seconded by Tesmer to adjourn the meeting.

Affirmative: Tesmer, Willford, Hazel, Gossman. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob