FREEBORN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
May 14, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Christopher Dahl via conference call due to the worldwide pandemic Coronavirus (COVID 19) and Governor Tim Walz's Stay at Home order.

Those present were as follows: Christopher Dahl, Chairman; Donald Kropp, Vice-Chair; David Ausen, Treasurer; Paul Heers Jr., Board Secretary; Colin Wittmer, Board Supervisor; Brenda Lageson, District Manager; Lindsey Zeitler, Resource Conservationist; Chad Billat, Private Lands Biologist; Brittany Dawson, District Technician; Dave Copeland, BWSR; and Gary Kurer, NRCS. **Absent:** None.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting:
Minutes of the April 9, 2020 regular meeting were approved as presented on a motion made by Wittmer and seconded by Kropp. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Ausen, Heers Jr., and Wittmer. Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

Treasurer's Report:
The treasurer's balance as of April 30, 2020 was $8,752.67 in checking and $1,227,656.20 in savings. A motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented and pay bills was made by Wittmer and seconded by Kropp. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Ausen, Heers Jr., and Wittmer. Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

Grant actions and/or information:
Lageson reported that she is assisting BWSR staff in a grant reconciliation for the 2018 CREP Outreach & Implementation grant.

This 2018 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) grant expires 6/30/2020. Staff is working on applying for more funding through 6/30/2022, the Request for Interest (RFI) is due to BWSR by tomorrow May 15, 2020. This funding provides part of a position to do outreach & implementation for CREP. A motion to move forward with the RFI submission was made by Wittmer and seconded by Ausen. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Ausen, Heers Jr., and Wittmer. Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

NRCS Report:
Kurer reported on the operations of the Albert Lea Field Office and Customer Service Team 19. A soil conservationist position is expected to be filled at the Dodge Center Field Office in early June. Kurer also discussed the status of EQIP, CSP, and CRP applications for 19. The new emergency animal mortality management funding pool was discussed by Kurer and application deadlines were provided for swine and non-swine.

BWSR Report:
Copeland provided updates regarding operations for BWSR staff with the decision by Governor Waltz to let the Stay at Home Order expire on Monday, May 18th, 2020 and briefly discussed that there would be protocol changes and deep cleaning that needed to be completed prior to business returning to normal. Copeland also discussed the hiring freeze with the only vacancy potentially affecting the SWCD is that of the grant coordinator. A discussion of weekly all staff meetings and a proposal to adjust the budget with a cut of ten percent for 2020-2021, but there should be no cuts to SWCD capacity funding.

Supervisor Reports:

Kropp reported on the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA) meeting via WebEx attended on Friday, May 8. The meeting consisted of discussing the extension of all grants set to expire in the Summer/Fall. Kropp also discussed that there are still funds available for cover crops for those producers in the GBERBA area.

Manager's Report:
Lageson requested the SWCD Coronavirus (COVID-19) policy adopted at the last regular board meeting be extended to the June 11, 2020 board meeting. A motion to extend the COVID-19 policy was made by Kropp and seconded by Heers Jr. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Ausen, Heers Jr., and Wittmer. Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

Lageson emailed her report to the supervisors and asked if they had any questions. There was a question regarding the election process because the County Courthouse is closed to the public per County COVID-19 policy. She explained the necessary steps to file for re-election.

Staff Reports:
Zeitler discussed the trainings attended over the past month and the work being completed for buffer compliance and cost-share site inspections. An update on tree pick up was provided by Zeitler prior to discussing the near completion of the Remington project and a waterway request. An update on requests for the no-till drill was provided. Dawson provided an update regarding endorsements, certifications, and reviews completed and in progress for MAWQCP. Billat discussed the status of CREP projects and their various stages as well as the MDM 68 grant. Billat is set to pick up the new Ranger and trailer. Trainings that were attended included 1W1P meetings, Technical committee meetings, and CRP Clear30 webinar.

Adjournment:
There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Heers Jr. and seconded by Wittmer. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative – Dahl, Kropp, Ausen, Heers Jr., and Wittmer. Opposed – None. **The motion carried.**

These are preliminary minutes subject to board approval at the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors.
Respectfully submitted,

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Paul Heers, Jr., Board Secretary Date