

Minnehaha Conservation District
February 8th, 2021 Monthly Meeting
Via Zoom
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm

Woerman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Supervisors present: Travis Entenman, Gordon Heber, Jim Pfeifer, Jennifer Schmidtbauer (left meeting at 3:59 p.m.) and Bob Woerman

Supervisors absent: None

Advisors present: Susan Kruse and Dana Loseke

Advisors absent: Brian Alderson, Carl Eliason, Kelly Lyons, and Mark McGee

Others present: John Parker, Eric Grootenboer, Denise Fletcher, Alina Krone-Hedman, Dan Wehmeyer, Deron Ruesch, Barry Berg, Alexa Kruse, Jay Gilbertson, Jeff Barth, and Brian Top

Agenda: MSP to approve by Entenman and Pfeifer. All ayes.

Minutes of January 11th meeting: MSP to approve (with amendments to show John Parker as Board Treasurer/Secretary and Denise Fletcher as Recording Secretary, as well as to show the time that Jennifer Schmidtbauer left the meeting) by Heber and Entenman. All ayes.

Treasurer's report: Reviewed at meeting. MSP to approve by Entenman and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

Bills: Reviewed at meeting. Approved to pay. MSP to approve by Schmidtbauer and Entenman. All ayes.

NRCS activity report by Dan Wehmeyer:

The office continues in phase 1 of re-opening – 3 NRCS staff and 1 partner in the building.

WETLANDS: We currently have 7 certified wetland determination requests in progress.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): General signup has been extended to an undetermined date. Grassland signup is from March 15th to April 23rd. Working through continuous offers; waiting on acceptance of generals before working on those.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP): Working on approval and obligating renewal application.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): Working on applications. Sent out 206 postcards about the CIS (Conservation Implementation Strategy) and received about 10 responses. Two conservation plans need approval (CSP-GCI and CRP).

Big Sioux River – RCPP Report by Barry Berg: Working on digitizing surveys and putting together contracts for 2021 SRAM and RAM. EQIP/RCPP contract is ready to sign. RCPP supplemental agreement will follow. Planning 7 water developments for producers and fencing on 120 acres. Continued work on WLE (Working Lands Easement) project along Skunk Creek. Alexa Kruse is working on a logo and website. MSP to approve 2 checks to be issued (TopSoil LLC and EDWDD) by Entenman and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

Urban Educator Report by Alina Krone-Hedman: CIS application survey was sent out about Urban Agriculture. 22 responses were received; about half were for 10 acres or less. Garden Webinar series has started. 22 people requested links for February 4th presentation on Rain Gardens and 8 tuned in. There will be a meeting regarding a rain garden by a creek at Garretson. A Gevik Site meeting was held, where the group decided to pursue a Home Depot Impact Grant (up to \$5,000). This would be used to make the site more ADA compliant – a better ramp to the bird observation house and to re-do the parking lot.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes - None

Update from Supervisors – None

OLD BUSINESS

1. Service Report (bio-solids, tree planting, grass planting, Gevik Site, etc.)

Bio-solids: Strong contract is in place for the next 3-5 years with the City. Working through the winter finding participants for the project. Trees: 35 acres planned. Grass: Meeting held with NRCS. 432 acres (17 CRP contracts) are planned to seed. 6 producers interested in the 15' and 30' drills for about 400 acres. Potential cover crop funds are available through the Soil Health Coalition. Gevik Site: Covered in Krone-Hedman's report. Parker presented pictures of projects completed by the District over the last 10 years – trees planted, terraces seeded and native grass plantings.

2. Building Improvement Information - Shed

The tree shed is almost complete. A mural will be added on the wall. Building inspector is coming on February 10th to look at the middle shed building project.

3. Annual Budget – 2021

MSP to adopt the 2021 budget by Entenman and Pfeifer. All ayes.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Big Sioux River Project – RCPP Agreement

MSP to adopt agreement by Entenman and Pfeifer. All ayes.

2. Working Agreement between EDWDD and Minnehaha Conservation District

MSP to adopt agreement by Entenman and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

3. Job Appraisals

Woerman's research had indicated an industry trend of 3-5% raises. Woerman recommended a 4% raise. Schmidtbauer, Entenman and Pfeifer all indicated they were comfortable with a 4% increase. MSP to give a 4% raise to all 4 employees (Parker, Grootenboer, Jaeger and Fletcher) by Schmidtbauer and Entenman. All ayes. MSP to make the raise effective with the next pay period by Schmidtbauer and Entenman. All ayes.

4. SDACD Membership Investment 2021

\$975.00 annual membership cost. MSP to pay annual membership by Entenman and Heber. All ayes.

5. Intent to Mine Notification

Parker discussed the communication that was sent. MSP to acknowledge the notice by Pfeifer and Heber. All ayes.

Executive Session (if needed) – Not needed

CONSERVATION PLAN APPROVAL

MSP to sign agreements by Entenman and Pfeifer. Ayes – Entenman, Pfeifer, Schmidtbauer and Woerman. Abstain – Heber.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Correspondence – February 25th Webinar will be held by Pheasants Forever about putting conservation on the ground. Notice will be placed on the District website.

MSP to adjourn at 4:22 p.m. by Entenman and Pfeifer. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, March 8th, 2021 at 3:00 pm – via Zoom

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, Recording Secretary