

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, January 29, 2021
8:00 a.m.

USDA County Offices

Attending Virtually: Supervisors: Saehr and Hubner; Commissioner Winscher;
SWCD Staff: Ringwelski; NRCS Staff: Hanson; BWSR Staff: Chris Pence

Attending In Person: Supervisors: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber; SWCD Staff: Wettstein

MSC Brutscher/Faber to approve the agenda as written. Motion passed.

2020 RE-ORGANIZATION:

1. SWEARING in of New Board Members – Thomas Brutscher, Dr. William Faber, David Hubner.
2. Official Date, Time, Location: Fourth Friday of Each Month, 8:00 a.m. in person at USDA or County or virtual during COVID. MSC Faber/Saehr. Motion approved.
3. Official Per Diem and Mileage: MSC Faber/Scholl. Motion approved.
 - Per Diem - Full Board Meetings, Day Meetings, Committee Meetings, and/or Payroll Signature - \$75
 - Mileage - at IRS Established Rate (\$.56 as of 1/1/2021)
4. Official Publication: Morrison County Record. MSC Scholl/Saehr. Motion Approved.
5. Official Bank of Deposit: Bank of the West Checking and Bremer Bank. MSC Faber/Hubner. Motion passed.
6. Annual Resolution Approving Morrison County Local Water Plan as District's Annual Plan. MSC Faber/Scholl. Motion passed.
7. Grant Agreements / Contracts Signature Approval: For FY2021 Morrison SWCD's District Manager, Shannon Wettstein, in the absence of SWCD Board Members, may sign grant agreements and/or contracts. MSC Saehr/Faber. Motion passed.
8. Minimum Fund Balance Approval: The minimum Fund Balance for FY2021 will be **3 months** of Operating Expenditures. MSC Saehr/Hubner. Motion passed.
(ie: PL Operating Exp. + Personnel for FY, divided by 12 x 3 months = MFB)
9. Capital Assets Policy of Threshold Approval: In the FY2021 Capital Assets Policy Report, **\$5,000** and above will remain the level of threshold documented, for depreciation, for all purchases by Morrison SWCD. MSC Faber/Scholl. Motion passed.

10. Slate of Officers for 2021 Recommendations: MSC Faber/Scholl. Motion passed.

Roles	Proposed for 2021
Chairman	Tom Brutscher
Vice Chairman	Bill Faber
Secretary	Dale Scholl
Treasurer	Dave Hubner
Public Relations	Scott Saehr
Committee Assignments	Proposed for 2021
Finance Committee	Brutscher / Saehr
Personnel Committee	Hubner / Faber
Water Plan Representative	Brutscher
WCTSA	Faber / Hubner
One Watershed One Plan	Scholl / Faber / Saehr

SECRETARY'S MINUTES: No changes to the November minutes. There was no meeting in December. MSC Faber/Saehr. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: December and January. MSC Scholl/Faber. Motion passed.

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson shared they are working on planning 2021 EQIP and CSP applications. If anyone is interested in CSP they can sign up until March. They are looking to hire a Civil Engineer Technician in Little Falls. He also just completed the ranking for EQIP using the resource concerns chosen at the Local Work Group.

Ringwelski reported WCA has been very busy because there have been a lot of requests to maintain ditches because there is not much snow on the ground. The last Planning Commission meeting for a barn that he did an Environmental Review had a lot of concern about manure and smell. There are probably going to be more requests for cost share on trees than we have money for.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT: Winscher shared he has also been getting a lot of concerned landowners about manure management and smell recently. This will need to be something we address over the next few years. The Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment will now be combined. The county is working with the Historical Society about putting in the drive-thru on the DMV.

BWSR REPORT: Pence also received a complaint recently about Morrison and approving more and more barns in the county. Also shared year end eLINK reporting is due on Monday and the RFP for 1W1P will come out in March. Asked about our interest and Wettstein shared the Miss Brainerd group would be meeting next week and is considering it.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Grant Agreement. Wettstein shared this has been signed. Faber shared the Policy committee voted to approve the contracted dollar amounts for the two consultants who will help lead this process. He also shared he will be the chair of the policy committee.
2. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update. Scholl attending meetings in December and January. The Joint Powers Entity has taken up the bulk of the conversations. At the January meeting there were four new members. The group is sending letters to policy members who have missed two or more meetings to inform them they are at jeopardy of being removed. Priorities for the watershed have been discussed. Concerns over ditch cleaning have been brought up. Wettstein share at the next technical committee meeting Mike Becker will attend with a representative from the Public Works department to discuss ditching concerns.
3. Working Arrangements During COVID-19. Wettstein shared staff were working on staggered schedules and the building is still closed to the public. MSC Saehr/Faber to extend the remote working option for staff through June's board meeting. Motion passed.
4. REPI Pilot Program Update – CRSL Outreach. Wettstein shared this money was going to come through the National Association of Conservation Districts and is waiting on final documents. This was funding the district applied for last year and it will help cover the cost of the Pheasants Forever position as the US Endowment money will expire in June this year.
5. WCA Report for 2020. MSC Faber/Scholl to tabled to the February meeting. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2021 Budget Approval –Brutscher, Saehr, Nouis and Wettstein reviewed the 2021 Proposed Budget yesterday. The biggest changes from 2020 included a significant WCA Bank Sale, grant monies for the Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan, LCCMR funding for Oak Wilt and the Culvert Inventory and new line items for MAWQCP, Sourcewell and Little Rock (previously included under Special Projects). The Taxable Fringe Benefit for staff is also adjusted to include an increase and this was discussed at length at the Budget meeting. Saehr suggested in the future this should be reviewed every few years as it has not been increased since 2012 and has decreased because the dollar amount is subject to withholdings which have increased since this time. Currently, staff are receiving an average of \$252 per pay period (24 per year). The proposed budget reflects a taxable fringe benefit, after withholdings to be an average of \$350 per pay period for each employee. MSC Scholl/Faber to approve the proposed budget. Motion passed.
2. Approve Audit Bid Letter for FYE 12/31/2020 to be completed Fall 2021 - \$3,000 Peterson Company LTD. MSC Hubner, Faber. Motion passed.

3. MASWCD 2021 Dues - \$4,025.91. MSC Saehr/Faber to approve. Motion passed.
4. MCIT 2021 Renewal Notice: \$8,345 – PC Renewal \$4,919 / WC Renewal \$3,426. MSC Faber/Saehr to approve. Motion passed.
5. Long Prairie 1W1P – Tad Erickson (Region Five) Consultant Contract Request for Approval & Execution. Following on the explanation Faber gave above, Wettstein shared that as the fiscal for this grant we will be signing the contract with the two consultants. MSC Saehr/Hubner to approve execution. Motion passed.
6. Long Prairie 1W1P – Moriya Rufer (Houston Engineering) Consultant Contract Request for Approval & Execution. MSC Hubner/Faber to approve execution. Motion passed.
7. Cost Share Application. MSC Scholl/Faber to approve. Motion passed.
 - a. State Cost Share Mark Januschka \$1,690 Windbreak
 - b. State Cost Share Mike Seppelt \$1,540 Reforestation
 - c. State Cost Share Richard Skiba \$1,313.72 Reforestation
8. Cost Share Amendment. MSC Hubner/Faber to approve. Motion passed.
 - a. State Cost Share Zach Baert ~~\$687.50~~ \$1,062.50 Well Sealing
9. Cost Share Payment
 - a. State Cost Share Darrell Larson \$2,949.70 Cattle Crossing
MSC Hubner/Faber to approve. Motion passed.
 - b. State Cost Share Zach Baert \$1,062.50 Well Sealing
MSC Faber/Scholl to approve. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL:

- Long Prairie River Watershed One Watershed One Plan Survey is out until March 5, 2021.
- City of Motley Wellhead Protection Plan II. This has been completed and will begin implementation.
- Statement of Interest – MN Campaign Finance Board (Statement of interest requirements for your agency’s public officials). Reminder given.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:05 a.m. MSC Faber/Scholl.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, February 26, 2021

8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Attending Virtually: BWSR Staff: Chris Pence

Attending in Person: Supervisors: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber and Saehr; Commissioner Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein, Ringwelski and Wettstein; Guests Jay Backowski and Karl Sabrowsky representing FSA

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the January minutes MSC Saehr/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Faber/Scholl. Motion passed.

GUEST REPORTS: Karl Sabrowsky with FSA Loans introduced himself and presented on the different programs offered. Jay Backowski with FSA Programs introduced himself and presented on different programs and the amount of money that came back to producers in 2020 in the county.

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson shared NRCS is working on EQIP applications. They are using our Local Work Group priorities in their ranking process. CSP sign-up deadline is March 26 for 2021 classic applications. If these contracts expire, they may end up in a cool-off period for two years. Hanson also shared next month there will be a series of Local Work Group trainings, that funding will be limited again this year so we will need to pursue multiple funding pools and that an intern is starting in Long Prairie. They are part of new collaboration between CLC and NRCS that Bill Faber is very familiar with.

Ringwelski shared ditch cleaning requests have been steady, trees are selling down quickly, the thousandth Ag Water Quality farmer has been certified in the state, he is working on an Environmental review for the Stangl Brothers in SE Buckman to put up a hog barn, and that there is a new Feedlot Officer, Robert Wall.

COMMISSIONER REPORT: Winscher explained how new barn requests and manure application is becoming more of an issue and he is getting more complaints. Their board has started the 2022 budget process. The county had \$645,000 of COVID relief money to distribute and the applicants who applied for this money shared over two million dollars in losses. Mike Wilson will be involved as the Rum River 1W1P moving forward and will be the representative from the county. Winscher also shared the names of the new combined Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment which will begin convening in April (Clint Catherine, Dave Brutscher, Dave Stich, Brent Lindgren and Marvin Trettel).

BWSR REPORT: Pence shared E-link reporting is completed and congratulated the district in doing a great job. He also shared that a Landscape Stewardship Plan will be written as part of the Long Prairie River 1W1P.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Grant Update. Faber shared he will be acting as chair for the Policy Committee in this process and that they have held their first meeting. A survey is currently running to get citizen input into the process.
2. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl shared the Joint Powers Agreement finally passed at the last Policy Committee meeting. He also said the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwa have not been involved up to this point but that they want to be involved moving forward.
3. Board of Supervisors Quarterly Per Diem Payment Method. Wettstein asked if the board would agree to reviewing their reimbursement records at the board meeting and then reimbursing at the next regular pay period. This will help to eliminate and errors in paychecks. The board was supportive of the new process.
4. Suicide Prevention Training from Northern Pines. Wettstein shared all staff had attended a virtual training hosted by a staff from Northern Pines. The training was targeted towards professionals working within the agricultural community.
5. WCA Report. Wettstein shared this last year again was a very busy year, being one of the most intense for public contacts in the last ten years being up 93% from 2018.
6. Year End Easement Report. Wettstein shared a map of completed easements along with landowner information with the board as a point of information. Thirteen ACUB easements were completed. Staff had to stop executing easements once funding ran out and new funding was allocated. Now that a new Cooperative Agreement with BWSR and the Army National Guard has been executed additional funds have been awarded.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Cost Share Application to approve MSC Faber/Scholl. Motion passed.
 - a. State Cost Share Toby Schneider \$1,120.00 Reforestation
 - b. State Cost Share Neal Loidolt \$665.00 Field Windbreak
2. REPI Challenge Proposal Revised (Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape). Wettstein shared the district had applied for this last year and was not successful. This years application is to work with a university researcher to help better define what resiliency means in the Sentinel Landscape through reviewing existing data of the boundary. Wettstein admitted this is different than what we typically would request money for but it will help us to better understand where to target our work in the future and which practices would best address resource concerns. Todd Holman from The Nature Conservancy is writing the grant so no staff time will go into the application. MSC Faber/Scholl to support applying for the grant. Motion passed.
3. Intern for Summer through Sourcewell Grant. MSC Faber/Scholl to approve posting the position and use the Sourcewell grant to pay for the position. Motion passed.
4. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Planning Grant Application. Wettstein asked the board to support moving forward with a planning grant application in partnership with Aitkin, Crow Wing and Todd SWCD. MSC Scholl/Faber to support. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL:

- Healthy Waters Virtual Consortium March 23rd – 25th, 2021
- Area 2 Meeting and WCTSA Board – Meeting postponed until June. Date TBD.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:20 a.m. MSC Faber/Scholl.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, March 26, 2021

8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

BWSR Staff (Attending Virtually): Chris Pence

Supervisors: Brutscher, Scholl, Hubner, Faber, Saeher

Commissioner: Winscher

SWCD Staff: Wettstein, Ringwelski and Hanson

Guest Speaker: Todd Holman, Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape (CRSL) Coordinator w/The Nature Conserv.

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the February minutes MSC Saeher/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Faber/Hubner. Motion passed.

GUEST REPORTS: **Todd Holman** shared with the board his role with the nature conservancy and with the district through the CRSL. He is able to bring time to help and leverage money with the work he does. He also shared how the success of ACUB has caused a ripple effect for other state programs, specifically the Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) programs which were historically limited to retiring crop land but now included forested, wild rice and the newest working lands RIM which targets grazing land.

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson reported they are ranking 2021 EQIP applications, they have several openings including a Soil Conservationist, Civil Engineering Technician, Agronomist and Internships. Over the last several weeks Wettstein and him completed four Locally Lead Conservation training series geared at hosting better Local Work Group meetings.

Ringwelski shared WCA continues to be busy and he is working on another Environmental Review for a hog barn. Cost share is mostly all encumbered and our tree sale is essentially closed due to the difficulty of getting more trees.

Wettstein reported she attended the virtual Healthy Waters Consortium retreat that had been planned for Seattle in 2020. She presented on the work we are doing in the CRSL and during the breakout sessions the conversation was continually turned back to her for more insight on how we are doing things. She relayed to the board that the work they have supported here has not only been a leader in the state like Holman shared but also nationally.

COMMISSIONER REPORT: Winscher shared there have been some retirements at the county specifically the county Recorder which has historically been an elected position. Also commented that the landfill is possibly getting stricter regulations. Morrison is also expecting to get another \$7M in the next stimulus.

BWSR REPORT: Pence shared the state is showing a \$1.6 billion surplus. He also shared upcoming training opportunities, grant application deadlines and that in 2022 a new Work Plan for cost share dollars will be required (because historically districts used their Water Plans).

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Grant Update – Faber shared the survey & kickoff meeting have both been completed. Shamineau residents really responded to both & residents received their first tax statement which included the additional funds for engineering and construction.
2. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update - Scholl said the JPE has now been signed by everyone and the Mil Lacs Band has assigned a Commissioner to be involved. The watershed will be looking for an Engagement Coordinator and has budgeted \$120K. Discussed ditches & buffers at last meeting.
3. COVID Update – Wettstein shared that the county gave us plexiglass & offered vaccinations to staff & board. In the office currently we are staffed at 50% capacity and the doors are locked to the public.
4. CRSL Outreach – Tele Workshop & NACD Agreement. Wettstein relayed that Feldhege and Chisholm attended a 10-week training with Hanson and other CRSL partners. From it they developed some targeted outreach that could be executed using money from the new NACD Agreement. This funding can cover outreach and will help fund Feldhege’s position as well as funds for Crow Wing SWCD’s area.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Cost Share Application. MSC Saehr/Faber. Motion approved.
 - a. State Cost Share Michael LuConic \$1,066.00 Reforestation
2. Resolution for Planning Boundary Establishment 1W1P Mississippi Sartell and St. Cloud – Wettstein shared these boundaries and why we need a resolution to support two separate ones. As recently as the Watershed Approach with the MNPCA the boundaries had been split so this will align with what has already been happening but as part of the 1W1P it needs to be formalized by the partners. MSC Faber/Hubner. Motion passed to split.
3. Resolution of Support 1W1P Mississippi St. Cloud Planning Effort – Wettstein shared she does not think it is necessary for us to participate in these meetings as there are only 370 acres, but the partners asked for our support of the project to proceed to the planning stage. MSC Saehr/Scholl. Motion passed to support.
4. Resolution of Support 1W1P Mississippi Brainerd Planning Effort – Wettstein prepped the board that this watershed is the next in the que for planning. Partners are working to put together an application. MSC Scholl/Hubner. Motion passed to support.
5. Irrigation Software Tool – Program Support \$625 – This program will soon be taken over by the U of M but has a gap in funding. Benton SWCD has asked all counties who are covered by the software to kick in an equal amount of money to pay for the consulting services until U of M takes it over. MSC Scholl/Hubner. Motion passed to support.

INFORMATIONAL:

- Internship Application Deadline April 15, 2021
- Tree Week - April 26th – 30, 2021
- Tree Pick-up / Drive Thru - Friday, April 30, 2021 - at LF Hockey Arena
- Next SWCD Board Meeting - Friday, April 23, 2021 - at the Morrison County Courthouse
- Nitrate Testing Clinic - May 17th – 21st, 2021 - Location TBD

Meeting Adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, APRIL 23, 2021

USDA County Offices

NO APRIL SWCD BOARD MEETING WAS HELD.

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, May 28, 2021
8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Supervisors Attending Virtually: Hubner

Supervisors Attending in Person: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber, Saeher

Commissioner: Winscher

SWCD Staff: Wettstein and Hanson

SECRETARY MINUTES: No meeting held in April. No changes to the March minutes MSC Saeher/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Saeher/Faber. Motion passed. Wettstein shared the balance for the checking is high but that we will see that come down as other grant monies are spent down and we have a period before they are available again. We will review in August to see if we should move funds to the reserve account

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson reported they are working on the second round of EQIP rankings as well as ranking CSP 2021-1 applications. They are also working on doing field reviews.

COMMISSIONER REPORT: Winscher shared the County Recorder will continue to be an elected position. Planning and Zoning and Board of Adjustment just held their first joint meetings this month. The group discussed the potential Pine Bluff, Ilc Plat and Shamineau LID requesting the project money unused from the CR203 project. There was another \$2M received for Covid-19 monies to the county.

BWSR REPORT: Absent

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl shared they are eight months behind schedule. The schedule is for it to go to the BWSR Board April, 2022. March, 2023 implementation funds would be available but will be very limited to Morrison County.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Grant Update – Land and Water Resource Narrative was approved as was a logo. They were presented the initial resource concerns for the watershed and those were approved as well.
3. COVID Update –In the office currently we are staffed at 50% capacity and the doors are locked to the public.
4. Tree Week, April 26 - 30 was very successful. Nous put together a Profit and Loss Report for the program and we ended up with a net income of \$35,822 with almost 31,000 trees sold. Next year we know DNR will not have trees for us to order so we will be ordering all of our trees from private nurseries so the individual cost of trees will go from 65 cents to 85-90 cents per tree. We did increase our prices this last year and the increase will help absorb next years situation so we will not be increasing prices two years in a row. Hopefully DNR will be back in business in 2023.

5. LSOHC Application Submitted, \$8.45M for Easements - This would be our highest request to date. We are proposing targeting landowners who own land around public lands to expand those habitat corridors and preserve in tact forests.
6. Mississippi River Brainerd 1W1P Planning Application – Crow Wing and Morrison are putting together the application which will be submitted to start this process. Applications are due June 11, 2021.
7. Nitrate Testing Clinic - May 17th - 21st. Wettstein shared a map of participating landowners Feldhege put together, it shows all of the wells sampled over the entirety of the program. Also shared the breakdown of where samples came in at for ppm of nitrates.
8. National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) – Outreach within CRSL, split between Crow Wing SWCD and Morrison SWCD, \$75,000. This funding is available now and will primarily go to continue funding Feldhege’s position with Pheasants Forever. Her current grant expires June 30th so this will pick up where that left off.
9. Revised REPI Challenge – Contracts for scientific analysis of climate resilience factors in the CRSL program area - \$200,000. We are waiting to hear if this is awarded but it will be work we contract out, not work a district employee will be doing.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Internship New Hire Approval– Sourcewell Grant: Marshall Anez. Wettstein shared with the board interviews and her recommendation. MSC Faber/Scholl to hire Anez for the summer. Motion passed.
2. Official Bank of Deposit Discussion – Wettstein asked the board for their approval to research other business checking offerings. Official bank of deposit is Bank of the West but there is a lot of staff turnover, it takes Nouis 20 minutes to do a deposit, we do not get any interest and if we switched to direct deposit there is a fee. Board recommended looking at Pine Country, CMCU, Unity and Farmers Merchants.
3. NRCS Direct Agreement – \$400,000 for Regional Prescribed Burn Training and CRSL Forestry Capacity. Wettstein is expecting a signed agreement July 1st from NRCS on this. We will be contracting with the Forest Stewards Guild for the training portion and then the district will be hiring the forester to work within the CRSL.
4. Land O’Lakes Opportunity – This is another new opportunity to work collaboratively with Centra Sota through a Conservation Agronomist position. The district would employ them and it would be fully funded through the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and Centra Sota who is owned by Land O’ Lakes. Wettstein shared the proposal with the board and asked for their support to move forward. MSC Faber/Scholl to pursue the opportunity and submit the application. Motion passed.
5. Cost Share Payments – MSC Scholl/Faber to approve as presented. Motion passed.

a. State Cost Share	Charles Streasick	\$1,747.05	Reforestation
b. State Cost Share	Neal Loidolt	\$665.00	Field Windbreak
c. State Cost Share	Robert Streasick	\$1,747.05	Reforestation
d. State Cost Share	Rick Skiba	\$1,313.72	Reforestation
e. State Cost Share	Mike Seppelt	\$1,540.00	Reforestation
f. State Cost Share	Mark Januschka	\$1,690.00	Field Windbreak
g. State Cost Share	Paul Kuske	\$1,731.42	Reforestation
h. State Cost Share	Toby Schneider	\$1,120.00	Reforestation
i. State Cost Share	Mike LuConic	\$1,066.00	Reforestation

INFORMATIONAL:

- CLC Award Student Group – National Earth Team Volunteer Award – Congrats to Bill and his department for this national award!
- MN Message, NRCS Newsletter
- Water Plan Task Force Meeting / Local Work Group TBD
- Amy Feldhege, 4-year anniversary in the office: May 15, 2017
- Oak Wilt Verification – Mailing, ground truthing and fly over will be happening in the next couple of weeks.
- Area II Meeting: In Person, Willmar American Legion, June 22, 2021. Faber will join Wettstein and Hanson.
- Next SWCD Board Meeting: Friday, June 25, 2021
- LCCMR Recommendations to the Legislature Pending – Oak Wilt and Culvert Inventory
- Camp Ripley Open House: Sunday, September 19, 2021

Meeting Adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, June 25, 2021

8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Supervisors Attending in Person: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber, Saeher and Hubner

Commissioner: Winscher

SWCD Staff: Wettstein and Hanson

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the May minutes MSC Saeher/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Faber/Scholl. Motion passed.

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson reported they have six preapproved CSP applications, 13 EQIP contracts approved in 2021 and they have been out on some construction projects that are moving ahead.

Ringwelski shared the Nygren Bank will be coming online soon as the easement is being recorded and the field visit to verify restoration has been done. He has been really busy with WCA and stacking slab requests in the county.

Wettstein shared they have been working as part of the Mississippi River Brainerd MPCA Watershed Approach on a video highlighting work several landowners have done throughout the watershed. Also, ACUB has picked up substantially due to new funding so Amy and Lance have been busy reaching out and getting agreements signed from landowners who have been on the waiting list.

COMMISSIONER REPORT: Winscher shared they have heard from Butch Brown, a landowner on County Ditch 16 who wants his culvert lowered. He also brought up the Pine Bluff LLC plat and the possibility of these lands getting developed. He said speeding tickets are way up in the county and that the administration is still trying to make sense of how to process the Covid-19 funds.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl shared they are working on getting additional funds from the USDA and for recruiting people be leaders in the watershed to recruit others for projects. This work will primarily be done by the Outreach Coordinator.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Grant Update - They did not have a policy meeting. Wettstein shared they have compiled resource concerns in the watershed and will be working to identify priority areas next.
3. Area II Meeting: In Person (Willmar American Legion) June 22, 2021 – Faber and Wettstein attended this meeting. Faber will now be the chair of the West Central Area 2 Technical Service Area.
4. Updates to Open Meeting Law Effective July 1, 2021 – Wettstein shared that starting July 1, 2021, Open Meeting Law will require decision makers to be in attendance. Members would be allowed three times where they could attend virtually but then after that the location of this member would need to be posted along with the official meeting location. There was some discussion on this but as the board has been meeting in person at a public location it will not be an issue for the district.

5. Mississippi River Brainerd 1W1P Planning Grant Submitted - \$226,600 – BWSR has announced this round will be much more competitive, but we wanted to apply and get this process kicked off because this watershed covers a significant part of the county. Awards will be announced in August at the BWSR Board meeting.
6. Revised REPI Challenge Awarded – Contracts for scientific analysis of climate resilience factors in the CRSL program area - \$200,000 – The district was informed their proposal was successful. Funds will most likely not be available until fall 2021.
7. Lidar Acquisition Discussions – DNR, Camp Ripley, NRCS – Wettstein has been meeting with the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape group and has attended a meeting where it was discussed to apply for funds to get this area of the state the most up to date Lidar data. The CRSL area, and the rest of the county would benefit from having more detailed elevation data. More information on this will be coming but for now the state is soliciting other partner agencies who could give cash towards the project so they will be approaching counties, cities and other agencies in the meantime.
8. Land O’Lakes Application Submitted to NACD for a Conservation Agronomist- \$182,500 – This application was submitted. The board discussed how this might look to other agricultural retailers and the need to make sure the opportunity is open to not just Centra Sota customers. The district cannot endorse one retailer over the other even with the position being partially funded through Land O’ Lakes/Centra Sota.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Cost Share Contracts: MSC Faber/Saehr to approved. Motion Passed.
 - a. State Cost Share Allendale Dairy \$2,500.00 Terraces
2. Official Bank of Deposit Options: Wettstein presented a comparison chart of the following banks (Pine Country Bank, CMCU, Mid Minnesota Credit Union and current bank) offerings comparing hours, interest rates, fees and the ability to do ACH direct transfers for employee payroll. Pine Country came out on top for all of the categories.
MSC by Saehr/Scholl for the official bank of deposit to be Pine Country and the account at Bank of the West be closed. Each board member will serve as signers and Wettstein will administer the account and online options. Motion Passed.

INFORMATIONAL:

Morrison County Record Article				
Tuesday	June 29 th	7:00 pm	Petition to Outlet into Ditch 41 in Todd County – Shamineau	Todd County Fairgrounds Long Prairie
Friday	July 23 rd	8:00 am	Next SWCD Board Meeting	Location???
Wednesday	July 28 th	9:00 am – 3:00 pm	Water Plan Task Force Meeting / Local Work Group / Geo Atlas (Part B) Training	M C Gov. Center Commissioners Brd Room
Sunday	Sept. 19 th	10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Camp Ripley Open House	Camp Ripley
Tue – Wed	Sept. 21 st – 22 nd	<u>TENTATIVE</u>	Morrison County Water Festival Tentative	Camp Ripley

Meeting Adjourned at 10:19 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, July 23, 2021
8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Supervisors Attending in Person: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber, Saehr and Hubner

Commissioner: Winscher

SWCD Staff: Zapzalka, Wettstein and Ringwelski

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the June minutes MSC Saehr/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Faber/Hubner. Motion passed.

GUEST REPORT: Steve Backowski, Public Works Director/County Engineer, thanked the board for allowing Mike Becker to help them with projects last year. He also shared they are systematically working on maintaining public ditches. County Ditches 21, 16 and 11 are complete. Ditch 17 will be moving forward then 18 and 21 are left. There are 86 total miles and 30 of those are complete. They are working to establish a maintenance fund so these can be more easily maintained in the future.

Winscher suggested that the Old Business agenda item one be moved up so Butch Brown could follow on Backowski's report.

Butch Brown, resident of Morrill Township and CD16 benefited property owner shared his situation, that the county cleaned the ditch and left a cement culvert underneath the replaced culvert. He shared he has searched in the townhall records and found there was an old concrete culvert there from 1910. He also shared there is water in the ditch. There was a lot of discussion and questions from the board, commissioners, staff and Backowski. Wettstein passed pictures around of what it looked like at the time of excavation (supervised by county, work completed by Saehr Backhoe and Gravel), what it looks like today and explained the districts role and involvement with the requirements of WCA. There is no evidence of a buried culvert and in this case Wettstein explained that to lower a culvert the county would have to purchase wetland credits and pass that expense to the benefited landowners on this ditch. This could cost upwards of \$500K.

Backowski and Brown both left the meeting.

STAFF REPORTS: Zapzalka gave an update on CSP, EQIP, RCPP and where they are at with funding. RCPP MAWQCP has funding and has received four applications. The district is also working on a renewal for the RCPP Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape which would be an additional \$2.8 million.

Ringwelski reported they are working on a construction project at Allendale Dairy and it is so dry the ground is like powder, if it rains it could be a disaster. Also shared trees are really suffering due to the drought and those that were planted this year are either extremely stressed or dead. Also reported he is processing a lot of ditch cleanings, pond and stock pond cleanouts because everything is dry and accessible.

Wettstein shared Mike Becker has been working on inventorying culverts again with the help of the summer intern. LeaAnn Nouis is preparing for our audit. DNR is out confirming oak wilt pockets in the landscape that were identified by an airplane flyover so we can begin working with landowners. Lance Chisholm and Amy Feldhege are busy with easements, with over 25 in process.

COMMISSIONER REPORT: Winscher shared the drought is really affecting things out there. Hay is getting scary expensive. Also shared there will be a public hearing on the railroad crossing up in Lincoln and that Campfire Bay was able to get a permit across the counter because they found a loophole in the ordinance. Also shared Deb Gruber, the County Administrator, has announced her resignation so they will be looking for a replacement.

BWSR REPORT: Pence reported they have been given the green light to attend some meetings. Also reminded the district we will need to start developing a work plan in eLink for State Cost Share. Pence shared the news that most likely all the 1W1P planning grants will be funded so the districts application for the Mississippi River Brainerd will be moving forward. Explained that competitive funds available will go down as 1W1P implementation dollars get allocated. We can also expect Local Capacity Funding as we have for the next two years. Additional special funds BWSR will have available is for Water Storage, Cover Crops and Easements.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Butch Brown, County Ditch 16 benefited property owner (moved earlier in meeting)
2. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Draft report is available and is 400 pages. Wettstein shared staff has reviewed and sent comments. Scholl also shared a delegation of policy members will be going to meet with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.
3. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber shared their next meeting is in September so no update from the policy committee. Wettstein shared they are working on goals for the watershed as a technical committee.
4. Sustainable Use of the Groundwater in the Little Rock Creek Area – Wettstein gave a brief summary of where this project is at. DNR has said they will need to gather additional data, that the dam in the Sartell WMA is contributing to the creek warming and that they do not plan to extend the temporary pumping permits. It sounds like they will instead issue regular permits to those irrigators who were operating under temporary permits.

5. West Central Technical Service Area (WCTSA) Engineer Services – Wettstein reminded the board we utilize WCTSA for our engineering projects and that this is not a charge we pass along to the landowners. Faber will now serve as chair of this board.
6. District Capacity Funding – Discussion on our position for future lobbying efforts – This topic will have to be revisited. Chuck Rau, Area II President and Benton SWCD Board member expressed the desire to get a unified message to the legislature from districts on how we will lobby for future funding. Do we want to have taxing authority or depend on various sources of funding like we currently do.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Cost Share Contract Payment: MSC Faber/Hubner to approve. Motion passed.
 - a. State Cost Share Thomas Trettel \$15,442.35 Shoreline Restoration
2. Policy on 10% Discount for Trees – Discussion on applying the 10% discount if a landowner is buying trees from the district at Tree Open House and is in CRP. Wettstein explained in the past landowners were not allowed to get the 10% but now with FSA not being able to disclose who is in their programs or CRP it is harder to withhold this discount unless they tell us they are signed up. Also, if they do get the discount their final CRP payment is based on what they actually payed for trees. Discussion was to encourage more trees on the landscape and there are more programs out there that landowners could be involved in that we are not aware of. MSC Faber/Saehr to offer 10% across the board regardless of other program involvement. Motion passed.
3. Per Diem increase to \$125 from \$75 – MSC Faber/Saehr to increase to \$125 for meetings, committee assignment meetings and check signing. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL:

Wednesday	July 28 th	9:00 am – 3:00 pm	Water Plan Task Force Meeting / Local Work Group / Geo Atlas (Part B) Training	M C Gov. Center Commissioners Board Room
Friday	August 27 th	8:00 am	Next SWCD Board Meeting	Location?
Sunday	Sept. 19 th	10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Camp Ripley Open House	Camp Ripley
Tue – Wed	Sept. 21 st – 22 nd	All Day	Morrison County Water Festival	Camp Ripley

Meeting Adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, August 27, 2021
8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Supervisors Attending in Person: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber and Saehr

Commissioner: Winscher

Guest: Amy Kowalzek, Land Services Director

SWCD Staff: Hanson and Wettstein

BWSR: Chris Pence

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the July minutes MSC Faber/Scholl to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Scholl/Faber. Motion passed.

GUEST REPORT: Kowalzek shared with the board of an ongoing process Land Services and the county have been working on regarding agricultural zoning density. She explained that when the last Comprehensive Land Use Plan was updated it was highlighted the importance of agriculture in the county. Currently, 85% of the county has ag zoning and allows three dwellings per 40 acres. This level of density did not feel in line with the Comp Plan so they have approached each township to ask what they would like their density to be. There is still a lot of work to be done but ultimately the county has zoning jurisdiction over each township and in order to preserve agriculture in the county will need to address this issue.

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson shared they have 14 approved EQIP contracts for \$1.8 million dollars and 9 contracts for CSP totaling \$608,589. They also have a new SINew employee, Samantha Jansky in the office to help with administrative jobs.

COMMISSIONER REPORT: Winscher shared Pine Bluff is not moving to plat. Shamineau's annual meeting is coming up this weekend and their next public hearing with Todd County will be August 31. Winscher is starting to hear complaints on taxes due for residents of this lake. There was a public hearing to close the Lincoln railroad crossing and they will be closing it. Shared again the County Administrator has resigned so the commissioners will be working to find a replacement.

BWSR REPORT: Pence announced he can attend meetings in person again. Also reminded the board and staff that state cost share funds will be coming soon but for the first time will be requiring a work plan to be developed first. Funds for the buffer will also be available but we will see a 14% reduction from last year. He also announced funding for the planning phase of the One Watershed One Plan for the Mississippi River Brainerd has been awarded.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Pine Country Bank – District Checking Account – Signatures. Wettstein said the account is just waiting for signatures from the board and she will transfer money from Bank of the West after the next check signing.
2. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl reported they have a draft plan which is out for review.
3. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber said the next policy meeting is next month so there is nothing new to report.
4. Water Plan Task Force Meeting / Local Work Group & Geo Atlas (Part B) Training Held – Wettstein shared the meeting went well. Winscher and Brutscher attended the morning sessions where accomplishments of the last year were shared and priorities for the county were given to NRCS. The Geo Atlas training was in the afternoon and was something the district had postponed due to the pandemic but was also a successful training. Brutscher asked if staff could plan a tour of conservation practices. Wettstein said they will plan one for the spring.
5. Marshall Anez – Sourcewell Internship Completed – Anez completed the summer internship and helped mainly with the culvert inventory work. We can request 100% reimbursement from Sourcewell for the wages we paid Anez.
6. Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) Proposal Selected for Presentation – Wettstein and General Kruse will present on our Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape, ACUB Easement Phase 10 proposal. They are requesting \$8.54 million dollars for conservation easements.
7. Morrison County Water Festival – Cancelled – Wettstein shared that there were several reasons she decided to cancel this for the year. When staff reached out to schools, they were not able to commit to attending, also the Science Museum was not going to be able to present due to COVID restrictions and other volunteers who normally help with the event were not going to be able to present due to the venue being inside and not having sufficient social distancing.
8. RCPP Renewal Application Submitted – This application was submitted for over \$2 million dollars for EQIP, CSP and Healthy Forest Reserve practices cost share.
9. Awarded – National Association of Conservation Districts / Land O' Lakes Grant – Conservation Agronomist Capacity in Morrison County
10. Awarded – NRCS Direct Agreement – Forestry Capacity in Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape
11. Awarded – Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan – Planning Grant

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Cost Share Contract Payment: MSC Saehr/Scholl to approve payment. Motion passed.
State Cost Share Allendale Dairy \$2,500.00 WASCOB
2. National Wildlife Federation – Conservation Champions Collaboration. Wettstein shared that Hubner has offered to assist in a field day and attend training if awarded this grant. This will pair well with the Conservation Agronomy offering mentioned above.
3. Approval to Advertise for Hire – District Forester – Wettstein shared the job advertisement that was drafted with the board and asked Faber to serve on the hiring committee. MSC Saehr/Faber to approve posting the position. Motion passed.
4. Approval to Advertise for Hire – Conservation Agronomist- Wettstein also shared this job advertisement. MSC Saehr/Faber to approve posting the position. Motion passed.
5. Bid Opening for Oak Wilt Suppression Contractors – The board received two bids, one from Pioneer Tree and the other from the Davey Resource Group. MSC by Saehr/Faber to award Pioneer Tree the contract because it was the lowest bid, is a local contractor and because they had a successful working relationship with them last round. Motion passed.

6. Tree Discount Policy – Last month the board had given Wettstein the go ahead to revise the Tree Discount Policy to reflect the change that landowners who are participating in other programs, outside of the district cost-share program would qualify for the 10% discount. MSC by Faber/Saehr to approve the amended language of the policy. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL:

District Work Anniversary’s – Lance 14 years, LeaAnn 10 years, Mike 5 years, and Shannon 3 years
Pheasants Forever Collaboration – 2 years (Which means Amy had her 2-year anniversary with them)

Tuesday	August 31 st	6:00 pm	Todd County Public Hearing – Petition to Outlet from Lake Shamineau	Todd County Courthouse
Thursday	September 2 nd	8:30 am	LSOHC Presentation to Council	Plymouth, MN
Monday	September 13 th		Rum River 1W1P Draft Plan	Comments Due
Tuesday	September 14 th	9:00 am – 1:00 pm	West Central Area 2 Meeting	Westport, Rosholt Research Farm
Thursday	September 16 th	9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Long Prairie 1W1P Policy Meeting	Long Prairie
Sunday	Sept. 19 th	10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Camp Ripley Open House	Camp Ripley
Thursday	September 23 rd	5:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Rum River 1W1P Policy Meeting	Milaca
Friday	September 24 th	8:00 am	Next SWCD Board Meeting	Government Center
Thursday	September 30 th	Half Day	University of St. Thomas Field Day – Senior Capstone Projects	Various Locations

Meeting Adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, September 24, 2021

8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Supervisors Attending in Person: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber, Hubner and Saehr

Commissioner: Winscher

SWCD Staff: Hanson and Wettstein

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the August minutes MSC Saehr/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Saehr/Faber. Motion passed.

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson shared Morrison, Todd and Wadena had 2.6 million funded for EQIP and 1 million funded for 2021. Not all ag waste systems were funded because of high prices but all of the EQIP cropland, pastureland and forestland applications were approved for funding.

Ringwelski shared trees planted last year are really suffering this year. He has been busy with WCA ditch maintenance and pond cleanout requests and spot checks. Mike Becker and him also assisted the Pierz 6th grade class on a field day. A maple syrup operation was recently certified for the MN Ag Water Quality Program.

COMMISSIONER REPORT: Winscher shared there is a County Ditch 1 violation in Green Prairie Township. Wettstein shared with the board that a Restoration Order was issued for this same spot. The Highway Department will be looking at doing additional ditch maintenance projects out in Morrill and Lakin Townships. Morrison County is looking at a 2.07% levy. Steve Backowski will be retiring. Shamineau had their annual meeting and the petition to Todd County to outlet passed with conditions.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Pine Country Bank / Bank of the West Update – Two checks have been cut to the new account. Nouis is working on updating any automatic payments and deposits we have with Bank of the West to move to Pine Country.
2. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl attended a policy meeting last night where they reported 90% of the planning grant is spent, they will not be creating a ditch authority for the watershed and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has yet to attend a meeting.
3. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber shared they had a meeting last week where they talked issue prioritization and discussed implementation organization, if we were interested in moving towards a Joint Powers Agreement or Collaboration. This will be discussed at a later date as well.
4. Area II Meeting, September 14th, Westport – Brutscher attended and talked about the trails for nitrogen and kurnza happening there.
5. Amy Feldhege, Pheasants Forever Resignation – Wettstein shared that Feldhege's last day will be today and she starts with FSA in Little Falls on Monday. She has done a lot of great work with the district especially with our ACUB program and assisting staff in the office over the last four years that she was there. Wettstein passed around a collage for the board and staff to sign.

- Oak Wilt Update – Cass and Crow Wing Locations – Wettstein shared a map of where oak wilt has spread to in the northern counties. She has updated both the counties and will be working with Pioneer Tree to do treatment at these locations. Fortunately, most of the sites that were ground truthed were not oak wilt but a lot of oak trees have suffered from the drought this year.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Sub-Award with Forest Stewards Guild, NRCS Direct Agreement Funds – This agreement will be to deliver three main things, regional training, landowner learn and burn trainings and writing burn plans. The total contract will be for \$128,000 and is paid for through the NRCS grant we just received. MSC Faber/Scholl to approve signing. Motion passed.
- Contract with Pioneer Tree Service, Oak Wilt LCCMR Funds – This is a not to exceed contract for \$340,000 to deliver vibratory plowing, tree felling and destruction of spore producing oaks. MSC Hubner/Faber to approve signing. Motion passed.
- Partner Agreement with Centra Sota Cooperative, Little Falls – Wettstein asked the board to look at this so we can discuss it at the next meeting.
- Partner Agreement with Camp Ripley Environmental Office – This is to allow the District Forester to work out of the Camp Ripley Environmental office. MSC Scholl/Saehr to approve signing. Motion passed.
- Approval to Hire – District Forester – Fifteen applications were received and five were selected for interviews. Interview panel consisted of Faber, Wettstein, Hanson and Josh Pennington. The panel has ranked the candidates. MSC to offer to candidate one at Step 4. If candidate does not accept, offer to candidate two at Step 1. Motion passed.
- Approval to Hire – Conservation Agronomist - Four applications were received and three interviewed. Interview panel consisted of Hubner, Wettstein, Hanson and Amy Robak. The panel ranked the candidates. MSC Hubner/Faber to offer to candidate one at Step 1. If candidate does not accept, offer to candidate two at step 1. Motion passed.
- Pheasants Forever Contract – With Feldhege leaving Wettstein asked the board if we want to open up discussions with Pheasants Forever to re-fill this position. We have a three-year contract with the organization and are in year two of three. MSC Saehr/Faber to authorize discussions to work with PF to honor our contract and support a position in the office.

INFORMATIONAL:

Thursday	September 30 th	Half Day	University of St. Thomas Field Day – Senior Capstone Projects	Various Locations
Mon – Fri	October 18-22	All Day	Nitrate Testing Clinic	Government Center
Friday	October, 22	8:00 am	Next SWCD Board Meeting	Government Center
Tue – Thur	October 26-28	All Day	BWSR Academy	Virtual
Thursday	October 28 th	9:00-1:00	Mississippi Headwater Board Conf.	Chase on the Lake

Meeting Adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, October 29, 2021

8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Supervisors: Brutscher, Scholl, Hubner and Saehr

SWCD Staff: Hanson, Ringwelski and Wettstein

BWSR: Chris Pence

Guests: Amy Robak and Rebecca Schubert, Centra Sota Cooperative

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the September minutes MSC Saehr/Scholl to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Scholl/Saehr. Motion passed.

GUEST REPORT: Robak and Schubert introduced themselves to the group and shared their focus areas of nutrient management, cover crops and irrigation management and their roles at the cooperative. Robak also shared the Conservation Champions grant she received from the National Wildlife Federation and how there will be some money to plan and host a field day to promote cover crops. Wettstein, Hubner and Eric Smude will be attending trainings with Robak and planning the events. The board and the rest of the people in the room also introduced themselves, explaining their backgrounds and roles supporting the district.

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson shared they are working on CSP renewals from 2017, this year 165 CSP payments are being made and this fall they are wrapping up larger projects for the year. Also completed an 81-acre Wetland Reserve Easement this week.

Ringwelski shared trees planted last year are really suffering this year. He has been busy with WCA ditch maintenance and pond cleanout requests, buffer spot checks. He thanked the guest Amy Robak for recommending so many people to the MAWQCP program. Staff attended BWSR Academy this week.

BWSR REPORT: Pence reminded staff eLink Work Plans need to be submitted. He also shared the implementation dollar amounts were awarded for the Rum and the Long Prairie River Watersheds.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Draft is out for agency comment and public comment.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update –They held a Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting, the second during this process, to get local perspectives.
3. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update- A draft Memorandum of Agreement is being reviewed by the county attorneys. Once there are no additional changes Wettstein will bring this to the board to sign. It formalizes our role in this planning process.

4. Office Status – Covid Update – The office is still locked to the public, so we continue to meet landowners at their properties or outside. Staffing within the building is also being limited and FSA and NRCS staff are being encouraged to work from home because of the recent rise in cases in the county.
5. New Hires – Lew Noska, District Forester will be starting November 22nd and Kolby Beehler, Conservation Agronomist will be starting December 20th. Both are very thankful of the opportunity and excited to start.
6. Tree Availability for 2022 Annual Sale – Already last year we knew there would be shortages in availability of stock because the DNR does not have any trees to sell this year. We do have trees to sell because we are purchasing them from private nurseries, they cost more but because we did adjust prices last year we will be able to absorb this year's increases and not have to increase costs again. A copy of the tree order form was provided to the board and Wettstein shared Nous will be sending it out mid-November. We are encouraging landowners to purchase their trees early because we will not be able to get any more trees. We still plan on offering our annual "Open House" discount even though we cannot host the public in the building. If they drop of their order and payment on December 1-3, they will get the 10% discount.
7. Signed Agreements – Pioneer Tree Service, Camp Ripley and Forest Stewards Guild. All these agreements have now been executed.
8. Nitrate Testing Clinic Held – Chisholm prepared a summary of the weeklong clinic and maps of which parts of the county the tests came that showed test levels. There was a good turnout with 163 wells in Morrison County being tested. It was held at the Morrison County Government Center again because of our office being closed.
9. University of St. Thomas Field Day- September 30th the district hosted 12 students and their professor to learn about conservation efforts the SWCD and the USDA Service Center are involved in. They are in the process of developing the senior capstone projects so may be looking for additional input from staff or the board.
10. Paul Sachs Restoration Order Appealed – Green Prairie Township- This is now with BWSR for review. Sachs has also petitioned the ditch authority for outlet into County Ditch 1.
11. LeaAnn Nous, Administrative Assistant, Bookkeeper Resignation – Nous has been with the district for 10 years and she will be missed. She is responsible for many things with the district including the tree program, payroll, accounting, financial reporting and much of the organization that we all benefit from. Nous' last day will be December 15.
12. Hiring Committee Update – Faber and Hubner met with Wettstein to review the job description and posting details. The position was open for 2.5 weeks and closed on Wednesday of this week. Wettstein reviewed the applications, there were 14 that applied and six invited for interview. Submitted materials for five of these (one declined the interview) were shared with the board at the meeting. Those selected for interview are very experienced and good candidates. Interviews will be held November 4th.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Nous Replacement – Special Meeting or Hiring Committee Authorization to Hire- The discussion revolved around the process that would enable a new hire to overlap with LeaAnn before she leaves. MSC Saehr/Scholl to have the Personnel Committee conduct interviews, rank the candidates and for the board to hold a special meeting to authorize the hire. MSC Saehr/Scholl. Motion Passed. Wettstein will check with Bill's schedule and get back to the board about a meeting date.
2. Partner Agreement with Centra Sota Cooperative, Little Falls- The draft has been updated so a new copy was provided to the board. Wettstein explained she would like the board to review for signature at a future meeting.

3. Minnesota Association of SWCDs Resolution Voting- the resolutions were reviewed and voted on by the board. Wettstein will send this to the association.
4. National Association of Conservation District Annual Meeting – Invitation to Present- Wettstein has been invited to attend the National Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting in Orlando Florida to speak about our work we are doing here. The conference will be held February 12-16. MSC Hubner/Scholl for approval to attend. Motion passed.
5. November, December, January Board Meeting Dates – MSC Hubner/Scholl to have November 19th and December 17th as the meeting dates to accommodate the holidays. No meeting date set for January yet. Motion passed.
6. Draft Copy of the 2020 Audit- Wettstein shared the audit went very good again this year. MSC Scholl/Hubner to approve the audit. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL:

End of Month	November		Tree Order Forms Available	
Sun-Tues	December 12-14		MASWCD Annual Convention	Bloomington, MN
Wednesday	December 15	1:00	WCTSA Area 2 Joint Powers Board Meeting – (Assuming Area 2 Board meeting will proceed this at 9 am)	Virtual or Waite Park

Meeting Adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, November 19, 2021

8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Supervisors: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber and Saehr

SWCD Staff: Zapzalka, Ringwelski and Wettstein

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the October minutes or the Special Meeting held 11.8.21. MSC Saehr/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: Wettstein explained the new process of having automatic deposits for staff payroll so that separation of duties is maintained. The Bookkeeper will initiate the transaction in the Pine Country online banking system and prepare the General Voucher with all the other payables. The check signers will review the General Voucher (as they always have) and approve the amounts staff will be receiving by signing the voucher. Once reviewed and signed off, Wettstein will approve the transaction within the online banking system where it will sit pending until the release date. MSC to approve as presented by Faber/Scholl. Motion passed.

STAFF REPORTS: Zapzalka shared maps of the total Fiscal Year 2021 contracts and dollars for CSP and EQIP. Morrison County had 16 EQIP contracts for \$1,829,316 and 14 CSP contracts for \$608,589. Shared the EQIP deadline is today and right now they have 70 applications.

Ringwelski said WCA is winding down and the season is over for doing wetland boundaries. Still completing buffer law spot checks and working on re-plantings of tree cost share projects that failed this year. Also attended the RCPP Irrigator partnership meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl shared it has been quiet, the plan is in the 60-day review period.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Policy committee met yesterday, and they did discuss implementation structure. Faber went on to say it has been a good group to work with.
3. New Hire – Jennifer Knopik, Administrative Assistant / Bookkeeper – Wettstein shared Jennifer will start December 1. Nouis' last day is December 15th so they will be working together for almost two weeks.
4. University of St. Thomas – Survey Request – Follow-up from visit – Wettstein shared the students that visited have now put together a survey on attitudes towards adopting soil health practices that Wettstein will be sharing with a handful of producers.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan– Memorandum of Agreement Signatures and Policy Member Selection – Wettstein presented the MOA and explained it has been reviewed by all the county attorneys (Crow Wing, Aitkin, Morrison and Todd) and is ready for

signature. MSC Scholl/Faber to approve signing. MSC Faber/Scholl to select Brutscher to represent the board on the Policy Committee. Motion passed. Wettstein will go to the county board to ask for their commitment.

2. District Tree Sales Order Policy – Nouis copied the policy from last year but has updated dates. MSC Faber/Scholl to adopt. Motion passed.
3. Partner Agreement with CentraSota Cooperative, Little Falls. MSC Saeher/Scholl to table until next meeting. Motion passed.
4. Region 5 Development Commission (R5DC) and North Central Economic Development Association (NCEDA) annual award – SWCD’s in Region 5 (Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena) as the 2021 Exceptional Regional Partner. Faber will attend and represent the district.
5. Minnesota Association of SWCDs Annual Conference Attendance – Staff attending will be Wettstein and Becker as well as Hanson from NRCS.
6. Sourcewell Intern for Summer of 2022 – Request for Sourcewell Grant Funds – MSC Faber/Scholl to approve requesting funds. Motion passed.
7. Lance Chisholm Salary Step Increase. Wettstein recommended giving two step increases on January 1 after discussions with the Personnel Committee. MSC Faber/Scholl to approve. Motion passed.
8. LeaAnn Nouis Severance – Wettstein shared policy states employees leaving in good standing are eligible for 100% of vacation to be paid out and if more than 10 years of service to have sick time payed out at 25%. Wettstein asked for support from the board to pay Nouis out at 100% for both vacation and sick time due to her tremendous service to the district. MSC Faber/Scholl. It would be an approximate \$2,000 more to pay out the remaining 75%. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL:

End of Month	November		Tree Order Forms Available	
Thursday	November 18	9-12	Long Prairie 1W1P Policy Committee	Long Prairie City Hall
Thursday	December 9	5:00	R5DC / NCEDA Annual Awards Ceremony	Timbers in Staples
Sun-Tues	December 12-14		MASWCD Annual Convention	Bloomington, MN
Wednesday	December 15	1:00	WCTSA Area 2 Joint Powers Board Meeting – (Assuming Area 2 Board meeting will proceed this at 9 am)	Virtual or Waite Park
Monday	January 17 (MLK Day)	9:30	Winter Agronomy Meeting – Conservation Champions Event	Little Falls

Meeting Adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, November 8, 2021

2:30 p.m.

**Morrison SWCD Office
16776 Heron Road * Little Falls, MN 56345**

Virtual: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5251718576>

or

Teleconference: Call (312) 626-6799 / Meeting ID: 525 171 8576 #

Supervisors Attending In-Person: Brutscher

Supervisors Attending Virtually/Conference: Faber, Hubner and Saeher

SWCD Staff In-Person: Wettstein

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Authorization to Hire Administrative Assistant / Bookkeeper – Wettstein shared with the board that interviews were held on Thursday, November 4th by the Personnel Committee of Hubner, Faber and Wettstein. The recommendation to the board was based on the in-person interview rankings and a separate test taken by the applicants. The Personnel Committee was impressed with the interviews and all agreed as to the top ranked and the second ranked candidate. MSC Saeher/Brutscher to approve hiring ranked candidate one for the position and to authorize Wettstein to entertain salary negotiations within the Grade 6-7 pay range for this position. If further salary considerations need to be made beyond this, the Personnel Committee would be convened to whether to go up from there. Further board discussion around the second ranked candidate and the impression of the Personnel Committee about this candidate resulted in MSC Saeher/Faber to amend the motion to extend it to include that if candidate one did not ultimately accept for whatever reason the position could be offered to candidate two without calling another board meeting and that the same guidelines for salary negotiations would be used as discussed in the original motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:07 pm

Dale Scholl, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, December 17, 2021

8:00 a.m.

Morrison County Courthouse

Supervisors Present: Brutscher, Scholl, Faber, Hubner and Saehr

SECRETARY MINUTES: No changes to the November minutes. MSC Faber/Hubner to approve. Motion passed.

TREASURER REPORT: MSC to approve as presented by Saehr/Scholl. Motion passed.

GUEST REPORT: County Engineer Tony Hennen and County Administrator Matthew LeBlanc. Both introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds. Hennen shared they are looking at construction projects for 2022, including maintaining CD18. CD17 is almost completed with its maintenance. LeBlanc shared he has been meeting with county staff, department heads and commissioners. The Morrison SWCD board and staff welcomed both of them and are looking forward to working with them.

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson they are working on planning EQIP applications, they had 72 applications for the first sign up period. 13 2022 CSP renewals were approved for funding. The next General CSP 2022 sign up is February 4, 2022. Also let the board know there are two new RCPP funding opportunities out there, one for irrigation held by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the CRSL renewal.

Ringwelski shared he has been busy with buffer, WCA and trees. He sent out letters of non-compliance to folks that didn't meet the buffer law requirements so will look forward to hearing from them.

COMMISSIONER REPORT: Winscher shared Steve Messerschmidt will be retiring this summer. Also said they were proposing for the levy to be set at 2.07.

BWSR REPORT: Pence said there were \$12.7 million in Clean Water Funds approved. Funds were also approved for the Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan implementation phase totaling \$715,000.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. New staff introductions – Lew Noska, District Forester & Jennifer Knopik, Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper. Noska and Knopik introduced themselves to the board and shared they are looking forward to working with the district.
2. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl shared they are in the middle of the 60-day public comment period with the public hearing to be scheduled in January.
3. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber shared they did not make any decisions at the last Policy meeting but talked about implementation structure (Joint Powers Board vs. collaboration model) which will need to be decided at a later point by the board.

4. Tree Open House / Tree Sales Update- Knopik shared with the board that many of the trees have been sold out already and that she will be calling and cancelling orders because the district is unable to get additional trees from the private nurseries for many of the species.

5. MASWCD Annual Meeting – Wettstein, Becker and Hanson attended the annual meeting down in Bloomington on December 12-14. Wettstein hosted a session geared towards NRCS DC and SWCD District Managers. Wettstein asked the board to consider recommending an Outstanding Conservationist for 2022.

6. Region 5 Awards Banquet – Faber accepted an award which was presented to the SWCDs of Region 5 (Cass, Crow Wing, Todd, Morrison and Wadena) for being the 2021 Exceptional Regional Partner. The districts have been working with Region 5 during the 1W1P processes and most recently the Long Prairie 1W1P has contracted Tad Erickson from Region 5 to serve as the meeting facilitator.

7. Conservation Champions Outreach – Wettstein shared the Conservation Champion group of which her and Hubner are a part of will be holding a winter meeting on January 17th. Hubner will be speaking about his use of cover crops and his tillage.

8. Pheasants Forever Position – Hanson and Wettstein sat in during the interviews for this position. Hopefully we will have someone in the position just after the new year.

9. Oak Wilt – Wettstein shared that Pioneer Tree has been out vibratory plowing and removing trees with landowners who were invited to participate in the program. The sites included ones in Cass County as well as a majority of those infected north of Highway 27.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Partner Agreement with Centra Sota Cooperative, Little Falls. MSC Saehr/Scholl to table this until January 28th. Wettstein will get a revised draft copy to the board by January 7th with recommendations back to her for inclusion by January 14th. Motion passed.
2. Sourcewell Intern for Summer of 2022 – Permission to post position. MSC Saehr/Faber. Motion passed.
3. Approve State Cost Share Contracts. MSC Hubner/Faber to approve. Motion passed.
 - a. Melissa Donek \$420.00 Field Windbreak – Replacements
 - b. Mark Januschka \$700.00 Field Windbreak – Replacements
 - c. Paul Kuske \$1,766.31 Reforestation - Replacements
4. January Meeting Date – MSC by Saehr/Scholl to hold a meeting on January 28th at 8 am and set the meeting date to the fourth Friday of the month in 2022. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL:

Wednesday	December 15	1:00	WCTSA Area 2 Joint Powers Board Meeting – (Assuming Area 2 Board meeting will proceed this at 9 am)	Virtual or Waite Park
Monday	December 20		Kolby Beehler, Conservation Agronomist first day	
Monday	January 17 (MLK Day)	9:30	Winter Agronomy Meeting – Conservation Champions Event	Little Falls
Thursday	January 20 th	9:00-12:00	Long Prairie Watershed 1W1P Policy Meeting	Long Prairie, TBD
	January 1 – January 31		Campaign Finance Board	File this during the dates

Meeting Adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Dale Scholl, Secretary