



Minutes from the December 20, 2021, Board Meeting

The regular monthly board meeting of the Wadena Soil and Water Conservation District was held on Monday, October 18, 2021, at 7:30 a.m. in person at the Sheriff's Building at the fairgrounds (or via Zoom). A notice of the meeting was posted on the door of the SWCD Office Location (4 Alfred Street NE) and explained how the public was able to participate in the meeting if not attending in person.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ken Berg at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Chair: Ken Berg
Vice Chair: Bruce Juntunen
Treasurer: Tom Schulz
Secretary: Nancy Benson
Public Relations: Brett Dailey

Others Present:

County Commissioner: Murlyn Kreklau
District Manager: Darren Newville
Ass't District Manager: Anne Oldakowski
NRCS DC: Josh Hanson
Admin Secretary: Chantal Tougas
Admin, Ed, & Outreach Asst: Kristi Rorah
Rockwood Twp Clerk: Reuben Raatikka
Rockwood Twp Supervisor: Gary Burgau
BWSR Conservationist: Chris Pence (Zoom)
District Technician: Mitchell Janson
Watershed Coordinator: Ben Underhill (Zoom)

Adopt Agenda: Motion made by Bruce Juntunen, seconded by Brett Dailey to adopt the agenda. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Approve Board Meeting Minutes from previous month: Motion made by Nancy Benson, seconded by Tom Schulz to approve the last month's Board Meeting Minutes. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Motion made by Tom Schulz, seconded by Bruce Juntunen to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Opposed: none, motion carried.

Bills Paid and Bills Payable: Motion made by Brett Dailey, seconded by Tom Schulz to approve the Bills Paid and Bills Payable as presented. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Cost Share:

- 20-06; Redeemer Lutheran Church; authorization to approve payment for an unused well sealing with a total cost estimate of \$2,277.50 and cost sharing not to exceed \$500.00 or 50% whichever is less in Blueberry Twp, Section 27. Motion made by Bruce Juntunen, seconded by Nancy Benson to approve payment. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

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District Manager's Report: as written and reported by Darren Newville.

- Reminder letter received from the MN Campaign Finance Board, public officials (board members) need to submit campaign finance and public disclosure information

District Conservationist's Report: as written and presented by Josh Hanson

- 20 EQIP applications received for 2022
- 27 CSP applications received for 2022, sign up deadline for the first signup is Feb. 4, 2022.
- Ivan has been certifying practices that were completed this fall.
- There is going to be prescribed burn training late winter/early spring for staff and the general public.
- Thanked the SWCD board for supporting RCPP that is bringing in additional funding for irrigation.

County Commissioner's Report:

- Attended AMC environmental policy meeting, can send out information from that meeting upon request.
- 2022 budget has been accepted.
- County contracts have not been settled yet, still working on it.

Other Agency Reports: BWSR report by Chris Pence

- Watershed funding authorized, can apply for 2023 funds July 1 for both the Redeye and Otter Tail 1W1P

Forestry Update: presented by Tom Schulz

- Forestry meeting on November 18, with 3 legislators in attendance.
- Discussed what Covid funding may mean for forestry.
- Discussed resolutions that passed at the convention.

Water Plan Update: presented by Anne Oldakowski

- Redeye funds available for water quality projects
- Will have presentations at both the cover crop and irrigation meetings for the Redeye 1W1P funds.
- Ben is working on 10 key element plan for the 319 grant and Anne is working on surface water assessment grant.

TSA 8 Report: presented by Tom Schulz

- personnel committee met regarding staffing issues, recommending restructuring engineering position
- engineering position to be eliminated after November 2022
- staff will be required to gain job approval authority

Meetings/Trainings:

- irrigations and cover crop meetings coming up

**Mitchell Janson arrived 10:50 a.m.*

Rockwood Township – Leader dam:

- Darren gave overview of issue: property owners contacted the SWCD in 2018 about maintaining a dike on their property, aerial photos dating back to 1991 were reviewed and showed an existing structure,

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additional work may have been done in the early 2000s but no records, under WCA there is a 7 year limit to enforcement of previously installed structures, current application was to make improvements to the structure - decision to approve maintenance required a culvert be put in to minimize impact on township road and neighboring lands, discussed installing spillway with landowner as well

- Authority of SWCD is solely under WCA
- When a decision is made under WCA there is a notice of decision that must be sent out. The Township may request to receive all notices of decisions.
- Rockwood Twp Clerk Reuben Raatikka formally requested any future notices be sent to the township.
- Discussion was held regarding the effects (of the dam on the Leader property) on other property owners and what recourse is available to the Township to address the issue.

**Reuben Raatikka and Gary Burgau left the meeting 11:37 a.m.*

2022 Board Meeting Schedule: handed out, see attached

2022 Staffing/Budget/EOT contract:

- Personnel committee met and approved 3% cost of living increase
- Discussed and recommended hiring of new staff person to work in the Wadena office
- Motion to approve hiring new technician made by Tom Schulz, seconded by Brett Dailey. Opposed: None. Motion carried.
- Motion made to approve amended budget made by Brett Dailey, seconded by Bruce Juntunen. Opposed: None. Motion carried.
- Motion made by Nancy Benson to approve extending the staffing contract with East Otter Tail SWCD, seconded by Tom Schulz. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Public Comments: Tom Schulz: Nancy Benson has been asked if she'd be willing to apply for an appointment to the BWSR board. Recommending that the SWCD board write a letter of support for Nancy if she chooses to apply

Meeting Adjourned: Meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.