MEETING MINUTES

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thursday, March 4, 2010

5:30 p.m.

4100 220th Street, Suite 102
Farmington, Minnesota

SWCD Members Present:
Scott Holm, Chair
Chris Nielsen, Vice-Chair
Scott Norstad, Secretary
Joe Meyers, Treasurer
Kevin Chamberlain, Public Relations

SWCD Staff Present:
Brian Watson, Staff
Lana Rotty, Staff

Others Present:
Michelle Wohler, NRCS

1. Call to Order
Chair Holm called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. A quorum was present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance
Chair Holm led the Board of Supervisors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Agenda
   10.031 Motion by Meyers, second by Chamberlain to approve the agenda as presented. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

4. Audience (comments on items not on the agenda)
   There were no comments from the audience.

5. Secretary’s Report
   1. February 4, 2010 Board Meeting Minutes
      10.032 Motion by Norstad, second by Meyers to approve the February 4, 2010 Board Meeting Minutes as presented. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

6. Treasurer’s Report
   1. March 4, 2010 Accounts Payable
      10.033 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to approve the March 4, 2010 Accounts Payable. All members saying aye. Motion carried.
2. February 28, 2010 Financial Reports

10.034 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to approve the February 28, 2010 Financial Reports; subject to audit. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

7. Rural Lands Committee

1. State cost Share Grant Program

a. Bonnie Wilmar Final Payment (08-SCS-06nb)

Nielsen stated that Bonnie Wilmar has completed the native prairie restoration project. The project is located in Section 21 Vermillion Township, Vermillion River watershed. The contract was approved at the October 29, 2009 Board meeting at 50% cost share not to exceed $3,150 based on cost estimate of $11,964.

10.035 Motion by Nielsen, second by Meyers to approve Bonnie Wilmar final payment for native prairie restoration in Vermillion Township, Vermillion River watershed. Final project cost eligible for program funding is $11,964. Final payment of $3,150 from fiscal year 2008 native buffer state cost share grant and $787.50 for technical assistance. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

b. FY 2010 Technical Assistance Option

Nielsen stated that at the August 2009 Board meeting the grant agreement with BWSR for fiscal year 2010 funding was executed. This included a base grant allocation of $21,139, which is down 45% from the previous year. BWSR provided subsequent guidance indicating that Districts could apply all of these funds for technical assistance provided certain requirements are met. The Rural Lands Committee is recommending that up to $21,139 of fiscal year 2010 state cost share base grant funds be used for technical assistance.

10.036 Motion by Nielsen, second by Meyers to approve allocating up to $21,139 of fiscal year 2010 state cost share base grant for technical assistance. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

2. Incentive Payment Practice Program Policy

Nielsen stated that revisions to our existing Incentive Payment Practice Program policies are proposed to best leverage funding from USDA-NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency 319 Grant, the North Cannon River WMO Clean Water Funds, and annual work plans with the Vermillion River WMO and North Cannon River WMO. The Rural Lands Committee is recommending changes to the existing Incentive Payment Practice Program policy percentage rates to include adjusting maximum cost share percentage as well as adding Wetland Restorations as an eligible practice.

10.037 Motion by Nielsen, second by Meyers to approve the Incentive Payment Practice Program Policy as presented. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

3. Rural Preserves Property Tax Program Policy

Nielsen stated that under 2009 legislation, SWCDs are to consider policy for the Rural Preserves Property Tax Program (RPPTP) which was presented by the County Assessor’s Office last month. The Rural Lands Committee is recommending adoption of BWSR template as the Conservation Management Plan document, identifying staff Brad Becker and Todd Matzke as individual plan writers as well as any outside professionals that provide appropriate credentials and wish to be on a vendor list, and appoint Brian Watson as the delegated authority to approve Conservation Management Plan.

10.038 Motion by Nielsen, second by Meyers to approve the Rural Preserves Property Tax Program Policy Payment Practice Program Policy as presented. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

4. Adoption of Fee For Service Schedule

Nielsen stated that in light of the Rural Preserves Property Tax Program, staff has considered having one policy that provides a fee structure for certain services. This fee structure is necessary to offset staff cost associated with workload. It is difficult to determine the number of requests for these services as they are all dependent on economy, landowner interest in programs, etc. However, based on anticipated annual workload associated with these services, less than $5,000 of revenue is anticipated annually. The committee is recommending approval of fee schedule.

10.039 Motion by Nielsen, second by Meyers to adopt the Fee for Service Schedule as presented. All members saying aye. Motion carried.
5. Met Council Cannon River WOMP Grant Agreement

Nielsen stated that we have received a grant agreement from Met Council to provide staff services under their Watershed Outlet Monitoring Program (WOMP) on the Cannon River in Welch. The grant agreement is for the period of January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2011 and includes a maximum reimbursement amount of $8,000. Staff is recommending approval of grant agreement.

10.040 Motion by Nielsen, second by Meyers to approve the Met Council Cannon River Watershed Outlet Monitoring Grant Agreement at a total not to exceed $8,000. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

8. Committee of the Whole

1. Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Agreement for Services

Holm stated that staff has been working with Dakota County staff to develop an annual work plan and budget with the Vermillion River Watershed JPO. The work plan was presented at the watersheds’ Joint Powers Board on February 25 and approved. The proposed work plan includes an amount not to exceed $472,000 for which approximately $200,000 is for capital improvement projects.

10.041 Motion by Nielsen, second by Norstad to approve the 2010 work plan for services with the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization for technical and administrative assistance not to exceed $472,000. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

2. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service 2010 Contribution Agreement

Watson stated that staff has worked with the NRCS to develop the 2010 contribution agreement. The deliverables include practice implementation under the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) including irrigation checks, manure management plans, and conducting status reviews for the annual contracts. The current plan of work provides compensation not to exceed $6,035.

10.042 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Meyers to approve the 2010 NRCS Contribution Agreement at a total not to exceed $6,035. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

3. Adoption of 2009 Annual Report and 2010 Annual Plan

Holm stated that the SWCD is required to have our annual report and annual plan to BWSR by March 15. Last year we combined these two documents into one. We use this Annual Report/Annual Plan to fulfill our reporting requirements under our 5-year joint powers agreement with Dakota County as well. The final document will be posted on our web site to meet legislative requirements.

10.043 Motion by Meyers, second by Nielsen to approve the 2009 Annual Report and 2010 Annual Plan and to submit the document to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

9. Interagency Announcements and Reports

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Michelle Wohlers provided the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) report. She stated that they are currently working on 57 applications for Environmental Quality Incentive Program. Several irrigation upgrades as well as high tunnels. Wohlers added that they have nine approved applicants for a five year contract in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). She further stated that there will be an additional sign up period for that program in May.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

There was no Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Report presented.

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Watson provided the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) report. He distributed the latest legislative update. He summarized Day at the Capitol events and overall felt contacts went well. Holm concurred that the day went well, the contacts were effective, enjoyed the discussions and networking. Norstad stated that he made some contacts in the afternoon.

Watson stated that the BWSR budget will be seeing cuts in several areas, including WCA enforcement and native buffer grants. He stated that general service grants are not proposed to be cut at this time.
National Association of Conservation Districts
There was no National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) report presented.

Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board
Holm provided the Metropolitan Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board (MJPB) report. Holm stated that the committee met and revised the bylaws. Watson received a copy of the revised bylaws and will forward them to the Board of Supervisors with the meeting informational packet.

Watson added that Dakota SWCD established 100 hours to be used for education toward the Landscape Restoration Program (LRP). At this time, the LRP will not commit to all of the hours we requested for education and as a result our staff will have to shift duties. Watson added that regarding the Clean Water Funding allocation, we have not seen any agreement or paperwork. Holm stated that he was asked to be part of the interview committee for a new hire at Anoka Conservation District.

Watson asked the Supervisors if there was interest in assisting assist with registration costs and staffing of a booth at the Living Expo booth; at this time staff and Supervisors are not able to commit.

Dakota County
There was no Dakota County report provided

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization
Chamberlain provided the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRW JPO) report. He stated that the planning Commission met on February 10. There was discussion and approval regarding the JPO creating and maintaining their own website. Jim Davidson of Dakota SWCD gave a presentation on the 319 Stream Cooling Demonstration Project. Jill Trescott, Dakota County Water Resources, also gave an update on winter agricultural events.

Watson added that a 2009 Annual Report would be provided to the Planning Commission and Joint Powers Board meetings in March.

North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization
There was no North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization report provided.

Other Watershed Management Authorities
Nielsen stated that he attended the Cannon River Watershed Partnership meeting. The discussed financial business, elected new Board Members, and there was also a presentation covering the watershed over the last twenty years.

Upcoming Meetings and Events
The upcoming events were reviewed. Watson reminded the Supervisors that Friday, March 12th is the Metropolitan Association of Conservation Districts Area 4 meeting. The Township Officers Meeting is scheduled for March 13 at the Extension and Convention Center at 8:30 a.m. The VRWJPB meeting will be held on March 18, one week earlier than usual.

District Managers Report
Watson stated that all other items have been previously addressed. However, Watson added that by March 12 the Metropolitan Association of Conservation Districts dues need to be paid.

10.044 Motion by Chamberlain, second by Meyers to approve payment of Metropolitan Association of Conservation Districts Dues at $225. All members saying aye. Motion carried.

10. Adjourn
10.045 Motion by Nielsen, second by Chamberlain to adjourn the meeting. All members saying aye. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Norstad, Secretary