

MINUTES

Board of Supervisors Meeting

December 21, 2020

Grant Soil & Water Conservation District

712 Industrial Park Blvd., Elbow Lake, MN 56531

Chairman Larson called the meeting to order at 9:07 am

Members present:

Randy Larson, Chairman

Paul Groneberg, Vice-Chairman

Larry Stephens, Member

Odell Christenson, Treasurer (via Zoom)

Don Dally, Personnel Director (via Zoom)

Others present: Brent Gulbrandson, Jared House, and Nicole Sumstad (Grant SWCD) and Jon Nelson (New Board Elect).

Secretary Report: Motion was made by Groneberg, seconded by Stephens to approve the regular board meeting minutes of the November 25, 2020, meeting. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Treasurers Report: Groneberg made the motion with Stephens seconded to approve a Quarterly CD schedule with an opening amount of \$100,000.00 beginning 12/31/2020. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None.

Motion was made by Dally to approve the Treasurer's report. Seconded by Christenson. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Correspondence

1. **MASWCD Annual Convention:** Groneberg reported that the Annual convention was good but enjoyed it more when in person. Everyone agreed that the networking was missed.
2. **Soil Management Summit:** Groneberg and Larson reported that there was a lot of very beneficial information shared, especially for growers, and glad that they attended.

New Business

1. **Pomme de Terre Report:** Groneberg reported that with the retirement of Keith Swanson the new commissioners will need to decide on a replacement. There possibly may be a gap in payments due to unresolved cash flow issues. House added the 1W1P grant of \$717,428.00, we have been granted \$123,998 to start projects in the Christina/Pelican lakes area for the 1st biennium. The 2nd biennium will then concentrate on the Pomme de Terre Lakes area.
2. **Bois de Sioux/Mustinka report:** Larson reported that the final plan has been submitted to members of LGU boards for approval. Following approval, the final plan will be submitted to BWSR. Upon BWRS approval then the final plan can then be adopted by members of the LGU boards. The deadline for all this to happen is March 2021.
3. **Chippewa Report:** Dally updated that they are working with MCIT for the risk assessment on the Joint Power Board (the who and how) of workings. The 319 updated they are working one project in Douglas county right now. And they are also looking at a new contact for Grant county which they are leaning towards Brent Gulbrandson
4. **2019 Pay Equity Report:** House reported the MN Management and Budget contacted the office on the delinquency of the 2019 Pay Equity Report that was due 1/31/2020. House completed the report and needs approval from board to submit. Stephens made a motion to approve the 2019 Pay Equity Report for submission. Groneberg seconded. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None. Motion carried.
5. **Arsenic Grant:** House reported that New Horizon Public Health had been awarded a grant for the people in Grant, Traverse, and Stevens to test their drinking water for arsenic levels. If the water tests high they then can apply for a grant to have a RO system installed upon meeting certain criteria: veterans, elderly, and low-income. This is a pilot program but the planning stages are moving along.
6. **CRP/CCRP:** Gulbrandson reminds that the general signup is from January 4 – February 12 and they are for 10-15-year contracts and that the annual rental rates increased about \$10 per acre. Gulbrandson has been reviewing the 85-90 contracts that are up for renewal as call have been coming in since a general letter went out to the landowners.
7. **NRCS update:** Gulbrandson states that they are continue working on the CSP payments.
8. **Rain Barrel update:** House and Sumstad reported that we have heard back from Forest City Models & Patterns and the cost of the barrel went up slightly due to COVID impacts. They will be \$50.01 per barrel, so we will charge \$55.00, including the sales tax. We will be placing an order for 312 (which will come on pallets for unloading ease) in the middle of January for March delivery. House reached out to the Grant County Highway Dept and they agreed to stored them for us at no charge for a couple of weeks. Sumstad will be contacting the cities in Grant county

to update and see if they still will honor cost share options. The plan is to roll out new advertisement early January.

- 9. Buffer Letter Approval:** House addressed the issue with Bois de Sioux wanting us to have a timeline on the issues with buffer strips. Bois de Sioux is assuming that the SWCD's are not pulling their weight and want to see action. House had composed a letter that we can send out to landowners with maps, approximately 38, that will include a respond by date.

Groneberg made motion to approve the buffer letter and send to landowners with Stephens seconded. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

- 10. Schneeberger Buffer Extension Approval:** House reported that he went out to survey the buffer that was supposed to be in place by December 31, 2020. Schneeberger's were under the impression that they could let weeds grow to create a buffer. House is suggesting that we sign an extension agreement for a year to further assist them with this.

Stephens made the motion seconded by Christenson to extend the Schneeberger Buffer agreement for one year, December 31, 2020. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

- 11. Personnel review/Salary/Benefits Approval:** Dally had done reviews on Gulbrandson and House and reported that everything was great. House reviewed Sumstad and stated the same. Stephens made a motion to continue with Blue Cross Blue Shield for District employees for health insurance and to approve the salary negotiations that were presented. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

House also added that the PF position has been put on hold due to the uncertainties around COVID.

Stephens made the motion to pay the bills for November 26th thru December 21st, 2020. Groneberg seconded. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Gulbrandson, along with House and Sumstad, gave a special thank you to Christenson for his 26 years of service and Dally for his 10 years. The District will truly miss the dedication and leadership these have two have shown over the years. Larson, Groneberg, and Stephens agreed.

Dally made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:15am with Christenson seconded. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Stephens, Christenson, and Dally. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

***January Board Meeting will be held on Thursday January 28th, 2021, at 9:00 am.**