

MINUTES
Board of Supervisors Meeting
July 23rd, 2020
Grant Soil & Water Conservation District
712 Industrial Park Blvd, Elbow Lake, MN 56531

Chairman Larson called the meeting to order at 8:05am. Via tele-conference.

Members Present: Randy Larson, Chairman
Paul Groneberg, Vice-Chairman
Don Dally, Personnel Director
Larry Stephens, Member

Members Absent: Odell Christenson, Treasurer

Others Present: Brent Gulbrandson, Jared House, Grant SWCD; Lynda Vavra, BdSioux WD (left at 8:45a.m.)

May Secretary's Report: Motion was made by Groneberg, seconded by Dally to approve the May 28th meeting minutes. Affirmative: Groneberg, Dally, Stephens, and Larson. Opposed: None. Motion Carried.

June Secretary's Report: Motion was made by Stephens, seconded by Dally to approve the June 25th meeting minutes. Affirmative: Groneberg, Dally, Stephens, and Larson. Opposed: None. Motion Carried.

Treasurer's Report: Motion was made by Dally, seconded by Stephens to approve the treasurers' report as read. Affirmative: Groneberg, Dally, Stephens, and Larson. Opposed: None. Motion Carried.

New Business:

- 1. Buffer Update (8:15 a.m.)** – John Kapphahn and Scott Gillespie asked to discuss Grant County Buffers prior to the board meeting. Unfortunately, neither were able to attend the meeting. Lynda Vavra told the board that the Bois de Sioux Watershed District wants to work with landowners to get into compliance with the buffer law. House went through the history of the Grant County Buffer Committee and described in detail how the buffer law has been set-up within the county. The SWCD board assured Lynda Vavra that our intentions are to work with the Watershed District to effectively assist landowners to come into compliance with the buffer law. Larson told Vavra that Scott and John are more than welcome to attend our August meeting if they so choose.

Old Business:

1. Pomme de Terre Report – Groneberg described that the PdTRA is meeting with the Northern BWSR Committee and seeking a recommendation to approve the draft Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. After the committee approves the plan it will go on to the BWSR board for approval. House mentioned that after BWSR approval the SWCD board will have to officially adopt the plan. Groneberg also mentioned that the PdT Coordinator will start working remotely on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Additional funding is being requested by partnering counties to cover coordinator salary and to allow the association to better cash flow projects.

2. Bois de Sioux Report – House told the board that the Steering Committee is planning on having a completed CWMP plan draft by July 27th. There will be a meeting on July 31st to review the plan and allow local boards to ask questions. House mentioned that this group of LGUs still need to come up with a plan to govern the spending of watershed based funding.

3. Chippewa Report (Amended agenda) – House told the board that the Steering Committee is planning on having a completed CWMP plan draft by July 27th. There will be a meeting on July 31st to review the plan and allow local boards to ask questions. House mentioned that this group of LGUs still need to come up with a plan to govern the spending of watershed based funding.

3. CREP/CRP Update – Gulbrandson informed the board that a CREP easement he has been working on has been stalled at the abstract company. He has been working with the landowner, abstract company, and the state to get this project finalized and get the landowner paid. Gulbrandson also mentioned that he is getting close to completing the 100 CRP contracts he has been working on.

4. 2019 Audit – Peterson Company – House told the board that he has been providing 2019 financial information with Peterson Company for the 2019 fiscal year. House stated that he has had to work additional hours to compile the requested information and has taken compensation in the form of comp time.

5. Office Update –

a. Covid-19 & USDA Phases – House told the board that we are still following USDA guidelines for covid-19. This has resulted in the office shutting down 3 times in the last few months. Employees have been able to work from home during office closures. However, this has increasingly been frustrating for local residents trying to reach office staff. All phone calls are being forwarded to personal cell phones to try and achieve better customer relations.

b. Dual Office Management – House and Gulbrandson asked to table this discussion until the next meeting.

c. Office Coordination – The board closed the meeting to discuss personnel items at 9:16 a.m. in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 13D.05, subd. 2. The board re-opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

House presented the board with Mary Jo Knutson’s resignation letter. The letter states that Mary Jo Knutson will be retiring on September 2nd, 2020. Motion was made by Dally, second by Groneberg to accept Mary Jo Knutson’s resignation from her Office Coordinator position on September 2nd, 2020. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Dally, and Stephens. Opposed None. Motion Carried.

House asked the board to approve him as staff contact for the office’s USABLE life insurance. Motion was made by Stephens, second by Dally to approve Jared House as authorized contact for the staff’s USABLE Life Insurance Policy. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Dally, and Stephens. Opposed None. Motion Carried.

Motion was made by Groneberg, second by Stephens to pay the June 26th – July 17th bills - #13592 - #13607 and all debit card withdrawals as presented. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Dally, and Stephens. Opposed None. Motion Carried.

Motion was made by Dally, seconded by Stephens to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m. Affirmative: Larson, Groneberg, Dally, and Stephens. Opposed: None. Motion Carried. Meeting Adjourned.

August Board Meeting will be Thursday, August 27th at 8:00 a.m.