



**MINNESOTA
SOIL and WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

***Minutes of the March 14, 2019 Board Meeting
Martin Soil and Water Conservation District
Fairmont, Minnesota***

**Meeting called to order by Cowing at 9:00 am
The Pledge of Allegiance**

Members present: Larry Cowing – Chair, Tyler Ask – member, Judy Beckman – member, and Clair Schmidt, Jr. – member

Absent: Linda Meschke – Vice Chair

Others present: Steve Flohrs – County Commissioner Liaison, Ashley Brenke – District Manager, Greg Johanson – Farm Bill Technician, Jill Sackett Eberhart – BWSR Board Conservationist, Betsy Norland – District Conservationist, Rich Perrine – Water Plan/WCA Technician, and Dustin Benes – Technician

Changes or Additions to Agenda

New Business

Letters of Recommendation policy

A motion was made by Beckman to approve the additions to the agenda, second by Ask. Motion carried unanimously.

Secretary's Report

A motion was made by Ask to approve the February 14, 2019 Secretary's Report, second by Beckman. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

A motion was made by Ask to approve the Treasurer's Report, second by Beckman. Motion carried unanimously.

Additional Bills to Pay

Reimbursement to Benes for MN River Basin Water Storage Forum registration for two staff, \$80. A motion was made by Beckman to approve payment for reimbursement, second by Ask. Motion carried unanimously.

Cost-Share Programs

State Cost-Share

Completed Projects

CS #14-18 Truesdell Family Farm
Township: Lake Belt

Project: Well Sealing
Project Bid Amount: \$1,275.00
Cost Share Requested: \$ 637.00
Eligible Project Cost: \$1,207.50
Cost Share Due: \$ 603.00
Slippage: \$ 34.00

A motion was made by Schmidt to approve payment for CS #14-18, second by Beckman. Motion carried unanimously.

Capacity – Clean Water Funds

New Project

CF #1-19 North Star Country Farms
Township: Waverly
Project: Cover Crops, same field 80 Ac. multi species 3 yr.
Project Bid Amount: \$14,700.00
Cost Share Requested: \$14,700.00

A motion was made by Ask to encumber \$14,700.00 for CF #1-19, second by Schmidt. Motion carried unanimously.

CF #2-19 Luke Olson
Township: Cedar
Project: Cover Crops, same field 80 Ac. multi species 3 yr.
Project Bid Amount: \$14,700.00
Cost Share Requested: \$14,700.00

A motion was made by Beckman to encumber \$14,700.00 for CF #2-19, second by Schmidt. Motion carried unanimously.

Grant Programs

Well Sealing Grant agreement

We received a \$10,000.00 well sealing competitive grant for sealing abandoned wells.

A motion was made by Beckman to approve the grant agreement, second by Ask. Motion carried unanimously.

Farm Bill Technician

A motion was made by Ask to submit the Statement of Interest for the Farm Bill Technician, second by Schmidt. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

MASWCD 2019 Legislative Days

Brenke and Johanson attended legislative days, meeting with Representative Gunther and Senator Rosen. Priority topics are District levy authority and Capacity funding.

New Business

Blue Earth Watershed Elected Officials meeting

Martin SWCD will be hosting a Blue Earth watershed elected officials meeting on March 28 at the Knights of Columbus Hall from 3-7 pm.

2019 Plant Grower Contract

Gerald Lorenz is interested in growing local ecotype native plants in 2019. The contract is for \$7,500.00 to grow 3,000 natives.

A motion was made by Schmidt to approve the contract, second by Ask. Motion carried unanimously.

Walk-in-Access (WIA) Program Agreement

Application enrollment and reenrollment are currently open. The DNR has a WIA program agreement for SWCD's to work with landowners.

A motion was made by Ask to approve the WIA program agreement, second by Beckman. Motion carried unanimously.

Prairie Ecology Bus/AIS

The prairie ecology bus presented for three days at Fairmont and MCW Schools. A total of 202 7th grade students were educated about AIS. The Prairie Ecology Bus can be setup at the Martin County Fair for two days for \$1,200.00, August 16-17 from 1-7 pm.

Wildlife Forever is coordinating with counties to be stakeholders for KARE 11 Cabin Cast outreach and education on AIS. The commercials air on KARE 11 news and MN Bound Outdoor program.

A motion was made by Beckman to sponsor the Prairie Ecology Bus at the Martin County Fair, second by Schmidt. Motion carried unanimously

A motion was made by Schmidt to approve \$4,000.00 for the KARE 11 outreach, second by Beckman. Motion carried unanimously.

Recommendation letters

A motion was made by Ask to support writing recommendation letters for deserving interns, second by Beckman. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Special Meetings

Soil Health Summit – Cowing

Cowing attended the summit, lots of good information.

One Watershed One Plan – Ask

The next Watonwan One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee meeting will be on March 20.

County Commissioner Report – Flohrs

Commissioners are working to receive state funding for the Courthouse Dome and the Justice Center. County drainage systems are being worked on.

District Conservationist Report – Norland

See handout.

Local Work Group meeting at 10:30 today.

District Manager and Staff Reports – Brenke/Staff

Staff quarterly reports were reviewed, see handouts.

Water Plan Advisory Committee – Beckman

The next water plan meeting will be held on March 19 at the Fairmont Water Treatment Plant.

SCTSA – Schmidt

The next SCTSA meeting is March 19, 2019.

GBERBA – Ask

The last meeting was a Policy/Technical meeting March 8. Talked about GBERBA grants ending in 2019. Discussed SWCD's funding and levy authority.

GBERBA has applied for a 319 grant.

BWSR – Sackett Eberhart

Gave updates; the District's Dutch Creek work plan is submitted, well sealing work plan is submitted, and NRBG grants are finalized.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Ask to adjourn the meeting, second by Schmidt. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:23 am.

Respectfully submitted,

April 11, 2019 Date Approved Austin Benes Secretary-Treasurer

Martin Soil & Water Conservation District
Treasurer's Financial Report
3/31/2019

A. Balance on Hand February 28, 2019	\$ 420,003.12
Total Receipts ending 3/31/19	\$ 43,889.81
Less Total Expenditures ending 3/31/19	\$ (43,950.38)
	<u>\$ 419,942.55</u>

B. Accounts Payable

State Auditor	112.00
River Bend Business Products	4,559.52
Frontier Telephone	287.16
Hannah Neusch - Expense reimbursement	32.19
Dustin Benes - Expense reimbursement	30.00
Gerhardt's Catering	996.37
Tech Sales - Calibration solution	404.00
Fruendt Lundquist & Gustafson - RIM expenses	850.00
Fleet & Farm - Field supplies	8.58
MVTL Laboratories - Water samples	184.90
Truman Tribune - Subscription	40.00
North Central Reforestation - Trees	356.40
Martin County Knights of Columbus	230.00
Martin County Recorder - RIM expenses	241.00
South Central TSA - Dues	3,319.00
MASWCD Area VI - Dues	400.00
Martin Co Hwy Dept - Fuel	218.37
	<u>\$ 12,269.49</u>

C. Accounts Receivable

Lance Becker	722.88
Lloyd Olson	240.00
Lowell Spee	6,748.50
	<u>\$ 7,711.38</u>

Bills paid as of 3/31/19

#11154	Arthur Andrews Properties, LLC	2,962.53
#11155	Greg Johanson - net wages	1,694.01
#11156	Rich Perrine - net wages	1,596.27
#11157	Dustin Benes - net wages	1,254.53
#11158	Jesse Walters - net wages	1,258.97
#11159	Hannah C. Neusch - net wages	1,167.53
#11160	Ashley A. Brenke - net wages	1,617.48

ACH	MN PERA	1,660.51
ACH	Further - Health Savings Account	1,000.00
#11161	U.S. Postal Service	110.00
#11162	Frontier Telephone	287.16
#11163	NCPERS - Life insurance	32.00
#11164	MN PEIP - health insurance	3,404.24
ACH	U.S. Treasurer	4,988.32
ACH	MN Revenue	804.00
#11165	Marco - Copier	101.39
#11166	Prairie Ecology Bus Center - AIS education	7,432.95
#11167	City of Lakes Media - Radio ads	840.00
#11168	Fairmont Photo Press	83.85
#11169	Martin Co Hwy Dept - Fuel	154.80
#11170	Jesse C. Walters - Expense reimbursement	15.89
#11171	Ashley Brenke - Expense reimbursement	474.90
#11172	Dustin J. Benes - Expense reimbursement	80.00
#11173	Greg Johanson - net wages	1,694.01
#11174	Rich Perrine - net wages	1,596.27
#11175	Dustin Benes - net wages	1,254.53
#11176	Jesse Walters - net wages	1,258.97
#11177	Hannah C. Neusch - net wages	1,167.53
#11178	Ashley A. Brenke - net wages	1,617.48
ACH	MN PERA	1,660.51
#11179	U.S. Postal Service	76.75
#11180	Ben Truesdell - State CS	603.00
		<u>\$ 43,950.38</u>

Receipts as of 3/31/19

Martin County Allocation	24,500.00
Martin County NRBG	10,199.50
Seeding	3,560.00
BWSR - Easement payment	2,000.00
BWSR - Easement expenses	1,106.50
Trees	1,721.20
GBERBA - Financial Coordinator	329.00
Profinium - LISA interest	359.35
State Bank of Fairmont - checking account interest	114.26
	<u>\$ 43,889.81</u>

Treasurer's Monthly Report
Program Summary
3/31/2019

Fund Account	Cash Balance 2/28/2019	Receipts	Disbursements	Cash Balance 3/31/2019
District Funds	\$ 11,599.49	\$ 6,978.81 j.e. 11,539.00 j.e. 18,915.00 j.e. 150.75	\$ 6,607.73	\$ 42,575.32
County Funds	(19,860.49)	34,699.50	34,699.50	(19,860.49)
BWSR Service Grant	16,908.00	-	-	16,908.00
BWSR - Farm Bill Specialist Grant	(3,500.00)	-	2,000.00	(5,500.00)
BWSR - Capacity Services T & A	205,678.87	-	15.89 j.e. 11,539.00	194,123.98
BWSR - Blue Earth WCPI T & A	141,247.77	-	24.26 j.e. 18,915.00	122,308.51
BWSR - CREP/RIM Grant	(14,676.25)	2,211.50	-	(12,464.75)
BWSR State Cost Share FY18 T & A	6,446.25	-	603.00 j.e. 150.75	5,692.50
BWSR State Cost Share FY19 T & A	17,945.00	-	-	17,945.00
BWSR - CWMA FY 16 T & A	(7,500.00)	-	-	(7,500.00)
BWSR - Flood T & A	92,219.15	-	-	92,219.15
BWSR - Buffer Funds T & A	55,341.18	-	-	55,341.18
LCCMR	(83,439.60)	-	-	(83,439.60)
BWSR - Buffer Cost Share T & A	1,593.75	-	-	1,593.75
Totals	\$ 420,003.12	\$ 43,889.81	\$ 43,950.38	\$ 419,942.55

Use of Cash	<u>2/28/2019</u>	<u>3/31/2019</u>
Checking Account	269,760.09	269,340.17
Profinium L.I.S.A. Account	150,243.04	150,602.39
	<u>\$ 420,003.13</u>	<u>\$ 419,942.56</u>

District Manager Report
March 14, 2019

2018 Financial Statement

I am currently finishing our 2018 Financial Statement per our State requirements. I have already worked with Kay (Clark) Gross from Cottonwood SWCD to submit the GBERBA Financial Statement.

Fairmont Chain of Lakes/Dutch Creek Watershed grants

I have completed the initial BWSR work plan requirement. In the next few weeks we will have a completed grant agreement and can begin working on practice implementation in the watershed. Our PCA Small Watershed 319 grant in the same watershed likely will not be complete until the end of the calendar year due to their new grant process.

Elm Creek Watershed

Dustin and I have been reviewing our Elm Creek sampling data and plan to work on data analysis over the next few weeks. Chris Lenhart and Brad Gordon from the University of MN have expressed interest in reviewing our data. The sampling at the Roberts' wetland along Elm Creek will be starting as soon as the tiles begin to flow.

Statewide Managers Meeting

I recently attended a statewide SWCD Managers meeting in St. Cloud with approximately 50 other Managers from across the state. It's a great way to share ideas with other Managers. Major topics discussed included MASWCD legislative priorities, safety in the workplace, social media usage, and general human resources related concerns.

Meetings/Trainings

Past:

February 15 – Blue Earth Watershed Civic Engagement, Fairmont

February 19 – Martin County Commissioner Meeting, Fairmont

February 26 & 27 – Statewide Managers Meeting, St. Cloud

March 1 – Watonwan One Watershed, One Plan, St. James

March 5 & 6 – MASWCD Legislative Days, St. Paul

March 8 – GBERBA, Mankato

March 12 – Jackson SWCD, Lakefield

March 12 – Martin County Conservation Club, Welcome

Upcoming:

March 19 – South Central TSA, Mankato

March 20 – Watonwan One Watershed, One Plan, St. James

March 21 – Blue Earth Watershed Conservation Planner, Fairmont

Respectfully Submitted,
Ashley Brenke

Jesse Walters

December 13, 2018 – March 14, 2019

CREP

Met with landowners interested in CREP, mapped out potential easement areas, provided information on the program. Continued through the application, title work, conservation plan, easement agreement etc. stage of existing applications.

CRP

Met with multiple landowners interested in CRP, mapped out potential boundaries, provided information on the program.

RIM

Worked with landowners on existing RIM sites, managed water levels according to the Conservation Plan provided. Provided program information including haying and grazing planning.

Buffers

Worked with Landowners, Drainage Staff and P&Z staff. Update BuffCAT. 99% compliance on Public Waters, 98% compliance on Public Drainage Ditches. Buffer Task Force meetings.

Blue Earth Civic Engagement and WRAPS

Attend BECE meetings, helped plan the I-90 Soil Health Event in Fairmont. Conducted resident and landowner interviews as part of WRAPS CE process.

Cover Crops

Educate producers about cover crops and conservation tillage including the soil health event. Assist landowners with cover crop contracts.

Miscellaneous

Tree program, open house, sales, planting plans.

1W1P meetings Watonwan and Des Moines.

Conservation club meetings, FLF, PF, MCCC.

Attended strategic farming meeting.

Multiple trainings, including seeding training with BWSR.

Obtained printer/scanner quotes.

GBEREBA meeting.

Outreach for MAWQCP.

Obtained 2 interns for the summer through MVAC.

Working on full farm conservation plan to increase JAA.

Hannah Neusch, Conservation Planner
Quarterly Update
Q1 2019

AgLearn Training

- Water Bodies- No. 5
- Sediment Management for Water Quality
- Phosphorus Management and Concerns-No. 3
- Nitrogen Management and Concerns-No.2
- Overview of Water Quality for Conservation Planners
- Use of NRCS Conservation Practice Standards and Specifications
- Water Management (Exam taken but doesn't register)
- Basic Hydrology
- Defensive Driving Fundamentals

On the Job Training

- Writing a Conservation plan training with Jesse and Dustin
- Water Quality/Nutrient Management training with Lance Smith and Jennifer Hahn
- Toolkit training with Betsy
- Meeting with Producer and Betsy
- RUSEL2 Training w/ Betsy
- Toolkit Training with Beth Collins
- IET training with Beth Collins
- HUC8 Conservation Planners Meeting, Networking, and Training Session (snowdate)

Classroom Training

- Basic Hydrology
- Soil Health Day
- Nitrogen Conference, Mankato
- How to Write a Seeding Plan
- Strategic Farming

Conservation Planning Work

- Gathered and filled out 052's and Job sheets
- Planning Watershed Conservation Planner meeting with watershed NRCS DCs, SWCD managers, and BWSR staff.
- Six Total conservation plans completed, totaling 1,723.00 Acres.

Quarterly Staff Report, Greg Johanson

Ordered trees for spring delivery. Held tree days Feb 1st and 2nd.

Organized Conservation update and worked with Fairmont photo press.

Set appointments for Sen Rosen and Rep Gunther for Legislative days.

Attended Legislative Days.

Worked on CREP 1 drainage issues.

Helped organize and move files in the storage room.

Worked on tree planting plans including farm visits.

Helped with cover-crop meeting.

Worked on the AG BMP final report for 2018. New budget for 2019.

Attended hearing for JD 37

Worked with drainage authority on JD 37, and other related drainage issues.

Worked with new potential enrollments for CRP, CREP.

Daily activities such as walkins for tree sales, random questions for CRP, and covercrops, AG BMP and rain guage.

**Benes 1st quarter report
12/10/2018-3/8/2019**

- Aquatic Invasive Species, I wrote articles and placed ads in the photo press conservation update. Purchased bait pucks from the local bait shop and designed stickers locally with the prevention message. Bait pucks were distributed to the first 150 participants during the Fairmont Chain of Lakes fishing tournament. I updated the County AIS prevention plan, approved by the county commissioners, SWCD board and then the MN DNR. Updated and reviewed the MN DNR launch access editor. Coordinated with the Prairie Ecology Bus and the Martin County Fair board with possible attendance at the fair for 2019. The Prairie Ecology Bus taught 68 seventh graders at MCW in February. I gave an update at the Fairmont Lakes Association meeting and updated my yearly report.
- I finalized and submitted the year-end water sampling reports. Elm creek reports due, were EQuIS and field data entry. Blue Earth Surface Water Assessment Grant (BE SWAG), field data and lab results were submitted. Dutch creek reporting was finalized and submitted. I winterized the water sampling field meter and disassembled the Elm Creek station for winter storage.
- I monitored and reported on 13 DNR ground water observation wells in December. DNR wells are checked quarterly and reported on the DNR website. I attended a webinar for the DNR Walk-In-Access program, updates for the upcoming enrollment period.
- Open house tree day event, I assisted customers with ordering and plans for tree planting. One on-site review was surveyed and designed.
- Wetland Conservation Act, I assisted with two possible violations, site reviews were done. A yearly report was submitted to BWSR. Two applications were reviewed. Three 1026's were reviewed. One joint application with the Martin County Highway department is in the works.
- I am currently assisting with three projects; surveying, design, SCTSA, and landowners.
- I worked on the LCCMR 13 county six month report.
- I assisted one customer with the AgBMP program.
- I assisted two customers with the State Cost Share program.
- I have assisted with four existing CREP projects and information regarding new CREP's. I am in the process of submitting to BWSR a CREP project reimbursement form. I attended a BWSR CREP training update in Mankato.
- Two new CRP's were flagged and seeded.
- I am currently working on CTA plans for two landowners.
- I continue with secretary duties for meeting minutes and bank deposits.
- I attended the Soil Health meeting in Fairmont. Also attended a Best Practices for Pollinators summit in St. Anthony, about 300 people were in attendance. I worked on Filter Strip training prerequisites for an upcoming training. Trainings in Aglearn were also completed.

Provided Conservation Update articles, 2019 Highlight Tree: Silver Maple; CWMA projects completed; County Park addition.

Martin County Conservation Alliance support:

Continued to provide the DNR with LCCMR grant required documentation needed before final reimbursement for the Fox Lake Conservation League (FLCL) - VanderWert County Park addition acquisition. Main partners: Martin County, Martin County Park Board, Martin SWCD, Trimont Conservation Club, Fox Lake Conservation League. Rosburg Construction assisted by Gary Ekstrom completed the earthwork – trail, access and parking.

Provided technical and administrative support for Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL) grants, primarily for the FLCL. Assisted with grant planning and reporting for the CPL Expedited Conservation Project (ECP) grants. Assisted with Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) grant projects.

The CPL grant program provides \$5,000 to \$400,000 in funding for eligible conservation projects, requires a 10% local match, and has been used primarily for small acquisition projects which include habitat/wetland restoration.

The CPL ECP program provides \$5,000 to \$50,000 with a 10% local match and is being used locally for woody removal with prairie restoration, invasive grass conversion to native prairie and wetland restoration including establishing native wetland vegetation. One woody removal project has been completed recently with labor through the MN Conservation Corps. Active projects include and two grass conversion, two wetland restoration, and one woody removal project. Each of these grants cover multiple local WMAs.

The first LSOHC application we submitted for 2016 brought \$1 million to purchase approximately 135 acres in Section 35, Elm Creek Township, adding to the north end of the Caron WMA. The wetland restoration plan has been completed and scheduled for construction. Native prairie plants have been installed, with seeding to be completed in 2019. Since we weren't funded for 2017 (One project below the funded line even though 3 attempts were made by Council Members to get us funded) We expanded our partnership.

Joining forces with The Conservation Fund and Ducks Unlimited, with them taking over the grant writing duties, brought \$2.4 million for 2018 and \$3.6 million proposed for 2019. I continue to assist with site assessments, cultural reviews, and restoration plans for these larger sites. Pheasants Forever continues to grow as a strong Conservation Alliance partner.

A good share of the seed collected from native prairie and propagation sites under the Martin County part of the Martin SWCD 2015 LCCMR 13 Counties – "Propagating Native Plants and Restoring Native Habitats" project, is currently being prepared to plant on these CPL, CPL ECP, and LSOHC grant funded sites. Attached are the first two pages of the FLCL Board minutes from February 2019 to illustrate the grant work being done through the great partnerships we have here.

Meetings attended: Martin County Park Board, Strategic Farming, JD-37 Informational meeting, I-90 Soil Health Tour, Pollinator workshop, DNR and partners Rooney Run wetland restoration and ditch petition, Retirement planning – set my last day of work at Martin SWCD: May 11, 2019.

Project Hours: CPL: 48, CPL ECP: 37, LSOHC: 25.5, LCCMR-13 counties: 108, CREP: 33, Tree program: 13.5,
Water Plan: 49.5, WCA: 55, Buffers: 6

Respectfully Submitted,



Rich Perrine, Technician – Water Plan/WCA