

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REORGANIZATIONAL BOARD MEETING
COURTHOUSE COUNTY BOARD ROOM
715 4TH STREET * INTERNATIONAL FALLS * MN * 56649
MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 2019**

Members Present:	Ralph Lewis	District I
	George Aitchison	District II
	Eldon Voigt	District III
	Richard Dreher	District IV
	Al Linder	District V

Others Present:	Pam Tomevi	District Administrator
	Jolen Simon	Program Coordinator
	Eric Olson	Resource Conservationist
	Sam Soderman	Water Resource Specialist
	James Aasen	Forest Resource Specialist
	Matt Gouin	KC Environmental Services Director
	Wayne Skoe	Koochiching County Commissioner
	Kevin Adee	Koochiching County Commissioner

Re-elected Supervisors Ralph Lewis, Richard Dreher, and Al Linder took the Oath of Office, witnessed by Eldon Voigt and George Aitchison.

As per District policy to elect the chairman and vice chairman on a rotational basis, Supervisor Ralph Lewis was elected Chair and Supervisor George Aitchison was elected Vice Chair for calendar year 2019. Supervisor Eldon Voigt accepted the office of Board Treasurer and Supervisor Richard Dreher accepted the office of Board Secretary for calendar year 2019.

Chair Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**2019/1-1 Motion by Dreher, seconded by Aitchison to approve the agenda with additions.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**2019/1-2 Motion by Dreher, seconded by Voigt to approve the minutes dated December 3, 2018 with corrections.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

2019/1-3 Motion by Dreher, seconded by Lewis authorizing committee member(s) and/or alternate(s) to attend scheduled committee meetings up to a maximum of 2 board members per meeting and approve committee assignments as follows:

- Budget Committee: Ralph Lewis/Eldon Voigt/Administrator
- Personnel Committee: Ralph Lewis/George Aitchison/Administrator
- Education/Public Relations Committee: Al Linder/Richard Dreher/Administrator
- North Central MN JPB: Al Linder (Eldon Voigt – Alternate)
- Laurentian RC&D: Al Linder (Eldon Voigt – Alternate)
- MN SWCD Forestry Association: Eldon Voigt (Ralph Lewis – Alternate)
- Big Fork River Board: Richard Dreher/ George Aitchison

- Little Fork/Rat Root River Board: Al Linder/George Aitchison
- Int'l Watershed Advisory Committee: Eldon Voigt/Ralph Lewis
- Wood Ash Committee: Richard Dreher/Al Linder
- Others (As deemed necessary and approved by the Board)

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2019/1-4 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Dreher approving asset inventory list as presented (details on file).

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2019/1-5 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder to approve the following reorganizational meeting business:

- keep monthly meeting date and time as the first Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. for November-April meetings and 7:00 p.m. for May-October meetings;
- keep supervisor compensation rates at \$75 for all meetings;
- adopt the 2019 mileage reimbursement rate set by the IRS;
- designate Bremer Bank and Border State Bank as official depositories of the Koochiching SWCD (see MN Statute 118A.002);
- keep The Journal as the official newspaper;
- grant district check signing authority to Pam Tomevi, Jolén Simon, Ralph Lewis, and Eldon Voigt.
- define ordinary and necessary bills to mean all bills, not to exceed approved operating budget, with the following exceptions (requiring prior Board approval): Dues, publication subscriptions, employee expense reports, and special projects/expenses not included in the approved operating budget.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2019/1-6 Motion by Voigt seconded by Dreher to ratify paid bills, check numbers 10609 to 10655 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$78,127.52 (details on file).

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2019/1-7 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Dreher to approve the Treasurer's reports ending November 30 and December 31, 2018 as presented.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2019/1-8 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Dreher to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$10,133.87 and to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between January 8, 2019 and February 4, 2019, not to exceed budget.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

Guest Introductions: Joe Donnell, J & J Contracting, Inc. introduced himself and was present as a member of the public.

Supervisor Reports

Dreher reported on his attendance at the 2018 MASWCD Annual Convention as well as his attendance at the Red Lake Watershed Board Meeting where discussion included potential projects on Bartlett Lake and a possible bog improvement project.

Linder reported on a conversation with the Environmental Engineer at Packaging Corporation of America regarding concerns with the wood ash program. The Board reviewed letters sent to each neighboring county's Environmental Services Department notifying them that wood ash from PCA is being permitted in their county. Additional discussions will take place at the upcoming quarterly wood ash committee meeting.

Voigt reported on his participation on the International Multi-Agency (IMA) conference call and attendance at the MN Northern Landscape Committee meeting where discussion included instances of ash tree removal and replanting with Hackberry in an effort to mitigate Emerald Ash Borer invasions.

Committee Reports

2019/1-9 Motion by Voigt, approving Budget Committee recommendation "BC 2019-2 Operating Budget" as presented (details on file).

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2019/1-10 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt ratifying Motion 2018/12-5 to clarify the value of compensated absences on 12-31-2018 in the total amount of \$35,000.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2019/1-11 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison approving Personnel Committee recommendation "PC 2019-1 Staff Wages and Benefits" as presented (details on file).

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

District Administrator Report

See attached.

Resource Conservationist Report

See attached.

Water Resources Specialist Report

See attached.

Forest Resource Specialist Report

See attached.

Program Coordinator

See attached.

Discussion included International work with MPCA and the Lake of the Woods Water Sustainability Foundation.

NEW BUSINESS

Contractor Bid Selection for Rat Root River Bridge Removal and Bank Stabilization Project

2019/1-12 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Dreher accepting J & J Contracting, Inc. as the contractor selected for the removal and bank stabilization of a bridge structure (details on file).

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2018 PERA Exclusion Report

2019/1-13 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Dreher approving the 2018 PERA Exclusion Report as presented (details on file).

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

Auditor’s Report on 2017 Financial Audit

2019/1-14 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison accepting the 2017 financial audit report as submitted by Michael Peterson, CPA of Peterson Company Limited.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2018 Pay Equity Report

2019/1-15 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison approving the 2018 Pay Equity Report as presented (details on file).

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

Upcoming Meetings:

2019/1-16 Motion by Lewis seconded by Aitchison authorizing the district administrator to attend the 2019 MASWCD Legislative Briefing Day March 5-6 in St. Paul and Voigt to attend separately due to a schedule conflict.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

2019/1-17 Motion by Voigt seconded by Dreher authorizing all board members and staff to attend the 2019 Lake of the Woods Watershed Forum March 13-14 in International Falls.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

General Business:

The Board reviewed the SWCD High Impact Self-Assessment Guide and the MASWCD Committee Recruitment – Voigt volunteered to be on the MASWCD Awards Committee for 2019.

Aitchison asked about the County’s plan for white ash reduction (cutting) to mitigate Emerald Ash Borer impact. Discussion included future tree species for possible die-off of both ash and tamarack.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on Monday, February 4, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the courthouse board meeting room.

Adjourn Meeting:

2019/1-18 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Dreher to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.

Submitted by:

Board Secretary, Richard Dreher

Date

Approved:

Chair, Ralph Lewis

Date

Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report

December 2018

) **BWSR Local Capacity**

-

) **Conservation Delivery**

- Northern Landscape Committee grant opportunity discussions

) **County/District**

- MASWCD Convention planning and attendance; computer security and software updates; 2019 draft service agreements;

) **County Buffer**

-

) **CPL-RRR**

- Work plan and budget update meeting with Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club/DNR; annual report completed/submitted to DNR

) **Natural Resource Block Grant**

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) **LF-NIPF2**

- Forest Stewardship plan contracts/landowner payments

) **Wood Ash**

- Program discussions/review with PCA; updated notification letters sent to neighboring counties;

General Administration

-) Board meeting prep/follow-up items; Board minutes/agenda; staff meetings/training; calendar update/time tracking; Payroll; PERA; FWT/SWT; bank statement reconciliation; QB transactions/updates; Treasurer Report; Accounts Receivable; Accounts Payable, budget updates; bank deposits/online banking; staff meetings; file/record maintenance; general phone/mail/email

Submitted by:

Pam Tomevi, District Administrator

Resource Conservationist Report

December 2018

WCA

- Talking to ESD on notices for upcoming projects and decisions with other agencies.
- Assisting landowners with permit process and identifying areas of wetlands on possible wetland properties in the area.
- Working with DNR, BWSR, and ACOE on getting information for permits and actual project implementation.
- Continued work on WCA tasks and updating Koochiching ESD on in-progress projects.

Wood Ash

- Assisting landowners with process/working with DH contracting.
- Receiving and permitting more long permits due to the amount of consistency and catch up the program has made.
- Working with DH contracting on permits and areas to dump/spread with current conditions.

CPL – Rat Root River

- Working with DNR fisheries office, stream habitat specialists, MPCA, and RLSFC on how/where the best place to spend remaining dollars would be before the grant closes.
- Accepted bids on bridge removal project.
- Site visit to various sites and planning for projects to be completed prior to end of grant. Talk with different members involved with the grant for thoughts, plans, and estimates.

Cost Share

- Awaiting final plan decisions for hospital river bank shoreline restoration.
- Awaiting JPB design plans for Bigfork River bank stabilization.

Water Quality

- Sampling 3 total sites now on a event or monthly basis now.
- Calls to project manager and other agencies to check status on other river conditions and entering data.
- Data recording/updating and attend MPCA led trainings/phone conferences.

Miscellaneous

- Work/plan projects with RLPOA and VNP for invasive cattail removal and effectiveness which may lead to a grant proposal once more research is completed.

Submitted by: Eric Olson

Water Resource Specialist Report

December 2018

AIS

- Inspection program wrap up
- Final report to DNR
- Budget review
- 2019 inspection program planning/brainstorming

SWAG

- Budget review
- Contract change order calls
- Billing
- Final Reporting for RR SWAG
- Budget planning for SWAG Contracts
- Compile and send in data for LF and RR SWAG Contracts
- Interim Reporting for LF SWAG

Local Capacity

- Landowner questions/walk-in
- Littlefork SWAG contract work
- County Mapping
- Plat book data check
- Maplogic and GIS Work
- Rainy River WRAPS Meeting

Miscellaneous

- Emails
- Holiday/Vacation

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

December 2018

Local Capacity-Forestry

- J Researched general forestry and forest health topics.
- J Processed contracts for several upcoming Forest Stewardship Plans and began field work.
- J Completed a forest stewardship plans and began another.
- J Attended the MASWCD Convention and assisted with hosting duties.
- J Continued coordinated several tree plantings for 2019.
- J Attended the Northern Landscape Committee Meeting.

Kooch CWMA

- J Researched grant opportunities.

2019 Tree Sale

- J Researched and Ordered Trees for 2019 tree sale.
- J Contacted several interested landowners about 2019 tree sales.
- J Researching pollinator/prairie species for seeding kits.
- J Scheduled a native forb and grass sale through Minnesota Native Landscapes and worked on Set-up.
- J Updated inventory and tree planting documents for 2019

NIPF 2

- J Discussed and promoted the project as landowners respond to the invitation letters.
- J Processed final invoices and survey results.
- J Mapped further eligible participants.
- J Created Contracts and Coordinated Plan Writing for project participants.
- J Coordinated the writing of several plans with landowners and contract foresters.
- J Presented project update at the Northern Landscape Committee Meeting.
- J Began Year-end Progress report.

MN Buffer Initiative

- J Reviewed BWSR and MN DNR Buffer Law updates and guidance as they became available.
- J Discussed Compliance Status with BWSR buffer staff, submitted updates.
- J Completed end of the year review and update of Koochiching parcels.
- J Planned tree'd buffer plantings using reserved buffer cost-share.

Submitted by: James Aasen
Forest Resource Specialist

Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report

December 2018

Rainy Basin International & Watershed Coordinator

- Partner meetings
- Updated stakeholder list and planned the first 5 interviews to be done the first week in January

PCA Wood Ash

- Updated permits, and spreading
- Update summary, hauling reports and spreading reports, permit coversheets
- Processed and sent end user letters
- Updated brochures
- Landowner assistance

Local Capacity

- eLINK entry
- Updated website education page
- Public participation planning meeting with Lake of the Woods SWCD and MPCA
- Northern Landscape Committee

NRBG Grants

- Climatology data entry and mail forms to U of M, submit to NRCS
- eLINK data entry reporting
- Met with Environmental Services for reporting
- Attended and assisted with the 2018 MASWCD

General Administration

Customer walk-in general assistance; board meeting prep; minutes and agenda; minutes book updating; website maintenance; credit card tracking; staff report; eLINK data entry; 2019 timesheet updates

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator