

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: None

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Supervisors Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: None

OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Pam Tomevi, Jolen Simon, Eric Olson, Sam Soderman, James Aasen, Commissioner Wayne Skoe, Commissioner Kevin Adee, Jody Peek (NRCS)

Vice-Chair Voigt called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**2020/5-1 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Lewis to approve the agenda with an addition.
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**2020/5-2 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt to approve the minutes from the April 6, 2020
regular meeting as presented.
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**2020/5-3 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to ratify paid bills, check numbers 11029 to
11044 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$47,147.51 (details on
file).
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**2020/5-4 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder to approve the Treasurer's report ending
March 31, 2020 as presented.
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**2020/5-5 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to approve accounts payable in the amount
of \$24.15 and to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between May 5, 2020
and June 1, 2020, not to exceed budget.
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

Guest Introductions

None

REPORTS

Supervisor Reports:

None.

NRCS District Conservationist Report:

NRCS staff members are completing ranking assessment tools for 2020 renewals which are due this week. A memorandum of agreement is in development and will be sent to the Board when ready for review. Local Working Group Meeting: Discussion on ranking all 49 resource concerns. The Program Coordinator will send out 2019 meeting summary notes as well as a reminder email to all potential recipients.

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.

NEW BUSINESS**COVID-19 Preparedness Plan**

The District Administrator reviewed the draft Koochiching SWCD COVID-19 Preparedness Plan with the Board as revised with the staff during a training prior to the board meeting.

2020/5-6 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to approve the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Koochiching Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) as presented with authorization to insert the electronic signature of Chair Aitchison.

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

Cooperative Weed Management Contracts

The Forest Resource Specialist reviewed draft bid notices and contractor/landowner agreements for the Cooperative Weed Management Area program and noted that the templates have been reviewed by the Koochiching County Land Commissioner and are pending review by the County Attorney.

2020/5-7 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the District Administrator to solicit bids and enter into agreements with contractors and landowners for the Cooperative Weed Management Area program after document review/approval by the Koochiching County Attorney.

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

Letter of Support - U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

The Water Resource Specialist provided a summary of the work plan described in the grant application.

2020/05-8 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder authorizing the District Administrator to send a letter of support on behalf of the Koochiching SWCD for the LCCMR grant proposal “Sediment-phosphorus management in Rainy-Lake of the Woods Basin” as requested by the USGS.

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

Upcoming Meetings:

2020/5-9 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison to authorize all supervisors and staff to attend the Local Working Group Meeting via teleconference on May 18th at 7:00 p.m.

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

General Business

Proposed Resolutions:

The District Administrator read aloud the resolution submitted by Voigt entitled “Aluminum Recycling at MASWCD State Convention”.

2020/5-10 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to approve the Koochiching SWCD resolution entitled “Aluminum Recycling at MASWCD State Convention” and authorize staff to submit to Area VIII for discussion/approval.

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

Public Comment:

None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on Monday, June 1st at 7:00 pm via teleconference.

Adjournment:

2020/5-11 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

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

Submitted by:

Board Secretary, Richard Dreher

Date

Approved:

Chair, George Aitchison

Date



April 2020 NRCS Report
By: Jody Peek

04/06/2020

- **NRCS COVID19 Plan**

- *NRCS activated the agency Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) on Monday, March 23rd, 2020 for all NRCS offices. This means that offices will not be accessible to the public.*
- *No customers or visitors are permitted in NRCS office space at this time. Customers will be required to call the contact numbers posted on our door and make off-site appointments or handle business electronically.*

- **CSP**

- Renewals - Application deadline to sign-up was March 20th for 2014, 2015 & 2016 contracts. Koochiching County has zero 2020-1 Renewals (Expiring 2014 & 2015 applications w/ no 1-year extension) and a total of 4 2021-1 Renewal applications.
- General Signup – Application deadline is May 29th. Koochiching County currently has 11 applicants.

- **EQIP/RCPP**

- Application deadline was March 13th. Koochiching County has 4 applications. All applications will be prioritized (assigned as High, Medium, or Low) by April 10th, ranked by May 22nd, approved by June 26th and obligation by Aug 14th.

- **Bemidji CST Staffing Update:**

- Michael Steinhauer was hired as the Resource Conservationist in Baudette and starts on March 30th. Currently works as a Soil Conservationist in Roseau.
- Kody Karr was hired as the Soil Conservationist in Bemidji. He is currently working for Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Mexico, MO. Kody's 1st day will be April 27th.

- **Other Items**

- Review new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with NRCS. This is an agreement on how NRCS and the SWCD can partner together to deliver conservation planning and programs. Agreement should be reviewed and signed by both NRCS & SWCD.
- Conservation Assessment Ranking Tool (CART) training is planned for Thursday, April 9th, 2020. This is the new ranking tool that will be used for ranking CSP and EQIP.

Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report

April 2020

- **AIS**
 - Expense tracking/invoicing
- **BWSR Conservation Delivery**
 - Landowner assistance; Board and staff meetings; scan/send post office mail to staff
- **BWSR Cooperative Weed Management**
 - Teleconference set up/demo for kickoff meeting
- **BWSR Local Capacity**
 - International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board Water Levels Committee WebEx meetings; Resort owner questions; PCA water intake study update; LCCMR grant info for Lower Rainy; new NIPF2 contract finalization;
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- **County/District**
 - County Buffer work plan updates; tree sales; Plat Book sales; Forest Stewardship contracts; Governor updates on COVID-19; prepare resolution authorizing the SWCD to temporarily close office facilities to the public, direct staff to telework, and conduct Board meetings via teleconference; COVID-19 Preparedness Plan; Excel coding for timesheets/treasurer reports; 1st quarter tax reports
- **MPCA Contracts**
 - Grant tracking; expense tracking and invoicing; project leader meetings/discussions; change order/contract extension discussions;
- **Natural Resource Block Grant**
 - Contract development for watershed work;
- **Wood Ash**
 - Expense tracking and invoicing

General Administration

- Board meeting prep/follow-up items; Board minutes/agenda; 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; file/record maintenance; general phone/mail/email

Submitted by:

Pam Tomevi, District Administrator

Resource Conservationist Report

April 2020

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.
- Work with various landowners and conservation officers on violations, potential violations, restoration orders, and regulations.

Wood Ash

- Assisting landowners with process/working with DH contracting.
- Ash production is remaining stable (~3 loads/day)
- Working with DH contracting on permits and areas to dump/spread with current conditions.

Cost Share

- Working with TSA 8 project facilitator for new process on requesting assistance and visiting sites for potential/ongoing projects.
- Giddings probe contacts for area projects/timelines for funding and feasibility.
- Shorewood landowners bank/houses problems and strategies with ACOE, BWSR, and other agencies.

Water Quality

- Calls to project manager and other agencies to check status on resuming work and when we are allowed to utilize contract funds due to covid-19.

Miscellaneous

- Various meeting cancellations, program changes, office coverage, last 2 weeks mainly dealing with covid-19 responses to programs.

Submitted by: Eric Olson

Water Resource Specialist Report

April 2020

AIS

- Budget review
- Invoicing
- Finalized and signed Agreement for Kab and Ash Inspectors
- 2020 Inspection program planning
- Calls/emails w/ Always There Staffing
- Inspector equipment prep/tablet updating
- AIS TAC call-in

SWAG

- 2020 lab forms
- BF SWAG Project establishment form
- Lab data errors/issues
- Big Fork SWAG budget/workplan signed and executed
- QAPP

RBW

- Geomorph work w/ DNR MPCA
- Sediment fingerprinting work
- Sediment fingerprinting conference call w/ MPCA, USGS
- Field work prep
- EQUIS Data entry, photolog, field notes
- Rat Root Call w/ MPCA
- BF watershed work planning, emails with MPCA staff
- BF call w/ MPCA, Itasca
- BF monitoring plan write-up

Local Capacity

- County Mapping
- GIS Meeting/imagery

WPLMN

Miscellaneous

- Emails

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

April 2020

Local Capacity-Forestry

- Researched general forestry and forest health topics.
- Conducted forestry field work on two properties.
- Completed two FSP's and began a CAP.
- Coordinated plan writing for several landowners.
- Coordinated a tree planting project.
- Discussion and planning with BWSR stewardship coordinator on existing and future grants.
- Many landowner discussions involving native plant programs, FSP's, CAP's, SFIA, 2C tax designation, tree planting, hemp production etc...
- Rescheduling and adapting logistics for everything due to pandemic and quarantine.

Kooch CWMA

- Led the 2020 Spring Partner Meeting.
- Continue developing outreach materials and website for CWMA.
- Work on BWSR CWMA Grant tasks—landowner weed control cost-share; coordination, contracting, docs and processes.

2020 Tree Sale/Native Plant Sale

- Discussed sales and tree and shrub selection with many interested landowners.
- Distribute 2020 order forms via mail and email.
- Processed orders and updated inventory.
- Coordinate delivery and distribution.

MN Buffer Initiative

- Coordinated buffer layout and flagging on three parcels near the Rapid River.
- Update partners and BWSR contacts with progress and 2020 outlook.

Submitted by: James Aasen

Forest Resource Specialist

Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report

April 2020

Local Capacity:

- Website updates
- eLINK updates
- Participate in CWMA online meeting, minutes taking and edits
- Participate in Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships Natural Resources Work Group funding decisions meetings
- Local Work Group planning
- Reviewed Upper/Lower Red Lake Watershed WRAPS draft (EOR) - well-written

WPLMN

- Invoicing

MPCA Rainy Basin International Coordinator

- Invoicing

MPCA Rainy Basin Watershed Grant

- Planning for Lower Rainy and Rapid River Watersheds with LOW and EOR
- Editing Forest Stewardship Workshop docs
- Invoicing
- Assist with interview training for North St. Louis SWCD
- Big Fork River Watershed partner planning meeting

PCA Wood Ash

- End User Forms sent, and up to date
- Updated permits, and spreading
- Updated summary, hauling reports and spreading reports, permit cover sheets
- Invoicing

NRBG Grants

- eLINK
- climatology data entry

General Administration

Board meeting prep; minutes; minutes book updating; reporting; website maintenance; credit card tracking (including troubleshooting of this and other tasks); supplies orders;

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator