

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
MONDAY, JULY 6, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: None

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lewis

OTHERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: None

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

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

2020/7-1 Motion by Linder, seconded by Aitchison to approve the agenda with additions. Voting yes by roll call: Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried unanimously.

2020/7-2 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder to approve the minutes from the June 1, 2020 regular meeting as presented. Voting yes by roll call: Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried unanimously.

2020/7-3 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder to ratify paid bills, check numbers 11057 to 11063 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$35,636.05 (details on file). Voting yes by roll call: Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried unanimously.

2020/7-4 Motion by Linder, seconded by Aitchison to approve the Treasurer's report ending May 31, 2020 as presented and approve the corrected Treasurer's reports ending March 31, 2020 and April 30, 2020 as presented. Voting yes by roll call: Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried unanimously.

2020/7-5 Motion by Linder, seconded by Dreher to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between July 7, 2020 and August 3, 2020, not to exceed budget. Voting yes by roll call: Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried unanimously.

Guest Introductions

None

REPORTS

Supervisor Reports:

Voigt reported on his attendance at the Joint Powers Board meeting in which funding and budget were discussed. A fall meeting may be held for further discussion. It was also noted that TSA8 purchased a subscription to Survey Monkey which will be available to all Area 8 SWCDs to use.

NRCS District Conservationist Report:

Peek reported on CSP renewal and application numbers which were greatly reduced from 2019. EQIP applications were down in 2020 as well due to a reduction in available funding. NRCS is in the process of trying to reopen offices. The Lake of the Woods (Baudette Office) is now allowing the public to enter the building by appointment only and is requiring all staff and visitors to wear face masks. NRCS is working on making new software available that would allow landowners to access and sign contracts digitally.

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 Update

The District Administrator updated the Board on the State of MN COVID-19 status which is still in Phase 3, stating that employees should continue to telework if possible. The Board agreed to keep the office closed to the public at this time.

Protecting Minnesota's Forested Watersheds for Loons, Lunkers and Logs

2020/7-6 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the District Administrator to execute the "Protecting Minnesota's Forested Watersheds for Loons, Lunkers and Logs" grant and serve as the fiscal agent for the District.

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

Clean Water Act Section 319 Small Watersheds Focus Grant Program

The District Administrator reviewed the letter of interest she submitted to MPCA and discussed the upcoming interview process for the Clean Water Act Section 319 Small Watersheds Focus Grant Program with the Board. This grant would allow Koochiching SWCD to complete further watershed work as outlined in the Koochiching County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan. If Koochiching SWCD is chosen to move forward in the grant process, additional information will be brought to the Board for discussion.

Upcoming Meetings:

BWSR Academy

The Forest Resource Specialist (FRS) and the Program Coordinator (PC) were both invited to be presenters at the 2020 BWSR Academy. The FRS declined the invitation and the Program Coordinator agreed to lead an online session. The District Administrator informed the Board that, due to ongoing COVID-19 concerns, staff will not attend the annual BWSR Academy in-person this year.

General Business

2020/7-7 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison approving the “AMENDED AND RESTATED JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT - ESTABLISHING THE TECHNICAL SERVICE AREA VIII (TSA8)” as presented.

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

Public Comment:

None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on Monday, August 3rd at 7:00 pm via teleconference.

Adjournment:

2020/7-8 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

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

Submitted by:

Board Secretary, Richard Dreher

Date

Approved:

Chair, George Aitchison

Date

Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report

June 2020

- **BWSR Conservation Delivery**
 - Board meeting; Loon, Lunkers, and Logs project/contract and work plan review
- **BWSR Cooperative Weed Management**
 - X
- **BWSR Local Capacity**
 - International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board Water Levels Committee WebEx meetings/emails/phone calls; Website updates; COVID-19 updates; communication with resort owners
- **County/District**
 - Tree and Native Plant sale summary; Plat Book sales; Forest Stewardship contracts; Governor/MASWCD updates on COVID-19; staff work load updates; OSA/BWSR Updates to SWCD Financial Reporting Requirements; MASWCD legislative updates; FY 2020 Section 319 RFP discussion/webex; summary of native plant and tree sales; NRBG agreement; Koochiching County Multi Hazard Mitigation Plan update review; estimate of fiscal impact of COVID-19 for MASWCD
- **MPCA Contracts**
 - Grant tracking; project manager emails/discussions; change order;
- **Natural Resource Block Grant**
 - TSA 8 project status review, Shorewood Drive technical discussion/summary report/distribution to landowners
- **Non-Industrial Private Forests - Phase 2 (NIPF 2)**
 - Grant tracking templates; work plan review and updates with BWSR
- **Wood Ash**
 - X

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

June 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 borings at Randy Crane property.
- Shorewood landowners bank/houses problems and strategies with ACOE, BWSR, and other agencies.

Water Quality

- Calls to project manager and other agencies to check river level status.
- Ongoing sampling.
- Flux 32 work for major watersheds and estimating river pollutants.

Miscellaneous

- Various meeting cancellations, program changes, office coverage, last month mainly dealing with covid-19 responses to programs.
- Big Fork River bank survey work with Sam

Submitted by: Eric Olson

Water Resource Specialist Report

June 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
- Inspection program start/ check on inspectors
- Equipment handout

SWAG

- 2020 lab forms
- BF SWAG Project establishment form
- Lab data errors/issues
- Sampling

RBW

- Geomorph work w/ DNR MPCA
- Sediment fingerprinting field work
- Sediment fingerprinting conference call w/ MPCA, USGS
- Field work prep
- EQUIS Data entry, photolog, field notes
- BF watershed work planning, emails with MPCA staff
- BF call w/ MPCA, Itasca
- BF Erosion Survey float
- Little Fork Professional Judgement Group

Local Capacity

- County Mapping
- GIS Meeting/imagery

WPLMN

Miscellaneous

- Emails

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

June 2020

Local Capacity-Forestry

- Researched general forestry and forest health topics.
- Conducted forestry field work on two properties.
- Completed a CAP Plan/practice plans, a Forest Stewardship Plan, and begun another FSP
- Advised neighboring SWCD staff on developing a FSP cost-share program.
- Many landowner discussions involving native plant programs, FSP's, CAP's, SFIA, 2C tax designation, tree planting etc...
- Rescheduling and adapting logistics for everything due to pandemic and quarantine.

NIPF Wrap-up Grant

- Discussion and planning with BWSR stewardship coordinator on existing and future grants.
- Began exploring the Landowner Access Database.

Northern Landscape Committee

- Chaired, hosted, and took notes at the NLC meeting.

Kooch CWMA

- Discussed project expectations with contractors regarding the project.
- Selected potential cost-share properties with the help of land commissioner and reviewed them in the field.
- Coordinated property owners and renters on selected properties.
- Participated in an Invasive Plant Web meeting and UMN online training course.
- Discussed wild parsnip and buckthorn control with several landowners checked out buckthorn control equipment.
- Began discussing buckthorn removal project feasibility with partners.
- Worked on webpage layout and organizing web outreach material with other staff.

County Buffer

- Conducted outreach, tree planting, and distribution for people affected by the island view sewer project tree removal.
- Reviewed buffers that were flagged this spring.
- Continued ongoing monitoring in field and photo review.

MN Buffer Initiative

- Updated BuffCAT compliance tracking page and BWSSr staff on county compliance progress.
- Follow up discussion with landowner regarding buffer compliance.

Submitted by: James Aasen

Forest Resource Specialist

Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report

June 2020

Local Capacity:

- Website updates - transferring to new format
- eLINK entry

MPCA Rainy Basin Watershed Grant

- Planning for Lower Rainy and Rapid River Watersheds with LOW and EOR
- Work with Project Managers and other SWCDs on Charter documents
- Additional meeting with Lake of the Wood Sustainability Foundation and various SWCDs in the Basin to discuss "Ask an Expert" workshops (online) for the future.
- Planning for Smart Salt trainings
- PJG meeting
- Drain stencil assistance- LOW

PCA Wood Ash

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

CWMA:

- Begin website page
- Create script for landowner calls
- Work with city (assist FRS)

NRBG Grants

- eLINK
- climatology data entry/scan/send (March-May)
- Set up new climatology volunteer

General Administration

Board meeting prep; minutes; website maintenance; credit card tracking; timesheet updates and email cleanup

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator