

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.**

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

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

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

- 2020/9-1** Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt to approve the agenda as presented.
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.
- 2020/9-2** Motion by Linder, seconded by Aitchison to approve the minutes from the August 3, 2020 regular meeting as presented.
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.
- 2020/9-3** Motion by Linder, seconded by Lewis to ratify paid bills, check numbers 11073 to 11084 including electronic transfers and direct deposits, in the total amount of \$32,579.34 (details on file).
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.
- 2020/9-4** Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt to approve the Treasurer's report ending July 31, 2020 as presented.
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.
- 2020/9-5** Motion by Aitchison seconded by Voigt to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$1,402.50 and allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between September 15, 2020 and October 5, 2020, not to exceed budget.
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.

Guest Introductions

None

REPORTS

Supervisor Reports:

Voigt reported on his attendance at the Ask an Expert meeting on August 19th.

NRCS District Conservationist Report:

See attached.

District Administrator Report:

See attached.

The District Administrator informed the Board that an email was received today congratulating the District on being selected for the Section 319 Small Watersheds Focus program Group C.

Resource Conservationist Report:

See attached.

Water Resources Specialist Report:

See attached.

Forest Resource Specialist Report:

See attached.

Program Coordinator:

See attached.

The Program Coordinator discussed an invitation from the Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships to submit an application for Board Member appointment.

- 2020/9-6 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the Program Coordinator to accept a Board Member appointment with the Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, if selected.**
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

COVID-19 Update

The District Administrator updated the Board on the State of MN COVID-19 status.

Koochiching County Commissioners discussed the availability of CARES Act funding for COVID-19 related expenses. The District Administrator will work with the County Administrator on the application process.

Cost Share Project

The Board reviewed an amendment and final voucher for payment for CS 2019-2.

- 2020/9-7 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder approving amendment 2020-1 for CS 2019-2.**
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.
- 2020/9-8 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder authorizing final payment of FY19 state cost share funds in the amount of \$2114.00 for CS 2019-2 on the basis of 75% of the total project cost of \$11,200.**
Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.

FY20 Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network (WPLMN) Contract

- 2020/9-9 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis authorizing the District to enter into the FY 2020 WPLMN contract for the Rainy River Basin WPLMN Sampling Program and authorizing the District Administrator's signature for contract execution.**

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

USDA-NRCS updated Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

The District Administrator and NRCS Team Lead discussed the MOA history and purpose.

2020/9-10 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt authorizing the District to enter into the MOA between USDA-NRCS and Koochiching SWCD and authorizing Chair Aitchison's signature.

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

Upcoming Meetings:

The District Administrator discussed changes to the 2020 BWSR Academy training format which will be online and will not require a registration fee. Staff will be allowed to attend applicable sessions at their discretion.

Permits

None

General Business

None.

Public Comment:

Commissioner Adee commented that anyone wanting a mail-in ballot should make their request to the County Auditor as soon as possible.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, October 5 at 7:00 pm via teleconference.**

Adjournment:

2020/9-11 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Lewis to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

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

Submitted by:

Board Secretary, Richard Dreher

Date

Approved:

Chair, George Aitchison

Date

Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report

August 2020

- **BWSR Conservation Delivery**
 - Board meeting
- **BWSR Cost Share**
 - Amendment/final payment voucher/discussions re: CS 2019-1; cost share invoice template/email with BWSR BC
- **BWSR Local Capacity**
 - PCA Intake Study review/discussions; Water Levels Committee WebEx meetings/emails/phone calls; Website updates; Flood forecasting communication protocol; Shorewood Drive slumping discussions/correspondence; Rainy Basin meeting, Adaptive Management Committee directive review; 319 grant info; water testing info for landowner; water level communications with landowners; IRLWWB webex/materials;
- **County/District**
 - Governor/MASWCD updates on COVID-19; staff work load updates; FY 2020 Section 319 2nd interview; finalize 2021 County Budget request; 2019 Financial Audit – files/scans/uploads; program installs on new office computers;
- **MPCA Contracts**
 - Grant /time & expense tracking; invoice prep; project manager emails/discussions re: change orders/new contracts; subcontractor invoice report;
- **Natural Resource Block Grant**
 - Surface water grant info/discussions/email; Landscape Stewardship Plan grant/workplan info for Big Fork River watershed; review MPCA Rainy River report;
- **Non-Industrial Private Forests - Phase 2 (NIPF 2)**
 - Draft project invoice/deliverables template

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

August 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.
- Int'l Falls city projects outside of city limits.

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.
- Visit properties with JPB for remainder of work at Mike Barnes property along with agreements and vouchers.
- Shorewood landowners bank/houses problems and strategies with ACOE, BWSR, and other agencies. JPB to get quotes from geotechnical engineer and provide recommendations and feedback for slope issues.

Water Quality

- Calls to project manager and other agencies to check river level status.
- Ongoing sampling.
- New contract and discussion for program.

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.
- 319 grant interview with MPCA, DNR, and staff.
- Hazardous waste assistance.
- Assistance with hwy. staff and landowners for potential beaver removal and blasting due to excess water, culvert directions, and bank erosion.

Submitted by: Eric Olson

Water Resource Specialist Report

August 2020

AIS

- Budget review
- Invoicing
- 2020 Inspection program planning
- Calls/emails w/ Always There Staffing
- Inspector equipment prep/tablet updating
- Check on inspectors

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

LWM

- 319 Grant calls
- Lower Rainy WRAPS conversations
- SSTS info
- Staff meeting
- Watershed field work planning

WPLMN

Miscellaneous

- Emails

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

August 2020

Local Capacity-Forestry

- Researched general forestry and forest health topics.
- Completed a Forest Stewardship Plan and begun another
- 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.
- Presented on PFM and Stewardship Practices as part of the Ask and Expert webinar series.
- Participated in a Forest Service Future Forest Modeling project advisory meeting.
- Began planning for upcoming Landscape Stewardship Planning Activities for the Big Fork River Watershed.
- Participated in the PCA 319 grant interviews.

NIPF Wrap-up Grant

- Discussion and planning with BWSR stewardship coordinator on existing and future grants.
- Completed Access class and received certification.

Northern Landscape Committee

- Participated in an MFRC Landscape Committee Leadership Web Meeting.
- Secured speakers and organized the next NLC meeting.

Kooch CWMA

- Discussed project expectations with contractors regarding the project.
- Coordinated projects with property owners and renters on selected properties.
- Discussed wild parsnip and buckthorn control with several landowners, checked out buckthorn control equipment.

County Buffer

- Continued ongoing monitoring in field and photo review.
- Discussed control options and BMPs with landowners with concerns about invasive species in buffer areas.

MN Buffer Initiative

- Updated BuffCAT compliance tracking page and BWSR staff on county compliance progress.

Submitted by: James Aasen

Forest Resource Specialist

Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report

August 2020

Local Capacity:

- eLINK entry
- Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships Board Member Application (Discussion)

MPCA Rainy Basin Watershed Grant

- Lower Rainy and Rapid River Watersheds with LOW and EOR, Core Team Meeting
- Create contact list for watersheds
- Running weekly series of "Ask An Expert" Online seminars, each Wednesday through Sept. 9 in partnership with other organizations
- Assisting with/hosting Smart Salt trainings (August 25-26)
- Big Fork Charter doc meeting and review
- Sit in press conference call for Rainy River/Rainy Lake

PCA Wood Ash

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

NRBG Grants

- eLINK data entry
- Household Hazardous Waste assistance
- Assist with 319 second interview
- website work with self and web designer
- KnowB4 training
- Work with Environmental Services weekly - knowledge sharing

General Administration

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

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator