

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REORGANIZATIONAL BOARD MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
COURTHOUSE COUNTY BOARD ROOM
MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.**

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
	Sam Soderman	Water Resource Specialist
	James Aasen	Forest Resource Specialist
	Wayne Skoe	Koochiching County Commissioner
	Kevin Adee	Koochiching County Commissioner
	Jody Peek	NRCS Team Lead

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

As per District policy to elect the chairman and vice chairman on a rotational basis, Supervisor Eldon Voigt was elected Chair and Supervisor Richard Dreher was elected Vice Chair for calendar year 2021.

Supervisor Ralph Lewis accepted the office of Board Treasurer and Supervisor George Aitchison accepted the office of Board Secretary for calendar year 2021.

Chair Voigt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2021/1-1 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Linder to approve the agenda as presented.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.**

**2021/1-2 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder to approve the minutes dated December 14,
2020 as presented.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.**

**2021/1-3 Motion by Linder, 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 & Program Coordinator
● 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)

And 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 2021 mileage reimbursement rate set by the IRS;
- keep Bremer Bank and Border State Bank as official depositories of the Koochiching SWCD (see MN Statute 118A.002);
- keep the International Falls 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, and Linder. Motion carried.

2021/1-4 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder approving updated asset inventory list as of 12/31/2020 as presented (details on file).

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

2021/1-5 Motion by Linder seconded by Lewis to ratify paid bills, check numbers 11048 to 11130 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$40,907.65 (details on file).

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

2021/1-6 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to approve the Treasurer's report ending November 30, 2020 as presented.

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

2021/1-7 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$2,961.63 for MASWCD dues and to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between January 5, 2021 and February 1, 2021, not to exceed budget.

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

Supervisor Reports

None.

Committee Reports

2021/1-8 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis approving Budget Committee recommendation "BC 2021-1 Operating Budget" as presented (details on file).

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

2021/1-9 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Voigt approving Personnel Committee recommendation "PC 2021-1 Staff Wages and Benefits" as presented (details on file).

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

NRCS District Conservationist Report

See attached.

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.

The Program Coordinator proposed a thank you gift for climatology volunteers.

**2021/1-10 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Voigt authorizing the Program Coordinator to purchase gift cards, not to exceed \$25 per climatology volunteer (14 in total).
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS

2019 Independent Auditor's Report (Review/Approve)

**2021/1-11 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt to accept the 2019 financial audit report from Peterson Company, LTD.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.**

Upcoming Meetings:

TSA8 Board Meeting Teleconference

**2021/1-12 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder authorizing all board members to attend the TSA8 Board Meeting on January 12, 2021 via teleconference.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.**

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, February 1, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via teleconference.**

Adjourn Meeting:

**2021/1-13 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, and Linder. Motion carried.**

Submitted by:

Board Secretary, George Aitchison

Date

Approved:

Chair, Eldon Voigt

Date

Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report

December 2020

- **BWSR Buffer Law**
 - 2021 work plan review with ESD
- **BWSR Conservation Delivery**
 - eLINK updates; water quality project discussions with BWSR
- **BWSR Local Capacity**
 - Staff oversight/assistance
- **County/District**
 - COVID-19/Legislative updates; staff work load updates; 2021 budget updates; Board Meeting; 1W1P webex; 2021 master timesheet coding; 2021 Tree Sale order form review, year-end financial review
- **MPCA Contracts**
 - 319 nine element planning meeting with MPCA; partner communications; review Draft Rapid River Watershed Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)
- **Natural Resource Block Grant**
 - Shorewood Drive slumping discussions/correspondence; eLINK updates; 319 grant communications with MPCA; 2021 NRBG service agreement with ESD

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

December 2020

WCA

- 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.
- Environmental worksheet assessments for various projects mainly involving snowmobile clubs.

Wood Ash

- Assisting landowners with process/working with DH contracting.
- Ash production is on average lower (~2 loads/day)
- Working with DH contracting on permits and areas to dump/spread with current conditions.
- Total permits for 2020 was 122 on 3580 acres averaging a pH of 5.9.

Cost Share

- Working with TSA 8 project facilitator/engineers/WSB on shorewood drive plans and details. Borings occurred on 12-2 and 12-3 for shorewood drive to a depth of around 50 feet at 2 locations.

Water Quality

- Calls to project manager and other agencies to check river level status.
- Minimal winter sampling occurring this year. 1 sample every 2 months on major watershed sites.

Miscellaneous

- Various meeting cancellations, program changes, office coverage, last month mainly dealing with covid-19 responses to programs.
- Assisting RLPOA on feasibility of obtaining a grant for increasing water flow, removing cattails, and restoring native veg.
- 319 grant meeting and discussion.
- Vacation used

Submitted by: Eric Olson

Water Resource Specialist Report

December 2020

AIS

- Budget review
- Invoicing
- Calls/emails w/ Always There Staffing
- Finalize inspection data
- Year end write-up
- 2021 NSL contract review/budget
- End of year meeting with NSL

SWAG

- 2020 data check
- Photolog, field sheets
- Lab data errors/issues

RBW

- Geomorph work w/ DNR MPCA
- Sediment fingerprinting field work
- Field work prep
- EQUIS Data entry, photolog, field notes
- BF watershed work planning, emails with MPCA staff
- BF call w/ MPCA, Itasca
- Rat Root River conversation with MPCA
- Rat Root River document review

Local Capacity

LWM

- Lower Rainy WRAPS conversations
- Staff meeting
- Watershed field work planning
- Water plan watershed work
- 319 Grant document

WPLMN

Miscellaneous

- Emails
- Vacation/Holidays
- Staff meeting

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

December 2020

Local Capacity-Forestry

- Researched general forestry and forest health topics.
- Many landowner discussions involving native plant programs, FSP's, CAP's, SFIA, 2C tax designation, tree planting etc...
- Worked with multiple landowners to coordinate forest plans.
- Worked with County ES department on Island view sewer project tree planting planning for spring.
- Conducted field work and completed a forest plan.
- Rescheduling and adapting logistics for everything due to pandemic and quarantine.
- Processed and ordered trees for requested custom orders for spring sale.
- Created stewardship Instagram articles for social media outreach programs.
- Wrote an article for the 2021 district newsletter.
- Began coordinating spring native plant sale with nursery.

NIPF Wrap-up Grant

- Discussion and planning with BWSR stewardship coordinator on existing and future grants.
- Built the first stages of an access database for forest stewardship activity tracking. Distributed to partners.
- Participated in weekly meetings with grant partners to collaborate on shared action items and discuss progress.

Northern Landscape Committee

- Attended the Minnesota Forest Resource Partnership Meeting
- Coordination with participants and speakers, correspondence and follow up material emailed to region participants.

MN Buffer Initiative

- Updated BuffCAT compliance tracking page and BWSR staff on county compliance progress.
- Worked with district and County ES staff planning buffer technical services and island view sewer project tree planting for spring 2021.
- Continued to use new county aerial photography for buffer compliance web review.

Submitted by: James Aasen

Forest Resource Specialist

Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report

December 2020

Local Capacity:

- eLINK entry
- Website page development
- NERSDP planning meetings
- Instagram posts

MPCA Rainy Basin Watershed Grant

- Lower Rainy and Rapid River Watersheds with LOW and EOR, planning for Big Fork River Watershed Public Participation Meeting (December 15) prep and followup
- Big Fork public participation meetings with MPCA and Itasca SWCD, and one small team meeting
- Rapid River TMDL discussions and planning

PCA Wood Ash

- Updated summary, hauling reports and spreading reports
- End user forms
- Landowner contacts as necessary

NRBG Grants

- eLINK data entry
- website work
- Climatology reporting

General Administration

Board meeting prep; minutes; website maintenance; credit card tracking; vacation and holiday; weekly staff meetings and email cleanup

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator