

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
MONDAY, JULY 12, 2021 at 7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: Supervisors Lewis, Voigt, Linder, Dreher

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Supervisor Aitchison

OTHERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: Jolen Simon, Eric Olson, James Aasen

OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Pam Tomevi, Kevin Adee (Koochiching County Commissioner); Jody Peek (NRCS); Will Lee (NRCS); Wayne Skoe (Koochiching County Commissioner)

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

2021/7-1 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder to approve the agenda as presented.

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

2021/7-2 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2021 regular meeting as presented.

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

2021/7-3 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder to ratify paid bills, check numbers 11175 to 11186 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$55,771.27 (details on file).

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

2021/7-4 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to approve the Treasurer's report ending May 31, 2021 as presented.

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

2021/7-5 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between July 13, 2021 and August 2, 2021, not to exceed budget.

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

Guest Introductions

None.

REPORTS

Voigt reported on his and Lewis' attendance at the Area VIII meeting during which it was reported that Local Capacity Funding for 2022 was approved as part of the Clean Water Fund and that an increase in Supervisor per diem rate was approved, raising the maximum amount from \$75 to \$125.

Committee Reports:

None.

NRCS District Conservationist Report:

- Local Working Group for Koochiching County is now complete.
- 7 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) contracts in Koochiching County, 6 of which were pre-approved.
- Grazing Workshop in Lake of the Woods will have two additional speakers on Friday, July 30th from 9:00 a.m. to noon.
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) received a few applications in our region, none in Koochiching County at this time.
- NRCS is getting calls from concerned citizens regarding the current drought. If the SWCD is contacted by producers in need of drought relief, forward information to Peek or Lee in case an emergency signup becomes available.

District Administrator Report:

See attached.

Resource Conservationist Report:

See attached. Discussion also included two possible cost-share assistance sites: one west of International Falls and one near Rainy Lake.

Water Resources Specialist Report:

None - will report June and July next meeting.

Forest Resource Specialist Report:

See attached.

Program Coordinator:

See attached.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS**Internet Services**

The Administrator reported that there is currently one older Jetpack unit and one data line through Verizon Wireless that provides mobile internet access to the SWCD office for guests and partners as well as SWCD devices that are not connected to the county server. She expressed a short term need to have mobile internet access while remote working intermittently until the end of the year but wished to avoid removing the current mobile internet access from the office. Additional discussion included the possibility of installing an access point in the SWCD office which would require a one-time cost for the device, have no monthly fee, and eliminate the need for an in-office mobile internet device and data line.

2021/7-6 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the Administrator to work with the Koochiching County IS Director to install an internet access point in the SWCD office with cost not to exceed \$700, approve the purchase of an upgraded Jetpack unit with cost not to exceed \$100, and approve the temporary addition of a

second data line through the existing Verizon Wireless account that may remain active only until the installation of the internet access point is complete or December 31, 2021 whichever is earlier.

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

The Administrator informed the Board that while the MASWCD Annual Convention has typically been held over the first Monday in December, this year it will be held over the second Monday in December. She explained that, when setting the SWCD board meeting schedule for 2021, the Board approved moving the December 6th board meeting to December 13th to avoid a conflict with the Convention.

2021/7-7 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt to change the Koochiching SWCD December meeting date back to the original date of December 6th due to the MASWCD Annual Convention taking place December 12-14 this year.

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

2021 MASWCD Community Conservationist and Outstanding Forest Steward Awards

Discussion included potential nominees for each award. The staff will create a list of potential candidates to present to the Board for consideration at the August meeting.

Upcoming Meetings:

For information only: Area VIII Fall Tour in Cass County, dates TBD.

Permits

None.

General Business

- The District Administrator reviewed the Chapter 14 of the 2021 session laws which will take effect August 1st, 2021.
- Pioneer Days organizers requested the donation of one 2019 Koochiching County Plat Map Book to be raffled at the Pioneer Days event in Birchdale, MN.

2021/7-8 Motion by Dreher, seconded by Linder authorizing the donation of one 2019 Koochiching County Plat Map Book to the Pioneer Days event in Birchdale, MN.

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, August 2nd at 7:00 pm in the Koochiching County Courthouse Boardroom** with teleconference option available for guest attendance.

Adjournment:

2021/7-9 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

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

Submitted by:

Board Secretary, George Aitchison

Date

Approved:

Chair, Eldon Voigt

Date

Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report

June 2021

- **Aquatic Invasive Species**
 - Call from boater/info regarding decontamination procedures
- **BWSR Conservation Delivery**
 - eLINK updates; website updates; Local Work Group meeting/discussions/follow-up; landowner assistance on native habitat programs; Forest Stewardship contracts; contract amendment with DNR and budget development for new Landscape Stewardship Plans; Area VIII meeting; landowner complaint re: brush removal near Northome
- **BWSR Cooperative Weed Management Area**
 - Budget and workload updates with staff
- **BWSR Local Capacity**
 - Staff oversight/assistance; IRLWWB WebEx/WLC meetings; Communication Protocol development as pre IJC Directive to WLC; Flood Forecasting Advisory Group webex; rule curve update for Rainy Lake Property Owners Association
- **County/District**
 - Board Meeting; County Board minutes; software updates; discussions with IS Dept re: access point/internet access; meeting set up with MARCO rep re: MFP lease;
- **DNR Contracts:**
 - Invoicing/grant and expense tracking; program communications with project managers;
- **MPCA Contracts**
 - Invoice prep, receipt scan/match, accounts payable; Program communications with project manager/partners re: contract amendment; contact subcontractors re: possible shutdown and preparations in case of work stoppage
- **Natural Resource Block Grant**
 - eLINK updates; 319 NKE work plan development with staff/MPCA
- **NIPF2**
 - Budget updates and expense tracking; template development for grant tracking/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

June 2021

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 on regulations and upcoming projects.
- Working with conservation officers on potential wetland violations.

Wood Ash

- Assisting landowners with process/working with DH contracting.
- Ash production is on average ~2 loads/day.
- Working with DH contracting on permits and areas to dump/spread with current conditions.

CPL Grants

- Assisting RLPOA on feasibility of obtaining a grant for increasing water flow, removing cattails, and restoring native veg.
- Meet with U of M students on cattail management within jackfish bay on Rainy Lake.

Cost Share

- Work with JPB, landowners, and geotechnical engineers to come up with a feasible solution to Shorewood Drive issues.
- Site visits and concept plans for various landowners property issues.

Water Quality

- Calls to project manager and other agencies to check river level status.
- Routinely sampling 9 sites based on flow and water levels.
- Flux32 pollutant load estimating program for various sampling sites.

Miscellaneous

- Vacation

Submitted by: Eric Olson

Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

June 2021

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...
- Continued to write outreach articles for social media pages.
- Conducted forestry fieldwork.
- Began developing an FSP.
- Assisted several landowners with SFIA enrollment and map development.
- Began work coordinating two presentations for BWSR academy 2021.
- Coordinated presentations and led NLC meeting as chair.
- Attended the MFRC Landscape Advisory sub-committee meeting on behalf of the NLC.
- Attended the NRCS/SWCD Local Work Group meeting.

Cooperative Weed Management Area and Grant

- Coordinated projects and discussed with landowners.
- Discussions with CWMA partners.
- Secured a certified contractor and planned projects.

NIPF Wrap-up Grant

- Began developing an improved FSP template.
- Attended the Mississippi Headwaters forestry implementation meeting on request from BWSR staff.

County Buffer

- Planted visual screen trees around sewer project grinder station on gold shores.

MN Buffer Initiative

- Continued to update BuffCAT compliance tracking page and BWSR staff on county compliance progress as needed.
- Continue buffer field monitoring.

Submitted by: James Aasen

Forest Resource Specialist

Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report

June 2021

Local Capacity:

- Website page development and updates
- 319 review and meeting
- Attend Local Working Group: June 14th at 7:00 p.m.
- Discussions on BWSR Academy training
- Northern Landscape Committee

MPCA Rainy Basin Watershed Grant

- Coordination regarding Lower Rainy and Rapid River Watersheds with LOW and EOR
- Big Fork Team Meeting
- Review Rapid River WRAPS Draft
- Review Little Fork Monitoring and Assessment Report
- Begin Invoicing
- Sediment fingerprinting document and meeting

PCA Wood Ash

- Begin Invoicing
- Coordination with DH and PCA
- Begin Invoicing

NIPF

- Assist with forest stewardship plan design

NRBG Grants

- eLINK data entry
- website work
- Climatology reporting
- Outdoor Education Day, June 1st

General Administration

Board meeting prep; minutes; plat book customer assistance; website maintenance; credit card tracking; weekly staff meetings and email cleanup

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator