

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2021 at 7:00 P.M.**

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

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None

OTHERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: Jolen Simon

OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Pam Tomevi, James Aasen, Sam Soderman, Eric Olson, Will Lee (NRCS); Kevin Adey (Koochiching County Commissioner); Wayne Skoe (Koochiching County Commissioner)

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

2021/8-1 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to approve the agenda as presented.

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

2021/8-2 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to approve the minutes from the July 12, 2021 regular meeting as presented.

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

2021/8-3 Motion by Linder, seconded by Lewis to ratify paid bills, check numbers 11187 to 11197 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$36,685.57 (details on file).

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

2021/8-4 Motion by Linder, seconded by Lewis to approve the Treasurer's report ending June 30, 2021 as presented.

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

2021/8-5 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between August 3, 2021 and September 13, 2021, not to exceed budget.

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

Guest Introductions

None.

REPORTS

Lewis commented that the Administrator's recent letter to the Board clarifying the details of her request for a temporary second data line was not necessary since he felt the original request was clear to the Board and that the August meeting minutes accurately reflected the discussion and board action to approve the request as presented.

Voigt reported on his attendance at the SWCD Forestry Association Meeting and tour of the Badoura Nursery.

Committee Reports:

Chair Voigt reported that the Budget Committee met with the District Administrator earlier in the day to review and discuss the 2022 County Budget Proposal.

2021/8-6 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to accept the Budget Committee recommendation to submit the 2022 County Budget request at the same amount as 2021 and authorize the Administrator's and Chair's electronic signatures.

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

NRCS District Conservationist Report:

See attached.

Additional discussion included the Lake of the Woods grazing workshop which had a total attendance of approximately 41, including 3 producers from Koochiching County.

District Administrator Report:

See attached.

Additional discussion included the CWMA grant and the Administrator's request for clarification on Board motion 2020/5-7 as to whether or not it included authorization for her to pay contractor invoices for cost-share contracts as well other program expenses according to the approved work plan and budget.

2021/8-7 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis to clarify that motion 2020/5-7 authorizing the Administrator to solicit bids and enter into agreements with contractors and landowners for the Cooperative Weed Management Area program included the authorization to pay program expenses and contractor invoices, not to exceed the approved work plan budget, with ratification by the Board at the next meeting following the date of payment(s).

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

Discussion also included a grant received by Koochiching County Land and Forestry for weed management on county land and current efforts/future plans to treat wild parsnip in specific areas.

Resource Conservationist Report:

See attached.

2021/8-8 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis authorizing staff to write a letter of support for the CPL grant application being developed with the Rainy Lake Property Owners Association (RLPOA) for the restoration of waterflow with culvert placement paired with non-native hybrid cattail removal to restore wetland communities.

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

Water Resources Specialist Report:

See attached.

Forest Resource Specialist Report:

See attached.

Program Coordinator:

See attached.

OLD BUSINESS

2021 MASWCD Community Conservationist and Outstanding Forest Steward Awards

Discussion included potential nominees for each award.

2021/8-9 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis to accept staff recommendations for the Community Conservationist and Outstanding Forest Steward Awards as discussed and authorize staff to complete and submit the MASWCD award applications.

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

NEW BUSINESS

Supervisor Per Diem Rates

The Administrator informed the Board that the new supervisor per diem rate cap of \$125 (up from \$75) took effect on August 1, 2021 and that any change to current supervisor per diem rate(s) requires official Board action.

2021/8-10 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to table discussion on any change to supervisor per diem rates until the reorganization meeting in January 2022, as per District policy that states, “...the District Board of Supervisors shall set the mileage and meeting per diem rates at the Annual Meeting of the Board each January”.

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

Multi-Function Printer Lease

The Administrator informed the Board that the current 5-year lease with Marco for the Konica C227 multi-function printer (MFP) is set to expire in December and reviewed a proposal from Marco for a new 5-year lease on a Konica C300i which would begin at the time of delivery, replace the current lease, and result in a savings of \$35.81 per month.

2021/8-11 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to accept the new proposal from Marco to lease a Konica C300i MFP as presented (details on file) and authorize the Administrator to sign the new lease.

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

Upcoming Meetings:

The Area VIII Fall Meeting and Tour will be hosted by Cass County SWCD and is tentatively scheduled for September 23-24. Registration forms are expected to arrive later this month.

2021/8-12 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison authorizing all staff and supervisors to attend the Area VIII Fall Meeting and Tour.

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

Supervisors Linder and Voigt stated that they are unable to attend the MARC&D business meeting and Forest Carbon Markets presentation on Thursday, August 5th and Friday August 6th.

2021/8-13 Motion by Linder, seconded by Voigt authorizing the Forest Resource Specialist to attend the Forest Carbon Markets presentation in their place on Friday, August 6th.

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

Permits

None.

General Business

The Administrator discussed a recent change to QuickBooks Payroll that includes an automated income and employment verification service powered by the Work Number from Equifax that will enable the verification to occur automatically rather than being sent to the employer to complete and return. Unless the District opts out of this change, the automated service will go into effect on August 31st. The Board offered no objections and verbally agreed to allow this update to take place, with the understanding that, according to QuickBooks, no data is shared unless an employee specifically requests it to be shared, usually as part of an application process for loans, credit, etc.

The Administrator reviewed a notice by the City of Big Falls regarding their updated Wellhead Protection Plan Amendment and map and their request to include this plan in any discussions related to updates to the Koochiching County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan (CLWMP).

The Administrator shared a request from MASWCD for supervisor and staff to provide input by August 13th via online survey regarding program topics for the 2021 MASWCD Convention in December.

Public Comment:

None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, September 13th, at 7:00 pm in the Koochiching County Courthouse Boardroom** with teleconference option available for guest attendance.

The Chair encouraged staff and guests to attend the next regular board meeting via teleconference, if possible, to reduce the number of people gathered in-person due to ongoing Covid19 concerns.

Adjournment:

2021/8-14 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 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

July 2021

- **Aquatic Invasive Species**
 - Expense tracking/invoice prep and submit
- **BWSR Conservation Delivery**
 - eLINK updates; website updates; USGS partner communications, project review, and preparation for Conservation Partner Legacy (CPL) grant presentation
- **BWSR Cooperative Weed Management Area**
 - Landowner contract review/cost share payment receipt; contractor invoice and documentation
- **BWSR Local Capacity**
 - Staff oversight/assistance; WLC Communication Protocol; Flood Forecasting webinar; WLC reports on drought conditions
- **County/District**
 - Board Meeting; County Board minutes; 2022 budget prep; work with IS Dept re: access point/internet access next steps; meeting with MARCO re: MFP lease; County computer security training; plat book inventory reconciliation
- **MPCA Contracts**
 - Finalize Invoices and submit; communications with project manager/partners; contract amendment final review and signing
- **Natural Resource Block Grant**
 - x
- **NIPF2**
 - Time and expense tracking; template development for grant tracking/invoicing/match documentation
- **Other**
 - Leave 7/2; 7/6 – 7/9; 7/30

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

July 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.
- Site visit wetland bank for vegetation management plan and compliance in Northome with BWSR, ESD, ACOE.

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.
- CPL grant opens Aug. 1st and ends Sept. 20th.
- Working with private contractors, Kooch County, RLPOA, DNR and other organizations for finding figures and preparing for grant opening.

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.

Submitted by: Eric Olson

Water Resource Specialist Report

July 2021

AIS

- Calls/emails w/ Always There Staffing
- Inspection program documents filed
- 2021 NSL contract review/budget
- Watercraft inspection program planning
- Training coordination for inspectors
- Inspector equipment prep
- Inspector check
- Inspection program management

SWAG

- 2021 monitoring call
- Sampling

RBW

- Rapid Geomorphic Assessment on LF Watershed streams
- Upland sediment sampling in LF watershed
- Geomorph work w/ DNR MPCA
- Sediment fingerprinting field work, passive sampler install
- Field work prep
- Rapid River and Lower Rainy mapping, project development
- Site review for sediment fingerprinting field work, USGS meetings and collab

LWM

- Rapid River WRAPS conversations
- Jackfish Bay grant planning

WPLMN

Miscellaneous

- Emails
- Staff meeting

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

July 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.
- Completed one FSP and began developing another.
- Assisted several landowners with SFIA enrollment and map development.
- Began work coordinating two presentations for BWSR academy 2021.
- Attended the MFRC Quarterly Meeting
- Attended SWCD Forestry Association Meeting at the DNR Forest Nursery in Akley.
- Participated in the Rainy Lake Core Team WRAPS meeting.

Cooperative Weed Management Area and Grant

- Coordinated projects and discussed with landowners.
- Discussions with CWMA partners.
- 4 projects were completed, and post-application review was conducted.

NIPF Wrap-up Grant

- Continued developing an improved FSP template.

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

July 2021

Local Capacity:

- Website page development and updates
- Discussion meetings on BWSR Academy training with BWSR and N. St. Louis

MPCA Rainy Basin Watershed Grant

- Big Fork River Watershed Team Meeting
- Created and did Watershed Wednesdays for the Big Fork River Watershed, a social media social science gathering method.
- Review Rainy River-Rainy Lake Stressor ID report
- Prepped for and held a booth at the Voyageurs National Park Fishing Pier Grand Opening Event
- Submit Invoicing
- Complete and submit Semi-annual report
- Sediment fingerprinting document and meeting, created landowner information sheet and website for those who are being asked for property access.
- Amendment discussions

MPCA Rainy Basin International Watershed Coordinator Grant

- Finalize and submit invoice
- Complete and submit final report

PCA Wood Ash

- Invoicing
- Coordination with DH and PCA
- End User Forms sent and report updating complete

NIPF

- Assist with forest stewardship table of contents design, template

NRBG Grants

- website work
- Climatology reporting
-

General Administration

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

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator