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MINNESOTA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Minutes of the Sibley Soil & Water Conservation District, Conference Call on **June 9, 2020**.

The meeting was called to order by Chair – Evenson at 4:02 p.m.

Members Present: Chair, Loren Evenson
Vice Chair, Paul Wiemann
Secretary, Robert Nielsen
Member, Kathleen Thies

Others Present: District Manager, Joel Wurscher
District Technician, Jeremy Buckentin
Watershed Technician/Water Planner, Ron Otto
District Conservationist - NRCS, April Sullivan
Board Conservationist – BWSR, Jenny Mocol-Johnson

After the pledge of allegiance, Wurscher stated that the board meeting would be in accordance to MN Statute 13D.021. Wurscher followed that by announcing the meeting would be conducted by telephone due to the health pandemic and declared emergency. An in-person meeting would not be practical or prudent.

Upon a motion by Wiemann and seconded by Thies, it was moved to approve the June agenda including the cancellation of cost share. Ayes Evenson, Nielsen, Wiemann, Thies. Carried.

Upon a motion by Thies and seconded by Nielsen, it was moved to approve the minutes of the May 2020 meeting. Ayes Evenson, Thies, Wiemann, Nielsen. Carried.

Upon a motion by Nielsen and seconded by Thies it was moved to approve 32 paid bills for the month of May totaling \$32,212.04. Ayes Thies, Wiemann, Nielsen, Evenson. Carried.

Upon a motion by Thies and seconded by Nielsen, it was moved to approve the June 2020 Treasurer's report subjected to audit. Ayes Nielsen, Thies, Evenson, Wiemann. Carried.

Old Business: Upon a motion by Nielsen and seconded by Wiemann, it was moved to approve the final payout for Otto's sick leave at a rate of 60%, not to exceed 800 hours. Ayes Thies, Wiemann, Nielsen, Evenson. Carried.

LWG Meeting: Wurscher notified the board the need to schedule a Sibley County Local Work Group (LWG) meeting for FY2021. This would have to be scheduled by July 31, 2020 and by looking at last year's invite list the meeting could include up to 21 individuals. Wurscher went through last year's agenda to give an example at what might be discussed. After some discussions amongst the board, a motion made by Wiemann, and seconded by Thies to host a LWG meeting on July 14th, starting at 3:00pm, located in the Sibley County Service Center if available. Ayes Thies, Wiemann, Nielsen, Evenson. Carried.

SWMP – City of Henderson: Wurscher revealed to the board that the City of Henderson is pursuing a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) including watershed delineations, water quality/quantity analysis, and prioritize best management practice locations. They are looking at accomplishing this through a Clean Water Fund Accelerated Implementation Grant (AIG). Per statute this could not be attained on their own and would need to partner up with either the County or SWCD. SEH, on behalf of the City approached Wurscher requesting this

partnership. Wurscher described to the board an example of an application submitted for the City of Wahkon (Mille Lacs County) that would be similar to what Henderson is looking for. Mocal-Johnson detailed her past experience as a Water Planner dealing with an AIG for the City of Faribault in Rice County. She also notified the board that this particular funding stream will most likely not be available this year and what it means to become a Fiscal Agent in this situation. Wiemann stated that he is not opposed to working with the city, however if there is no benefit to the District, he is not interested in pursuing any grant. He added that BWSR has been trending towards offering less and less money for administration purposes on grants in general and that if it keeps up, Districts will go out of business. Evenson asked if Wurscher could seek out more information before the board makes a final decision. It was also decided to have Wurscher inquire about a representative from SEH or the City be present at next month's board meeting.

SSTS Program: Wurscher informed the board that he has been working with Laura Hacker from the Assessor's office, on transitioning the Ag BMP low interest SSTS loan program as well as the Low Income SSTS grant program back to the County. Otto gave a background of the programs and agreed that it would be a good fit having those programs administered out of the Courthouse. Despite this change, SWCD will still have to follow through any Ag BMP loans for conservation practices and equipment should money become available again through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

NRCS Report: Sullivan updated the board on the status of the potential CET position that may open up in Glencoe by July. Mattila is performing compliance spot checks in Scott and Carver Counties. Sullivan then updated the board about the EQIP and CSP programs. Thies asked Sullivan about the office opening back up and what their process was. Sullivan stated that FPAC had just sent out some guidance on Monday. Currently, their office is closed to the public and in person interactions are done by scheduled appointments and field visits.

Supervisor & Staff Report: Otto stated this past month he held two TEP meetings. In addition, he has received three new applications in which notice of applications (NOA) have been sent out. Ron told the board that there are twenty-one SSTS loans in progress right now. Ron concluded by stating his intentions of submitting a signed letter regarding his retirement from his position as Water Planner effective June 30th, 2020.

Buckentin informed the board about a tactical invasive plant management course he is taking part of. Buckentin updated the board that the County is currently flying the 2020 imagery at a 3" ortho scale. Lastly, Buckentin told the board that he has been on numerous site visits and has been completing geology reviews.

Other Business: None.

Next Meeting: July 14, 2020, starting at 4 p.m., Sibley County Service Center, 111 8th Street, Gaylord, MN.

Adjourn: Upon a motion by Thies seconded by Nielsen, it was moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:10 p.m. Ayes Wiemann, Evenson, Thies, Nielsen. Carried.

Approved: July 14, 2020

Secretary