



**Freeborn Soil & Water  
Conservation District**  
1400 West Main Street  
Albert Lea, MN 56007  
Phone: 507-373-5607 Ext. 3  
[www.freebornswcd.org](http://www.freebornswcd.org)

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**I. The meeting was called to order** at 1:30 P.M. by Chairman Don Kropp in our district office located at 1400 West Main Street, Albert Lea, MN. Kropp introduced guest Casey Madson.

**II. Those present were as follows:**

Don Kropp, Chairman	Mark Schaetzke, District Manager/Tech.
Chris Dahl, Vice-Chair	Brenda Lageson, Office/Assistant Manager
Dave Ausen, Treasurer	Lindsey Zeitler, District Technician
Paul Heers, Jr., Board Secretary	Gary Kurer, NRCS District Conservationist
Colin Wittmer, Supervisor	

**Absent:**

None

**III. First item of business was the oath of office for Don Kropp.**

**IV. Reorganization of SWCD Board Officers and Committee Appointments for 2017.**

- Chairman Kropp then began the reorganization process by asking what the board's wishes were for officers in 2017. A motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Dahl to keep the same officers as in 2016. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Then committee assignments were discussed. A motion was made by Dahl and seconded by Wittmer for committees to remain the same as in 2016. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried**

**Board positions are listed below: Committee appointments for 2017 as follows:**

Chairman:	Kropp	Budget Committee:	ALL
Vice-Chair:	Dahl	Legislative Committee:	Ausen and Dahl
Treasurer:	Ausen	Education Committee:	Kropp
Board Secretary:	Heers, Jr.	Personnel Committee:	Dahl & Wittmer
Supervisor:	Wittmer	State Cost-Share Committee:	ALL
		Joint Powers Board Rep.:	Heers, Jr.
		RC&D Rep.:	Heers, Jr.
		Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance Rep.:	Kropp

**I. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

- Minutes of the December 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting** were approved as presented on a motion made by Wittmer and seconded by Dahl. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**

**II. Treasurer's Report:**

- The treasurer's balance as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016**, was \$8,569.80 in checking and \$737,262.91 in savings. A motion approving the treasurer's report as read and payment of bills was made by Wittmer and seconded by Heers, Jr. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**

- Read letter from County Administrator Kluever regarding our 2017 appropriation request. After some discussion a motion was made by Ausen and seconded By Heers, Jr. to set the **2017 Budget** as printed. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Grant actions and/or information.
  - Update on the County Water Plan status which we have adopted as our Comprehensive Plan. BWSR sent back to county to make the plan more prioritized, targeted and measurable. Our grants remain on hold until it is approved.
  - Motion to accept 2017 Buffer Grant by Ausen and seconded by Heers, Jr. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
  - Motion to accept the 2017 Capacity Grant by Ausen and seconded by Dahl. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Designate official bank depository for 2017. A motion was made by Heers, Jr. and seconded by Dahl to keep Security Bank Minnesota, as our official bank depository for 2017. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. **The motion carried.** Wittmer abstained.
- Reviewed materials from MASWCD and request for payment of dues for 2017. A motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Heers, Jr. to pay the 2017 dues to MASWCD in the amount of \$3,425.83. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Reviewed materials from NACD and request for payment of dues for 2017. A motion was made by Heers, Jr. and seconded by Ausen to pay the 2017 dues to NACD in the amount of \$775.00. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Reviewed request from Southeast SWCD Technical Support JPB dues for 2017. After some discussion a motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Ausen to pay membership dues of \$1,000.00 to JPB. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Reviewed request from Southeast Area MASWCD dues for 2017. After some discussion a motion was made by Dahl and seconded by Wittmer to pay dues of \$500.00 to Southeast MASWCD. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Reviewed request from Southeast Area Envirothon donation for 2017. After some discussion a motion was made by Dahl and seconded by Heers, Jr. to pay donation of \$175.00 to Southeast Area Envirothon. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Reviewed MCIT insurance coverage bill for 2017. After some discussion a motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Ausen to approve payment to MCIT for \$4,750. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Reviewed the Cedar 1Watershed 1Plan MOU, and assign a representative and an alternate. A motion was made by Ausen approving this MOU with Heers, Jr. as representative and Dahl as alternate. Seconded by Wittmer. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**

- Discussion regarding the timely signature of documents was discussed. A motion was made by Heers, Jr. and seconded by Wittmer authorizing the Chairman of the Board or Vice Chairman to sign contracts or agreements as needed. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Discussion was then held regarding electronic payments. A motion was made by Heers, Jr. and seconded by Wittmer authorizing the SWCD bookkeeper to make these payments as needed. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Discussion regarding allowable IRS mileage rates. A motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Dahl to set the 2017 mileage rate at .53 per mile for authorized travel for SWCD business. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**

### III. State Cost Share Program Actions and/or Information:

- None at this time.

### IV. New Business:

- NRCS Agency report was given by Kurer. He reported on the status of EQIP, CSP, ACEP, staff position, and the Client Gateway for Ag Customers.
- Our SWCD was approached to act as a pilot for shared services. This Operational Agreement would trade our services for use of NRCS equipment and/or computer access with programs. After some discussion a motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Dahl to enter into this pilot program. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Discussion was held regarding the hiring of our new Technician position. A motion was made by Heers, Jr. and seconded by Ausen authorizing Manager Schaetzke to offer the position as recommended by the personnel committee. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Another motion was made by Heers, Jr. and seconded by Ausen that a 6 month probation would be required to be successfully fulfilled in order to achieve permanent status and receive employee benefits as stated in the SWCD employee handbook. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Zeilter attended the Shell Rock Advisory meeting. Schaetzke attended a Blue Earth Pre-WRAPs, and plans to attend a New Richland flooding meeting on January 30.
- Zeitler has been working with the buffer tracking tool (BuffCAT) and gave a summary report for our county.
- Schaetzke informed the board of supervisors of an upcoming Soil Health workshop being held at Wedgewood Cove here in Albert Lea on Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> and encouraged attendance. After some discussion a motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Heers, Jr. authorizing attendance of supervisors and staff as their schedules allow. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**

- Staff requested authorization to advertise in the local media for our tree sale. A motion was made by Dahl and seconded by Ausen authorizing staff to advertise our 2017 tree sale. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Staff also requested looking into being able to accept credit cards this year. A motion was made by Dahl and seconded by Ausen authorizing staff to pursue this option. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Discussion was held on the upcoming preparation of the Annual Report, Plan and Spring Newsletter. Topics to be included; new staff, trees and current programs. Same format as last year.
- Lageson stated that our SWCD qualified for a small wellness grant with the SE Coop. Our SWCD would be required to match 10% to receive these funds. After some discussion a motion was made by Wittmer and seconded by Ausen to apply for these funds. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**
- Reviewed Correspondence Received. . .
  - Turtle Creek W.D. minutes from their Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> meeting
  - Save the date – SWCD Day at the Capitol is March 20 -21.
- Reviewed employee evaluations and SWCD budget for calendar year 2017, after some discussion a motion was made by Dahl and seconded by Wittmer to authorize a 4% increase to Schaetzke and Lageson. Zeitler will receive an additional \$1 per hour effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.** A copy of the SWCD's wage schedule is available at the SWCD office.

#### V. Adjournment:

- There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Ausen and seconded by Heers, Jr. Results of a roll call vote were as follows: Affirmative- Kropp, Dahl, Ausen, Heers, Jr. and Wittmer. Opposed -- None. **The motion carried.**

The next regular meeting will be held **Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017** at 1:30 P.M. at our SWCD office at 1400 West Main, Albert Lea.

These are preliminary minutes subject to board approval at the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors.  
Respectfully submitted,

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Paul Heers, Jr., Board Secretary

Date