



FREEBORN COUNTY
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
 MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
 Wednesday, December 11th, 2024, at 10:00 am

1. Call to Order

- The regular meeting of the Freeborn County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) was called to order by Chairman Christopher Dahl at the district office located at 1400 West Main Street, Albert Lea, MN on Wednesday, December 11th, 2024, at 10:00 am.

Attendees

- In attendance: Christopher Dahl (Chairman), Donald Kropp (Vice-Chairman), David Ausen (Treasurer), Curtis Helland (Board Secretary), Vickie Heers (Supervisor), Brenda Lageson (District Manager), Lindsey Cornell (Resource Conservationist), Chad Billat (Private Lands Biologist), Mark Trnka (Conservation Technician), Senja Viktora (District Technician), Brad Kramer (Citizen)

2. Approval of Minutes

- A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on November 14th, 2024, was made by Helland and seconded by Ausen. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. Treasurer’s Report

- Balance in checking account was \$76,315.54, savings \$685,700.26, CD (10 month) \$250,000.00, and CD (10 month) \$235,000.00 as of November 30th, 2024. A motion to approve treasurer’s report and payment of bills was made by Kropp and seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**
 - Dividend payment of \$714.00 from MCIT.
 - Security Bank Credit Card was officially closed.
 - Manager Lageson requested authorization to make year-end payments, budget adjustments, sign agreements and amendments, sign final financial reports for BWSR grants, payments, vouchers, etc. A motion to give authority to Lageson to take care of the above year-end housekeeping items was made by Kropp, seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. Cost Share & Grant Items

a. Cancellation Requests

	Project Type	Contract #	Funding Source-Grant ID	Amount Cancelled
i.	SAFE-CRP Incentive	WBIF-CW-FREE-22-15	C22-5721	\$7,500.00
ii.	Prairie Strip-CRP Incentive	WBIF-CW-FREE-22-14	C22-5721	\$8,484.00
iii.	Well Sealing	WBIF-CW-FREE-22-13	C22-5721	\$1,500.00
iii.	Prairie Strip-CRP Incentive	FY-24-SW-CRP-03	P24-0021	\$4,905.00
iv.	Well Sealing	WBIF-SW-FREE-23-16	C23-2187	\$1,500.00

A motion to approve all contracts for cancellation was made by Heers, seconded by Ausen. Helland abstained. **MOTION CARRIED.** For the 3 CRP incentive cancellations above, after BWSR review it was determined a different contract type/format should be used, these contracts are being canceled to allow for the use of the new contract form.

b. Contract Amendment Requests

- Cornell brought before the board a request to switch funding sources for well sealing contract WBIF-CW-FREE-22-12 from C22-5721 to C24-0179 and extend contract deadline by one year. A motion was made by Helland to approve amendment request for contract WBIF-CW-FREE-22-12 and switch funding from C22-5721 to C24-0179 and extend contract deadline by one year, seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- Cornell brought before the board a request to extend deadline for a well sealing contract WBIF-SW-FREE-23-13 by one year. A motion was made by Ausen to approve amendment request for contract WBIF-SW-FREE-23-13 and extend contract deadline by one year, seconded by Helland. **MOTION CARRIED.**

c. New Requests

- Billat brought before the board two new CRP incentive contracts for funding.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-CW-FREE-24-03	CRP incentive	\$8,484.00	\$8,484.00	C24-0179
WBIF-CW-FREE-24-04	CRP incentive	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	C24-0179

A motion was made by Helland to approve above contracts for funding, seconded by Kropp. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- Billat brought before the board a new CRP incentive contract for funding.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
FY-22-SW-CRP-04	CRP incentive	\$4,905.00	\$4,905.00	P24-0021

A motion was made by Heers to approve above contract for funding, seconded by Kropp. Helland abstained. **MOTION CARRIED.**

d. Final Payment Requests

- Billat brought before the board a request for payment for a CRP incentive contract.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Final Payment	Fund Source
FY-22-SW-CRP-04	CRP incentive	\$4,905.00	\$4,905.00	P24-0021

A motion was made by Kropp to approve contract above for payment, seconded by Heers. Helland abstained. **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. NRCS Report

- Kurer provided a written report for the board; report highlighted current staffing changes, and status of the: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

6. Supervisor Reports

Heers and Ausen reported attending the MASWCD State Convention on December 3-4.

- Reported changes to Area 7 MASWCD Bylaws to allow president to serve two, two-year terms.
- Randy Smith, Area 7 MASWCD President, was elected to Vice-President of State MASWCD.
- All resolutions were passed but one pertaining to easements.
- Reported this was the most attended state conventions.

7. Manager Report

- Lageson reported normal activities accomplished in the past month.
- Reported that the new Acting County Administrator will meet with her later this month.
- Updated board on the status of the Administrative Professional Position: 35 applications, 8 applicants meet minimum requirements, 4 applicants for interviewing.

8. Staff Reports

- Staff reports previously emailed to board members.
- Cornell informed the board the Freeborn Area Soil Health Team's Winter Workshop will be held on February 18th, 2025, in Owatonna, MN.
- Trnka reported to the board of squirrel damage to SWCD Ford Truck, currently waiting for estimate to fix.

9. Reminder

- Reminder to the Board members to update/certify statement of economic interest.

10. Personnel Committee

- A motion to close the meeting to the public to discuss staff was made by Kropp, seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- The personnel committee presented their recommendations to the full board. Promote Cornell to District Manager, also promote Billat to Project Manager/Private Lands Biologist. Cornell to move to step 8 on managers scale, Lageson move to step 11, Billat move to step 9, Trnka move to step 11, and Viktora to step 7. After some discussion a motion was made by Kropp, seconded by Heers to approve the recommendations effective January 1, 2025. **MOTION CARRIED.**

11. Adjournment

- There being no further business, adjournment was called by Ausen, seconded by Helland.

These are preliminary minutes subject to board approval at the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors on Thursday, January 9th, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Board Secretary

Date