

DUBUQUE SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
EPWORTH IA
March 14, 2022

Call Meeting to Order: The monthly meeting of the Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners was called to order by Chairperson Wayne Demmer at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom on March 14, 2022. Those present included Staff: Theresa Weiss, Colleen Siefken & Eric Schmechel; Commissioners: Wayne Demmer, Jeff Schmitt, Ronald Lindblom, John Smith & Mike Freiburger; Assistant Commissioner: Dave Ruden; Guest: Claire Carlson.

Adopt Agenda: The following additions were added:

- Policy - Conservation Assistant Tax Withholding Entities.
- Watershed Staff Travel Request
- Farms Audit Response
- Regional Meeting – Overbuilding of Structural Practices

22-33 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the agenda with noted additions. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting: Demmer called for a discussion of the March 14, 2022 monthly meeting minutes.

22-34 Motion made by Lindblom to approve the meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

FARMS Program Summary: Current **FARMS '22** Account information:

Program	Balance	Program	Balance
REAPP	\$ 0.00	Cost Share	\$ 25,000.00
REAPF/NG	\$ 0.00		

Siefken noted that she had just received back her audited FARMS program folders. 6 of the 7 files had no noted findings, 1 had scanned documents in the file and no note that this was acceptable due to covid. No further action to be taken.

Cost Share Applications & Cost Share Cancellation: Demmer reviewed the following:

IFIP

Peter Welling, #97680, 0.64 ac Filter Strip \$200 CRP Sign-Up, \$128.00 cost share amt.

REAP

None

Cancellation

Michael Maloney, #89314, does not have a suitable site for project according to engineering. Mike was informed his cost share will be cancelled on the project.

22-35 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the Cost Share Application. Seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

Cost Share Amendment: Demmer reviewed the following:

Susan Hellert, #96416, estimated cost to be increased from \$7,740 to \$11,584.00 due to increase pipe cost and additional yardage in final design. Obligated funds to also increase from \$3,870 to \$5,792.00.

22-36 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the cost share amendment. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Claire Carlson - CDI: Claire noted she had talked with Colleen and was pleased with the progress being made on our SWRCP. She reminded us that the goals can be added to, revised or even cancelled if no longer pertinent. She noted she is finishing up with her final 6 counties. She will forward a survey to Colleen for the board to complete regarding the process.

Watershed Project Update:

Annual 28E Review on March 22, 2022 at EB Lyons.

Dubuque County Fair Booth Registration, estimated cost \$400 -

Travel Request for Eric and Zack to attend the Midwest Leaders watershed Program in late March in Prairie Du Chien, WI. \$340 travel expense request each.

SWCS meeting in Denver, Co in July. Schmechel would like to attend. More information coming.

Interactive displays at Swiss Valley Nature Center and EB Lyons need maintenance work and updating to make them functional again. Board wishes to put \$700 towards updating the displays.

Field days being planned this summer – May – Native Grass Buffer/Streambank Stabilization at the Charles Glab and Swiss Valley Nature Center properties. June – Soil Biology/Earthworm Days. August – Waldos farm – 60” corn rows and cover crops.

Restock of watershed logo clothing has been ordered (shirts/hats). Lengthy delays to be expected.

Dubuque County Watershed Banner/Logo – would like to have available for field days. Board supports the idea. Eric also has a billboard sized banner should anyone know of a display place for it.

Wayne proposed and board agreed that they would like to have a special meeting regularly with Eric and his team to discuss watershed matters and ask questions. Siefken will send out a google calendar.

Only 2 intern applications were received. Eric sees potential in one. He will contact that one and try to schedule an interview.

22-37 Motion made by Lindblom to approve the fair booth registration. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

22-38 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the Midwest Leaders travel request. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

22-39 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the Interactive display updating. Motion seconded by Lindblom. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance:

- February Bank Statement & Treasurer reports were reviewed. 3 additions were handwritten to the Vendor Bills Submitted.

- Siefken noted that Dave Ruden should be noted in the minutes as being granted online access to the Dupaco accounts for the purpose of obtaining bank statements. Ruden has no signing authority.

Policy created granting Conservation Assistants permission to access tax entity websites for the purpose of obtaining proof of payment of the District's tax liabilities.

NACD grant ('20) \$1,087.90 reimbursement #2 from DSC.

Maquoketa River WMA water sampling is projected to cost the district \$364 this upcoming year. \$18/sampling x 5 sites x 3 sampling.

22-40 Motion made by Smith to approve the February Treasurer Report. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

22-41 Motion made by Freiburger to appoint Ruden to obtain bank statements from Dupaco's website.. Motion seconded by Lindblom. Motion carried unanimously.

22-42 Motion made by Schmitt to approve Policy for tax entity website access by CA. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

22-43 Motion made by Lindblom to approve the NACD reimbursement. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

22-44 Motion made by Lindblom to not approve funds until invoice is received. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

\$1,000 Father Norman White Memorial Scholarship: Will be offered again this year. **Reminder of criteria** - To qualify you need to be a Dubuque County High School graduate and attending (or planning to attend) the University of Dubuque, Loras College, Clarke University, Iowa State, University of Wisconsin – Platteville, or Northeast Iowa Community College – Peosta or Calmar campus and enrolling into an **Agricultural or Natural Resources related field**. Freiburger suggested we try advertising the scholarship with the Archdiocese of Dubuque website.

22-45 Motion made by Lindblom to offer the scholarship. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence Received:

- CDI scholarship nominee is Ellen Kirby. Her scholarship has been forwarded on to the Regional Director.

- General Election – 3 commissioner seats will be listed on the upcoming ballot. Wayne and Jeff's terms will be expiring and Jack's appointment will be listed for the remainder of the term (2 years). Siefken will be in contact with the Auditor's office to obtain the Nomination form (25 signatures needed) and Affidavit.

- CDI Connections Newsletter (February)

- IDALS Contests & Awards – Siefken emailed all possibilities to the board. June 10th deadline

- February '22 Kozak Update

- Resolution Process – Due April 1st to CDI. Board suggested perhaps a resolution to upgrade the wages of the starting state techs. Siefken will talk with IDALS to see if this would be appropriate as they are also trying to upgrade the position. UPDATE – Kuennen reports an upgrade to the position's wages will not happen, but perhaps acknowledgement of applicant's skills could allow the

candidate to start at a higher step within the pay scale of the Technician position. He felt staff was already working on this task and he didn't see the value of a resolution at this point. ADDITIONAL – Schmitt would like to have a representative from the District discuss at the Regional Meeting his concern of NRCS overbuilding structures and how this could be addressed.

Meeting Updates:

None

Personnel Updates:

NACD 5th round TA Grants – SWCD has applied.

NACD Employee Vacancy Announcement – Personnel committee has reviewed the advertisement. 6 applications received. 2/3 will be interviewed. Schmitt/Lindbom will be assisting Siefken/Weiss.

New State Technician interviews have been completed. Offer can't be made until personnel contact returns to office, which will be this Thursday. When offer is made the applicant will have 48 hours to respond.

NRCS Updates: Weiss reported the following:

- 15 preapproved EQIP applications.
- 1 CSP application
- 15 General CRP applications submitted. 70 Continuous CRP applications awaiting processing.
- State Cultural Resources process will taking a closer look at projects. Hands on investigations may be occurring on many sites.

Being no further business to discuss, Demmer requested a motion to adjourn.

22-46 Motion made by Schmitt to adjourn. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, **April 11, 2022** at **6:30 p.m.** at the SWCD office, 210 Bierman Rd, Epworth , IA.

Wayne Demmer 4-11-22
Chairperson Date

William Siefken 3/16/22
Secretary Date

