

DUBUQUE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

September 13, 2023

210 Bierman Road, Epworth, IA 52045-9529

Call Meeting to Order: The monthly meeting of the Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners was called to order by Chairperson Wayne Demmer at 12:44 p.m. in person at the District office in Epworth, IA on September 13, 2023. Those present included Staff: Bill Meyer, Allisen Hallahan (Conservation Assistant), Sarah Kelchen (Acting CA), and Eric Schmechel. Guests: Doug Davenport and Claire Carlson (on Zoom). Commissioners: Wayne Demmer, Mike Freiburger & Jack Smith.

Adopt Agenda:

The agenda was approved as presented.

23-81 Motion was made by Smith to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

Claire Carlson 5 year plan:

Claire in attendance to discuss how our 5 year plan goals were progressing since the retirement of previous conservation assistant and district conservationist. Spoke about meeting again in December to discuss further our goals, achievements and what next year may look like.

*** Claire Carlson exited meeting at 12:51

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting:

Demmer called for a discussion of the minutes from the regular meeting held August 8, 2023 and the special meeting held August 31, 2023.

23-82 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the minutes from the regular August 8, 2023 and the special meeting held August 31, 2023. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Doug Davenport Prairie Strip Presentation:

Doug gave a presentation regarding prairie strips along or within fields. Discussed the possibility to receive payment on these strips by enrolling in CP43 CRP contracts. Benefits include increased diversity of plants and wildlife as well as reduced overland waterflow and sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus transport.

FARMS Program Summary:

Current **FARMS '23** Account information:

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| REAP P \$6000.00 | REAP F/NG \$119.65 | Cost Share \$45,805.00 |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|

Review of District caps on State Cost Share:

Wayne called for discussion the current district caps set in place for Grassed Waterways (\$10,000) and Grade Stabilization Structures (\$25,000). After a brief discussion, votes were not held due to wanting the participation of more commissioners. Will pick discussion back up at October meeting.

Watershed Project Update:

- Trevor/Brooke Contract Extension – Eric discussed the extension of the contract with the two. Eric believes that they are a real asset to their team.

Demmer called for discussion extending their contract another year.

23-83 Motion made by Smith to extend Trevor Brook Marketing Contract by 1 year. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- Where's Your Watershed Day- Swiss Valley NC (DCCB)- Being held September 23, 2023. Eric stated there is the possibility of adding a permanent display at the Swiss Valley Nature Center.
- Iowa Water Conference- Being held September 18-20, 2023 in Altoona, Iowa. Eric Schmechel, John Wiley, and Scott Hendricks are wanting to attend.

Demmer called for discussion the Iowa Water Conference attendance requests from Eric, John, and Scott.

23-84 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the Iowa Water Conference attendance requests for Eric, John, and Scott. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

- Midwest Climate Resiliency Conference- being held in Duluth Minnesota in November. Eric has been asked to speak at the conference and they have agreed to pay up to \$1000 in travel costs for him to attend. Eric believed this should cover his entire stay and they will be waiving his registration fees.
- Midwestern Leadership Conference- Being held by the Sand County Foundation in Mason City Iowa. Eric and Scott are discussing going. Scott is unsure due to a GIS training that will be occurring the same day.

***Eric Schmechel exited meeting at 1:55

Cost Share Application:

| Applicant | Practice ID | Program | Practice | Total Cost | Total Cost Share | Approval Status |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------|--------------------------|------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Corporation of New Melleray | 111360 | REAP P | Tree/Shrub Establishment | \$8000.00 | \$6000.00 | Approved |

Cost Share Cancellations:

None

Farms Cost Share Amendments:

None

Cost Share Certifications & Maintenance Agreements:

| Applicant | Practice ID | Program | Practice | Total Cost Share | Approval Status |
|---------------|-------------|---------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Marcus Murphy | 90844 | REAP P | Forest Stand Improvement | \$1625.84 | Approved |

Conservation Plan

None

(Board voted 6-13-22, motion #22-72 to not sign CRP Conservation Plans)

Finance:

August TR, Bank Statement & bills.

Demmer called for discussion of the August TR, bank statement, bills presented.

23-85 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the August TR, bank statement, bills presented. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

- Districts Financial Review (Audit)- Review was held on September 11, 2023 by Demmer and Smith. No inconsistencies found.

Demmer called for discussion the district financial review.

23-86 Motion made by Smith to approve the district financial review. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence Received:

- CDI Connections
- CDI Annual Conference Recap – Demmer attending.

Meeting Updates:

- The National Mississippi River Museum will be visiting Smith’s farm. They are planning to bring around 25-30 high school students for educational purposes. Freiburger and Smith will be in attendance.
- Maquoketa River received a large grant for the constructions of hydro-stations. Discussed the possibility of asking Erin Erickson – watershed coordinator for the Maquoketa River Watershed Management Authority (MRWMA) to attend a meeting.
- Discussed moving meetings back to evening now that the new CA is becoming acclimated. New meeting time will be 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm for the time being.

Personnel Updates:

- NACD employee went out and we have received two applications so far. We will be accepting applications until September 15th at 5:00pm. Review of applications will begin after this date. Allisen will email resumes to commissioners for review.

NRCS Updates:

Meyer gave an update on NRCS. It is time to designate priority watersheds. Will discuss at October meeting.

Other Business:

- Treasurer update. We will continue to discuss and explore options for Ruden to step down as Treasurer.

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

23-87 Motion made by Freiburger to adjourn. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.** at the district office.

Chairperson

Date

Secretary

Date