

**DUBUQUE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S MEETING**

**October 17, 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 6:27 p.m. in person at the District office in Epworth, IA on October 17, 2023. Those present included Staff: Bill Meyer, Allisen Hallahan (Conservation Assistant), Eric Schmechel, and Scott Hendricks. Guests: Harley Pothoff. Commissioners: Wayne Demmer, Mike Freiburger, Jack Smith, Ron Lindblom, Jeff Schmitt, and Assistant Commissioner Dave Ruden.

**Adopt Agenda:**

The agenda was approved with addition of Brian Cose Cost Share certification and Dennis Coyle Cost Share cancellation. **23-90** Motion was made by Smith to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting:**

Demmer called for a discussion of the minutes from the special meeting held September 13, 2023 and the regular meeting held September 13th, 2023.

**23-91** Motion made by Schmitt to approve the minutes from the special meeting September 13, 2023 and the regular meeting held September 13, 2023. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

**NRCS Updates:**

- Meyer indicated needing to designate priority watersheds and resource concerns. Discussion followed about EQIP and CSP applications and what the most people are applying for. Meyer explained how these applications are ranked based on the resource concerns that are chosen. Meyer suggests choosing a resource concern that applies to many different land use types. Meyer will check with surrounding county to see what they are using to go forward with our choices.
- Also discussed our current priority watersheds. Current list includes John's creek, Middle fork Little Maquoketa, and North Fork Little Maquoketa. Discussion followed on which of these watersheds receive the most applications and which have the greatest nitrate levels. Current priority watersheds to remain the same for this year. Will discuss looking more in depth into the current water sampling efforts within the county for next year.
- Bill discussed the upcoming raise in EQIP cost share rates from 50% to 75%.

**FARMS Program Summary:**

Current **FARMS '23** Account information:

REAP P \$0.00    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 regarding Iowa code, votes were not held due to wanting more time to review. Will discuss further at the November meeting.

**Cost Share Application:**

None

**Cost Share Cancellations:**

Practice Number	Name	Program	Practice	Amount	Action
105010	Dennis Coyle	IFIP	Grade Stabilization Structure	20,000	Canceled

**23-92** Motion made by Lindblom to cancel Dennis Coyle's IFIP contract. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

**Farms Cost Share Amendments:**

None

**Cost Share Certifications & Maintenance Agreements:**

Applicant	Practice ID	Program	Practice	Total Cost Share	Approval Status
Brian Cose	101864	REAP F/NG	Forest Stand Improvement	996.00	Payment Approved

**23-93** Motion made by Schmitt to approve Brian Cose payment. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

**Conservation Plan**

None

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

**Finance:**

September TR, Bank Statement & bills.

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

**23-94** Motion made by Schmitt to approve the September TR, bank statement, bills presented. Motion seconded by Lindblom. Motion carried unanimously.

**Watershed Project Update:**

- Watershed team has multiple upcoming conferences and trainings. Discussed Hendricks attending Certified Crop Advisor exam and the Big Soil health Event. Hendricks and Wiley both attending GIS course in November. Wiley attending IStorm event. Schmechel attending Midwest Resiliency Conference and Midwestern Leaders Conference.

**23-95** Motion made by Lindblom to approve payment for conferences over \$500 including Wiley and Hendricks attending the GIS course, Wiley attending IStorm, and Schmechel attending both Midwest Resiliency Conference and Midwestern Leaders Conference. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

- Trevor and Brooke Marketing invoice was reviewed.

**23-96** Motion made by Freiburger to approve the invoice. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

- Winter Soil Health Day is scheduled for February 6, 2024 at Northeast Iowa Community College in Peosta, IA. Schmechel is planning for 2 keynote speakers as well as different break out panels. The name of the event may be changed. Schmechel is hoping to have more things finalized by our next meeting.
- PFI incentive programs were discussed. PFI and Pheasants Forever have partnered for program named Precision Conservation. Invite was extended to join them for a meeting on October 23, 2023 to discuss this program further.

\*\*\*\* Scott Hendricks exited 7:49

**Correspondence Received:**

CDI Connections

**Meeting Updates:**

- Maquoketa River WMA is having their Board of Directors Meeting on October 24, 2023 at 6:30pm.

**Personnel Updates:**

- NACD employee position has been offered and accepted. Individual is working through the background check process currently. No start date set as of yet.

**Other Business:**

- Assistant commissioner and treasurer Dave Ruden has announced his retirement from the district effective today. Discussion held regarding recruiting more assistant commissioners to support the districts mission. Discussed possibility of putting out an advertisement requesting individuals interested in learning more about the district to attend an upcoming meeting. Lindblom discussed concern that if others on the board are wishing to retire soon as well that we do not currently have interest from anyone to take over these places. Suggests that having two or three assistant commissioners added would make it easier to fill the seats in the future.

\*\*\*\* Eric Schmechel and Harley Pothoff exited 8:14

- NACD/ CDI poster contest discussed. Allisen will reach out to local schools to see what interest may be in participating. 2024 theme has not yet been announced. Discussed the possibility of giving a monetary reward to winners within our district. Will discuss more when we have a better idea of interest.
- Discussion held regarding who would be filling the treasurer role.

**23-97** Motion made by Schmitt to appoint Lindblom treasurer. Motion seconded by Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

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

**23-98** Motion made by Schmitt to adjourn. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, November 21, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.** at the district office.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date