



## MINUTES FROM THE MAY 17, 2023, BOARD MEETING

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*The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lyle Dittmann at 7:24 a.m.*

**Members Present:** Chairperson: Lyle Dittmann  
Secretary: Terry Greenwaldt  
Public Relations: Wayne Enger  
Treasurer: Bruce Albright

**Others Present:** County Commissioner: Dan Bucholz *via teams*  
OTC Land & Resource: Chris LeClair  
NRCS District Conservationist: Troy Baumgart  
District Manager: Darren Newville  
Assistant District Manager: Anne Oldakowski  
Administrative Secretary: Chantal Tougas  
Watershed Coordinator: Don Bajumpaa

**Members Absent:** Vice Chairperson: Steve Inwards

**Agenda:** Motion made by Wayne Enger, second by Terry Greenwaldt, to adopt the agenda. Opposed: none, motion carried.

**Approve Board Meeting Minutes:** Motion made by Wayne Enger, second by Bruce Albright, to approve the Board Meeting Minutes as presented with one correction. Wayne Enger made the second motion to approve the bills paid and payable. Opposed: none, motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Motion made by Terry Greenwaldt, seconded by Wayne Enger, to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented, subject to audit. Opposed: none, motion carried.

**Bills Paid & Bills Payable:** Motion made by Terry Greenwaldt, second by Wayne Enger, to approve the Bills Paid and Bills Payable as presented. Opposed: none, motion carried.

**Cost Share Policy: No Till/Strip Till –** Motion made by Bruce Albright, second by Wayne Enger to approve the following policy. \$20/acre with a maximum of 160 acres for a 3-year contract with the ability to extend up to a 6-year contract. Opposed: none, motion carried.

### OT 1W1P

**6-C23-4546-01;** Joseph Franklin; Candor Township, Section 11; is requesting cost share assistance for a Forest Stewardship Plan. The total estimated cost of the project is \$ 1,156.59.00 with cost sharing of \$ 867.44 or 75%, whichever is less. Motion made by Wayne Enger, second by Terry Greenwaldt to approve. Opposed: none, motion carried.

**6-C23-4546-02;** David Cordes; Girard Township, Section 25; is requesting cost share assistance for a Shoreline Protection project. The total estimated cost of the project is \$ 8,000.00 with cost sharing of \$ 4,000.00 or 50%,



whichever is less. Motion made by Terry Greenwaldt, second by Wayne Enger to approve. Opposed: none, motion carried.

**6-C23-4546-03**; David Cordes; Girard Township, Section 25; is requesting cost share assistance for a Shoreline Protection project. The total estimated cost of the project is \$ 1,758.46 with cost sharing of \$ 1,318.85 or 75%, whichever is less. Motion made by Wayne Enger, second by Terry Greenwaldt to approve. Opposed: none, motion carried.

### REDEYE 1W1P

**C21-3238-23**; Scott Huwe; Blowers Township, Section 7; is requesting cost share assistance for his Irrigation Water Management. The cost share amount is \$ 1,500.00 (\$500 per year) for a 3 year contract. Motion made by Wayne Enger, second by Terry Greenwaldt to approve. Opposed: none, motion carried.

### PRIORITY LAKES GRANT

**PL18/LP**; Shane Hoefs; Gorman Township, Section 35; is requesting a cost share payment for his shoreline restoration. The total cost of the project was \$ 20,750.00 with cost sharing of \$ 12,496.06. Motion made by Terry Greenwaldt, second by Wayne Enger to approve. Opposed: none, motion carried.

**District Manager's Report:** Presented by Anne Oldakowski.

**District Conservationist's Report:** Written and read by Troy Baumgart

- CRP –No word yet on accepted offers. Taking calls regarding seeding, trees, and staking projects. There is a spike in interest in Grassland CRP.
- CSP –7 applications. Assessment/Ranking deadline was originally May 12, 2023, however, that has been extended for two more weeks.
- EQIP – Two additional applications have been funded through the Wildlife Fund Pool. Both are grazing contracts. There is a potential for an additional Ag Waste project. Thursday is the deadline for the first application.
- RCPP – Only one application left to fund in EOT.

**County Commissioner's Report:** Presented by Dan Bucholz *via teams*

- Has been sitting in on interviews for the shared position.
- A U of M educator has been hired.
- County Road 8 repairs have been started and bids are coming in June for County Road 51 repairs.

**Other Agency Report:**

OTC Land & Resource – A vote will take place on Tuesday for the revisions on the Septic Ordinance. There have been concerns on these revisions. A date of January 1, 2024 has been discussed.



### ***Old Business***

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***TSA Update:*** There were very few minor changes made to the updated joint powers agreement (JPA). Motion made by Bruce Albright, second by Wayne Enger to approve and sign the amended JPA. Opposed: none, motion carried.

### ***New Business***

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***Meetings/Trainings:*** Motion made by Terry Greenwaldt, second by Wayne Enger to approve those that want to attend the Area Meeting. Opposed: none, motion carried.

***Shared Extension Educator Position:*** Darren presented information about the establishment of a U of M Extension Educator Position that would be shared by Otter Tail County (50%), EOT SWCD (25%), and the Wadena SWCD (25%). Motion made by Wayne Enger, second by Bruce Albright to approve the EOT SWCD financial support of this position and the agreement with Otter Tail County. Opposed: none, motion carried.

***Job Approval Authority:*** Motion made by Wayne Enger, second by Terry Greenwaldt to approve Mitch Janson's job approval authority. Opposed: none, motion carried.

***LCCMR:*** Motion made by Terry Greenwaldt, second by Wayne Enger to approve Darren to sign the Pooling agreements for the Redeye and Long Prairie WBIF funds with the other LGU partners. Opposed, none: motion carried. Motion made by Wayne Enger, second by Terry Greenwaldt to approve the purchase of a Brush Hog Tiller. Opposed: none, motion carried.

***iPad's:*** Motion made by Terry Greenwaldt, second by Wayne Enger to upgrade our current iPad's. Opposed: none, motion carried.

***Public Comments:*** none

***Adjourn:*** Meeting was adjourned at 8:39 a.m.

**District Managers Report**  
**May 2023**  
**Submitted by Assistant Manager Anne Oldakowski**

- **Tree Program** – Trees from Schumacher’s and DNR arrived May 8 and bundling of trees began that day. Took quite a few calls about tree pick-up. Tree pick-up days were May 12-13 in Perham. We sold over 51,000 trees with 380 orders. Tanner currently has fourteen custom tree planting projects for about 22,000 trees. Tree planting will begin May 15.
- **Forest Stewardship** – Completed 1 stewardship plan for the 2C deadline. Still taking numerous calls from landowners about high taxes in the county. Assisted two landowners with SFIA ownership transfer. Finalized a contract between the DNR and Wadena SWCD for \$5,000 for administrative work for the West Central Landscape Committee. All The Conservation Fund lands have been inventoried. The county board approved submitting a LSOHC application for purchase of the lands.
- **Drill Rental/Custom Seeding/Seed Sales** –Tanner continues working with landowners on plans and ordering seed for 2023. He has 196 acres custom seeding scheduled for twelve landowners. Pete assisted two producers with pickup/drop-off and with maintenance on the drill. Twenty-four rentals for May-June.
- **RIM/CREP/CRP** – Both offices provided numbers for the BWSR easement survey asking for approximate hours it takes to do the steps for an easement and inspections. Staff assisted NRCS with status reviews. The Eagle Point Partnership RIM easement agreement was recently signed.
- **MAWQCP** – 4 more assessments and five endorsements in progress. Jim has returned from leave. SWCD staff continue to assist with the certification process, spreadsheet for tracking, and attending monthly meetings. Alyson has been delivering signs and writing news articles for those newly certified. She has been following up with other producers on future articles. Completed quarterly report for the contract.
- **MDA NFMP/NMI Project** – Nathan completed spring maintenance of the weather stations.
- **MDA Central Sands** – Kits were mailed out to participants the first week of May with a deadline to return to RMB Lab by May 31.
- **AgBMP Loan Program** – Both offices are answering questions from landowners and lenders on the program and application process.
- **Irrigation RCPP** – Staff continue to assess RCPP applications. Darren submitted the quarterly report and invoice after compiling information from all the partnering SWCDs.
- **MDH Groundwater Grant** – Our grant application for an additional \$50,000 in funding for staff time and nitrate clinics was approved.
- **Red Eye Watershed** – Staff continue to work with landowners to plan and install projects. We received a \$50,000 grant through MPCA for inventorying culverts and feedlots and pastures in the watershed. Alyson and Nicole have been tasked with this project. We are beginning the seasonal stream monitoring this month.

- **LCCMR Forestry Pilot Program** – The local forestry team members in Long Prairie and Redeye discussed workplan activities. Don will coordinate pilot projects in these two watersheds.
- **Otter Tail River Watershed** – We are encumbering the funds for projects in the watershed. Houston Engineering is developing an Implementation Tracking spreadsheet.
- **Crow Wing Watershed** – Surveys have been sent out for stakeholder input on what plan goals and issue statements should be. The first policy meeting will be on May 31. Public kickoff meetings will be held this summer.
- **Long Prairie Watershed** – Next Policy meeting is May 19 and steering meeting is June 2nd. They are also working on a tracking tool and reviewing project requests.
- **Other Watersheds** – Don continues to be involved with the Chippewa, Pomme de Terre, Buffalo-Red, and Mustinka/Bois de Sioux Watersheds, discussing quarterly work and implementation.
- **Irrigation Scheduling Program** – Staff are signing up producers for the 2023 irrigation season. They are planning routes and setting up checkbooks.
- **Shoreland Program** – Liz and Pete continue to do designs and work with landowners interested in projects on Lida, Marion, Rice, Long, Ethel, and Wall Lakes.
- **Cover Crop Grant** – A Soil Health Field Day will be held August 8 near Deer Creek. Staff have visited some cover crop sites to see how they fared the winter and surprisingly look good. Drone footage was filmed on some sites also.
- **Buffer Law** – Both SWCDs are working on their annual buffer compliance reviews. Ten letters of non-compliance are being sent in EOT.
- **Wetland Conservation Act** – Mitchell has been completing site visits this spring and fielding questions on ditch maintenance and other various projects. Darren visited five sites during the TEP meeting. Lining up additional site visits. The Perham Sportsman’s Club is looking to do a building project with possible wetland impacts.
- **Feedlots** – Mitch is continuing to work with a Wadena County producer and MPCA to increase the number of animal units on the site. The runoff violation has been resolved. Another producer has requested to increase animal units also. Visited a farm for a potential ag waste pit closure.
- **County Ag Inspector** – Alyson met with MDA to do seed sampling at Professional Ag Services. The annual weed notice was published in the Verndale Sun. She has proctored two pesticide tests.
- **Extension Educator Position** – Darren met with OT County and MN Extension to discuss a possible shared position. Provided Extension staff with needs of the SWCD and consulted with BWSR about tracking and reporting.
- **Legislative Update** – Darren attended a committee update and has been contacting local legislators and tax committee members to fully fund the SWCD Aid legislation.

- **A.I.S.** – Alyson delivered tubs and tablets for the upcoming season to the inspectors. Alyson completed the inspector modules as a refresher and will attend an in-person training in June.
- **Education and Outreach** – Staff attended the Ag in the Classroom in New York Mills and Otter Tail County Conservation Days. Both SWCDs participated in the Area Envirothon. We met with Dain Erickson, Red Canoe Cre8tive to go over our plans and review what he has available. Breakfast on the Farm will be August 5 near Perham.
- **Otter Tail River Dam Modification Projects** – Darren and Chantal completed reimbursement requests from DNR and USFWS. Requested additional funds for engineering. Looking at final cleanup needs at the Little Pine site. Drone footage was taken.
- **The Otter's Tail** – OTC Land & Resource Management and EOT met with property owners to talk about a June meeting. Waiting to see what role the DNR will play.
- **Administration** – On top of the normal day to day administrative tasks, Chantal submitted billing for the OT Dam modification project, completed payroll, quarterly reports, preparation for board meetings, and submitted a RIM easement reimbursement to BWSR. She also printed tree tags for tree pickup days and is working on the parking lot/sidewalk replacement project in Perham for this summer.
- **Training and Meetings** – Staff have attended quite a few meetings and training in the last month.
- **Staff/Focus Teams** – The staff focus teams continue to meet and we have implemented some of those suggestions coming from these teams.