

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, January 26, 2024

9:00 a.m.

Morrison County Government Center

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Saehr, Hubner, Faber and Scholl. Absent: Brutscher and Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein, Noska, McDonald, Beehler and Ringwelski; NRCS Staff: Hanson; BWSR: Mayers

2024 RE-ORGANIZATION – APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (Items 2-10) MSC Saehr/Faber to approve the consent agenda items 2-10 as the 1st item does not apply this year. Motion passed.

1. Swearing in of New Board Members –No new board members
2. Official Date, Time, Location: Fourth Friday of Each Month, 8:00 a.m. at USDA County Office or Morrison County Government Center in special circumstances
3. Official Per Diem and Mileage:
 - Per Diem - Full Board Meetings, Day Meetings, Committee Meetings, and/or Payroll Signature - \$125
 - Mileage - at IRS Established Rate (\$.67 as of 1/1/2024)
4. Official Publication: Morrison County Record
5. Official Posting Location: Morrison SWCD Website and USDA Service Center Building
6. Official Bank of Deposit: Pine Country Bank Checking and Minnesota Municipal Money Market Fund (4M Fund)
7. Resolution Adopting the Morrison County Local Water Management Plan and Adopting it as the District’s Annual Plan.
8. Grant Agreements / Contracts Signature Approval: Morrison SWCD’s District Manager, Shannon Wettstein, in the absence of SWCD Board Members, may sign grant agreements and/or contracts.
9. Minimum Fund Balance Approval: The minimum Fund Balance will be **3 months** of Operating Expenditures.
(ie: PL Operating Exp. + Personnel for FY, divided by 12 x 3 months = MFB)
10. Capital Assets Policy of Threshold Approval: Capital Assets Policy Report, \$5,000 and above will remain the level of threshold documented, for depreciation, for all purchases by Morrison SWCD.
11. Officers for 2024 – Board discussed the slate of officers. MSC Saehr/Faber to nominate Scholl as chairman for a second year and rotate all other members up one role as identified on the chart. Motion passed. MSC Saehr/Hubner to keep committee roles the same with the addition of inviting Scholl to be part of the Finance Committee discussions this summer as he was involved in this budget committee meeting for this meeting since Brutscher was on vacation.* Motion passed.

Roles	2023	2024
Chairman	Dale Scholl	Dale Scholl
Vice Chairman	Dave Hubner	Scott Saehr
Secretary	Scott Saehr	Tom Brutscher
Treasurer	Tom Brutscher	Bill Faber
Public Relations	Bill Faber	Dave Hubner
Committee Assignments	2023	2024

Finance Committee	Brutscher / Saehr	Brutscher / Saehr*
Personnel Committee	Hubner / Faber	Hubner / Faber
Water Plan Representative	Brutscher	Brutscher
WCTSA	Faber / Hubner	Faber / Hubner
One Watershed One Plan	Scholl / Faber / Brutscher	Scholl / Faber / Brutscher

SECRETARY’S MINUTES: MSC Saehr/Faber. Motion passed with no changes.

TREASURER’S REPORT: MSC Faber/Hubner to approve. Motion passed.

COMMISSIONER’S REPORT: Absent

STAFF REPORTS: Hanson shared they are receiving funds to preapprove five compost facilities in ACT Now funding. They are also working on 40 RCPP applications, ranking the rest of the 81 EQIP applications they have and screening their 27 CSP applications. Wettstein pointed out that NRCS has over \$6M in applications the local office is processing and how impressive that is.

Ringwelski shared he is working on WCA and with Mike and our engineers on getting those engineered designed projects completed. Becker is also working on buttoning up reports for the Public Works delineations we completed during the summer. Noska was able to present he has been working with landowners on oak wilt and buckthorn removal and a lot of aspen regeneration sites. Beehler talked about attending the Central Minnesota Irrigation Association meeting, working with interested landowners on cover crops for next year and planning the two events coming up, Women in Ag and Winter Conservation Meeting. McDonald share the new funding the district had received for federal ACUB easements, and they will be moving forward with three landowners with that money. She also shared updates on the Facebook page and the additional outreach work she has been helping with and presented on at the Pheasants Forever state convention.

BWSR REPORT: Mayers shared he will be hosting a supervisor training that he has invited us to.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl presented that Dan C. from Sherburne SWCD will be tracking all the grants, Molly S. from Mille Lacs SWCD will be working on forestry in permanent protected lands, they are going to hire a new person for conservation easements and a short-term position for someone to apply for grants. The Rum group is also planning a tour this summer. Wettstein added they will receive additional supplemental funding.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber shared that they had a joint Policy and Technical Committee meeting and that all the money from the first batch of funding is encumbered and additional supplemental funding will be awarded. The partnership is working with Kanati Land Management to develop an outreach plan for the watershed.
3. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update- Wettstein said the Policy Committee will meet in February and the Steering Committee is working on developing a work plan to submit to BWSR which will then allow them access to implementation funding.
4. Annual Tree Sale / Tree Open House on January 3 – Wettstein shared we had a very successful open house and online sale. That first day we had over \$20,000 in sales and over 160 individual sales. Even with the online sale option we still did have a very busy day in the office open house. With all of the activity, a lot of the specialty fruit trees are sold out and so is some of the conservation bundles of 25 trees. We will continue the sale until everything is sold out and now with the website, customers can see real time, what trees are still in inventory where in the past they would have to call in and talk to Knopik or they would send in their order form and Knopik would have to call them and let them know the trees were no longer available, it was really cumbersome.
5. BWSR Clean Water Fund Grant Award - \$292,500 for Cover Crops, Phase 2 was approved for funding.

6. LCCMR Amended Resolution for Weyerhaeuser Project – Wettstein read the resolution which LCCMR has requested which just identifies the district as the fiscal agent for this project. MSC Saehr/Faber to approve the resolution and submit it to LCCMR. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2024 Budget- Saehr and Scholl met with Wettstein before the meeting to discuss the years budget. A couple of changes have been made and what the board is reviewing is the recommendation from the Finance Committee. MSC Saehr/Hubner to accept the budget as presented with the employee COLA set at 3.4% and three employees moving forward with a step and the others staying at their current step. In addition, the recommendation to table the taxable fringe to be able to have more discussion at a later date but to leave it at \$14,400 per employee for the year. Motion passed. Wettstein will survey the employees to see if they are still liking the taxable fringe and if they feel it is sufficient to cover their health care needs since the district does not offer that benefit. From their she can look into a group plan and or review what surrounding districts/counties are offering for a health care benefit. Wettstein clarified that this is not part of the wage and compensation study we are currently undergoing as they are only looking at pay across the districts and counties, not benefits. The Finance Committee will be meeting mid-year to develop the next years budget so that this process will have more time and will line up with the budgeting process at the county better.
2. State Cost Share Contracts – MSC Faber/Hubner to approve 1-4 as presented. Motion passed.
 1. Renee Waldoch \$1,152.00 Reforestation
 2. Duane and Marian Steffes \$1,320.42 Critical Area Planting
 3. Lee Roberts \$994.12 Critical Area Planting
 4. Jerry Van Keuren \$600.00 Forest Stewardship Plan
3. State Cost Share Payments – MSC Saehr/Faber to approve. Motion passed.
 - a. Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls \$937.50 Forest Stewardship Plan
4. Clean Water Fund Cover Crop Policy Update

INFORMATIONAL:

- Campaign Finance Board Deadline January 31st
- Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Policy Meeting January 23 CANCELLED
- Rum River One Watershed One Plan Policy Meeting, January 25th at Mille Lacs County Courthouse from 4:30-6:30 PM
- Morrison SWCD Annual Tree Sale – Until Sold Out
- Ag, Apps and Art; An Event for Women in Agriculture, Friday, February 2nd 5-8 at the Rice Creek Club House
- Area 2 Meeting, Wednesday, March 6th, Benton SWCD to host
- Winter Agronomy Meeting, March 13th, Little Falls TBD
- Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Policy Committee, March 21st at 9 AM in Todd County

ANNUAL AWARDS LUNCHEON RECOGNIZING THE FOLLOWING:

Randy and Joni Hamson for receiving the Morrison County Wildlife Habitat Steward Award, Lance Chisholm for the MACDE Extraordinary Contribution Award, Josh Hanson for being a Morrison County Super Partner, Special Recognition: Tree Crew consisting of Donny Herman, Donny Johnson, Ralph Anderson, Willy Gruber and Ival Kronbeck, the Saehr Family (Darrel, Amy, Randy and Holly) for receiving the Morrison County Outstanding Conservationist Award, Roxanne Matson (retired) from Larson Abstract for her exceptional

support to the ACUB program, Morrison SWCD staff member Shannon Wettstein for receiving the DNR Forestry Partnership Award.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

*****Next Board Meeting February 23 at 8 AM, USDA Service Center

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, February 23, 2024

USDA County Offices

NO FEBRUARY SWCD BOARD MEETING WILL BE HELD.

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING
Friday, March 1, 2024
8:00 a.m.
Initiative Foundation, 405 1st St SE, Little Falls

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Saeher, Hubner, Faber, Brutscher and Scholl. Commissioner: Absent; SWCD Staff: Wettstein; NRCS Staff: Absent; BWSR: Mayers

SECRETARY’S MINUTES – MSC Saeher/Faber to approve as written. Motion passed.

TREASURER’S REPORT - MSC Saeher/Brutscher to approve. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl said the last meeting they were given a presentation of the work that had been done or was in the works.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber said their last meeting had a year end recap of projects and money as well.
3. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update – Policy committee met to discuss and hear each district share what work they were building into a work plan.
4. Ag, Apps and Art; An Event for Women in Agriculture, Friday, February 2nd 5-8 at the Rice Creek Game Farm Club House. Wettstein shared this was the first event like this the district has hosted and we had a great turnout of 50 people (it was originally capped at 45 due to materials) and survey respondents said they would be interested in coming to another like it. Attendees heard about soil health benefits, it featured a panel of female farmers all with different operations and there was a fun craft attendees could take home. Wettstein shared Beehler took the lead but that Carrie Miller and Sunnie Kahlhamer from NRCS as well as Knopik and McDonald helped plan the event.
5. Taxable Fringe Update – Employee Survey. Wettstein shared the anonymous survey she did with the report asking if staff is happy with the current offering of a taxable fringe. Most all staff are happy, but the next step will be to get comparable to make sure our offering is keeping up with other districts and the county. This comparison is not part of our current wage and compensation study.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Correction to Landowner Name on State Cost Share Contract January Approval – MSC Faber/Hubner to make the correction. Wettstein explained she mistakenly put the wrong name in the board agenda to approve but the amount we approved was correct. Motion passed.
 - a. ~~Renee Waldoch~~ Mark Przybilla \$1,152.00 Reforestation
2. State Cost Share Contract – MSC Brutscher/Hubner to approve. Motion passed.
 - a. Brad and Sharon Schmidtbauer \$4,050.00 Forest Stewardship Plan
3. Pioneer Tree Service Invoice (Final Oak Wilt) – Wettstein passed around the final invoice for the Oak Wilt project. This included work in Morrison and Cass Counties that was completed for the project. There was discussion on the amount of the bill and Wettstein admitted to allowing the contractor and instructing Noska to overspend the grant dollars as the one site in Cass County had taken several years to get the landowners on board and during that time the wilt had spread. Overall, at the one site, Pioneer did \$98,000 worth of work. Wettstein shared that the original grant did say we would use the grant funds to treat the

northernmost sites and the site in Cass was our highest priority site. She also verified all of the expenses are true and correct as Noska was onsite and provided oversight during the plowing, felling and hauling process. The board asked for Noska to present a summary of the work at the next board meeting. After discussion on whether to approve the full amount or a partial amount a MSC Hubner/Faber to pay the entire amount of 217,584.00. Wettstein shared the amount not covered out of the grant will be paid for out of the new Soil and Water State Aid money appropriated by the legislature last year. Motion passed.

4. Update on Wage and Compensation Study – MSC Hubner/Saehr to table this until next meeting due to time constraints. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL

- Area 2 Meeting, Wednesday, March 6th, Benton SWCD to host
- Winter Agronomy Meeting, March 13th, Little Falls Ballroom

BOARD WORKSHOP Workload Analysis – Guests from Houston Engineering, Inc (Doug Thomas, Moriya Rufer and Rachel Olm)

The project purpose is to prepare a workload/technical analysis designed to ensure that the Morrison SWCD (District) resources—both internal and external—are enough for meeting planned goals and objectives over the next four to six years. Our overall approach will be to employ a workload analysis process that is geared toward government bodies. It differs from traditional workload analysis/assessment techniques in a few different ways. This approach starts with the statutory and historical obligations of a unit of government (core/critical) and then builds back in (current) district and county programs and projects that support current comprehensive/work plans. It then builds in actions identified in plans such as 1W1Ps and/or are envisioned by the governing body (new or on the horizon). After these are understood, they will be used to provide an estimate of required staffing needs and skills required to carry out the various levels of activities, programs, and projects for the next four to six years.

Houston Engineering staff will also meet with Morrison SWCD staff on a separate day to go through current work, alignment to essential/core purposes, plan implementation and perspectives on associated staff time necessary to adequately perform these functions.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

*******Next Board Meeting March 22nd at 8 AM, USDA Service Center**

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING
Friday, March 22, 2024
USDA Service Center
16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345
8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Saehr, Hubner, Faber, Brutscher and Scholl. Commissioner: Absent; SWCD Staff: Wettstein; NRCS Staff: Hanson; Absent; BWSR: Mayers

AGENDA – Moved the New Business #3 to Old Business #1.

SECRETARY’S MINUTES MSC Faber/Brutscher to approve with changes (Kahlhammer spelling, location and adjournment at 12:15). Motion passed.

TREASURER’S REPORT MSC Brutscher/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Winscher shared Dave Stich is retiring from the BOA/PC. Also shared they are going through a wage study like the district is.

STAFF REPORT – Hanson gave the report that there will be a new DC on April 7th and he will introduce them at the April meeting. They have 22 preapproved EQIP applications and 14 approved applications. RCPP has 19 preapproved applications and 7 approved.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Update on Wage and Compensation Study – Wettstein briefed the board on where this is at. The recommendations from Kelly Jones from DDA is to move towards a yearly step and define grades for each position. The presented chart shows 10 grade, 12 step framework. Scholl asked about what would happen after 12 years for an employee and Wettstein said she will work with Jones to get an answer with that. Wettstein said this is all based on our pay philosophy for how much of an increase each step gets (with COLA) and how many steps we have. The county is looking at something very similar. The market data from 15 surrounding SWCD’s and 3 counties shows we have a lower starting salary but we end higher and Jones is recommending moving up our starting salary to be more competitive and this will also keep our spread narrower. Wettstein shared we can come back to this topic next meeting but wanted to get it in front of everyone first.
2. Workload Analysis Follow-up from March 1st Board Workshop – The board worked through this worksheet with Wettstein making her recommendations first and explaining the reasoning and then opening up for discussion. MSC Saehr/Faber to accept the recommendations based off the review the board had today and send to the consultants from HEI. Motion passed.
3. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl gave the update to say they are looking for projects for 2025-2026 and that currently 68% of the money is going to staff and 32% going to projects.
4. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber said they will not have a meeting until May.
5. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update – Brutscher shared the group is developing a project list and the policy committee heard what is planned. The workplan needs to be submitted before implementation funds are available.

6. National Association of SWCD Annual Convention, February 10-14th – Wettstein was really proud that we had a huge representation at this meeting with Beehler and Wettstein presenting, staff attending and Brutscher, Saehr and Faber attending from the board. The district received a lot of recognition at this meeting.
7. BWSR Board Responsibilities Meeting, February 13th – Scholl would like to talk about this when Mayers is here next month.
8. Winter Agronomy Meeting, March 13th, Little Falls Ballroom – This was really successful with 60 people in attendance and topics that were asked for including annual forages, cover crops in no till vs manure incorporation and engineering assistance.
9. 2023 Easement Summary – Wettstein shared a summary put together by Chisholm and McDonald.

NEW BUSINESS

1. State Cost Share Contract Approvals – MSC Brutscher/Faber to approve. Motion passed.
 - a. Jeremy Lucking \$4,627.74 Field Windbreak
2. Recommend Payment to the Rum River Watershed – MSC Faber/Hubner to pay then be reimbursed by Rum River. Motion passed.
 - a. Jim and Joy Schlichting \$3,000.00 Forest Stewardship Plan
- ~~3. Update on Wage and Compensation Study~~
4. Peterson Company LTD Audit Engagement Letter – Year End Audit Fee \$5,500 for 2023 – MSC Faber/Brutscher to sign. Motion passed.
5. General Cost Share Policy – MSC Brutscher/Faber to table to a later meeting. Motion passed.
6. Mississippi River Brainerd Memorandum of Understanding for Implementation – MSC Faber/Brutscher to sign. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL

- National Guard Bureau Correspondence Regarding Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS)
- Rum River Watershed Policy JPE Meeting, March 21 Mille Lacs County Courthouse
- Request for Proposals (RFP) for Environmental Classroom Exhibit Design Services
- Rum River Watershed Policy Committee Meeting June 27th
- Long Prairie Watershed Policy Committee Meeting, May 16th

Meeting Adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

*******Next Board Meeting April 26 at 8 AM, USDA Service Center**

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, April 26, 2024

USDA Service Center

16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345

8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Saehr, Faber and Scholl. Commissioner: Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein, Ringwelski, Noska and Beehler; NRCS Staff: Hanson and Zapzalka; BWSR: Mayers. Guests: Randy and Joni Hamson, Landowners; Todd Holman, CRSL Coordinator; Sargent Major Ryan Hoffstead and Deputy Garrison Commander Lieutenant Colonel Steven Hall.

SECRETARY'S MINUTES MSC Saehr/Faber Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT MSC Faber/Saehr to approve. Motion passed.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Winscher talked about that George Sandy will serve on the PC/BOA, that the new height limit in shoreland will be increasing from 25 to 30 feet and Camp Ripley was in just a couple of weeks ago to give their community briefing.

VISITORS –

- Randy and Joni Hamson, 2023 Wildlife Steward Award Winner – Wettstein introduced the couple and shared the reasons they were chosen as the winners of this award and for their tireless work to create, manage, and maintain wildlife habitat on their 400+ acre property in Cushing township. Chairman Scholl presented a sign, the group congratulated them and Randy thanked the offices for all their support over the years and for the recognition.
- Sargent Major Ryan Hoffsted and Deputy Garrison Commander Lieutenant Colonel Steve Hall Presenting the 2023 ARNG Environmental Security Award to the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Team – SM Hoffsted presented the board with a Certificate of Appreciation for their partnership and for bringing national recognition to the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Team through receiving this award. Chairman Scholl accepted the award and thanked them for the recognition.

STAFF REPORT – Terry Zapzalka was introduced as the new District Conservationist for Morrison County. Ringwelski shared the precipitation summary report for the year and shared they are looking for additional volunteers to be precipitation readers.

BWSR REPORT – Mayers shared the Mississippi River Brainerd is finalizing an application for implementation funds. Holman had shared with the rest of the BWSR Board the amount of cover crops he had seen in this area of the state and wanted to recognize Beehler for the work that she, farmers, MDA and NRCS are doing in this area.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Oak Wilt Program Summary – Noska presented a summary of the oak wilt program from 2019-2024, the two rounds of LCCMR grants. The estimate from the Forest Health Coordinator for the DNR was that 1 million oaks were protected, and the risk of spread was reduced or eliminated on over 9,000 acres of forest. Pioneer Tree Service, Lisa and John Wimmer and their team were contracted to do the work and Noska was very happy with their work.

2. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update- Scholl shared they are working on the new workplan. They have received supplemental funding from BWSR.
3. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber shared they also received supplemental funding and their next meeting is on May 16th.
4. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update – Wettstein repeated what Mayers said earlier that the group is finalizing an application for their implementation funds.
5. Website and Social Media Update – Wettstein shared that the website has had over 2,500 visits since January 1 due primarily to the tree sale which kicked off on January 3rd. The Facebook account is now two years old and has reached almost 14,000 people.
6. 2023 Precipitation Observer Weather Summary – This was covered above in Ringwelski’s staff report.
7. Pheasants Forever Quarterly Summary – Wettstein shared a copy of McDonald’s report with everyone.

NEW BUSINESS

1. State Cost Share Contract – MSC Saehr/Faber to approve as presented. Motion passed.

a. Steffes Partnership	\$1,859.06	Critical Area Planting
b. American Legion Post 350	\$4,408.84	Critical Area Planting
c. Noah Czech	\$2,136.77	Prescribed Burn
d. Brad and Sharon Schmidtbauer	\$2,511.33	Reforestation
2. State Cost Share Payment- MSC Faber/Saehr to approve payment. Motion passed.

a. Brad and Sharon Schmidtbauer	\$4,050.00	Forest Stewardship Plan
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3. Long Prairie Watershed Partnership Contract – MSC Faber/Saehr to approve. Motion passed.

a. Earl Edeburn	\$427.50	Well Sealing
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4. Clean Water Fund Cover Crop Contracts- MSC Saehr/Faber to approve a. – I. None opposed. Motion passed. Beehler presented the ranking criteria and shared the total amount approved was \$127,663.60 for this round which will come out of the FY23 and FY24 grants.

a. Isaac Kroll	\$17,188.60
b. Duane Kroll	\$19,250.00
c. Adam Kroll	\$16,240.40
d. Neal Loidolt	\$7,351.30
e. Jayme Schilling	\$9,848.30
f. Gary Rademacher	\$7,283.55
g. Jeff Mueller	\$14,839.55
h. Shawn Winscher	\$5,519.25
i. Alvin Pick	\$5,794.80
j. Keith Lorenz	\$3,270.30
k. Simon Kroll	\$16,754.55
l. Gerald Herzog	\$4,323.00
5. Wage and Compensation Study – Wettstein presented the information as a continuation of last month’s discussion. The consultant has compared the district to 15 other surrounding SWCD’s and three other counties data. The recommendation would be to move to a new structure, shrink up the percentage range spread between the starting and ending salaries and decide how to recognize longevity as the recommended structure would move

employees up a step every year and they would top out at 12 steps. The board recommended continuing to move forward but had additional questions surrounding the policies which would need to be developed in conjunction with adopting a new structure. They recommended reviewing the probationary period, longevity, and performance reviews. The board also wanted to know the budget implications of not only adopting it but what the next three years would look like. Wettstein will work to develop or revise policies and to get a more long-term budget projection.

6. Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Proposal, Phase 13 for ACUB Easements – \$5.2M – Board recommends moving forward with the application.

INFORMATIONAL

- City of Swanville Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS) Discovered in Public Water Supply
- Nitrate Clinic, Morrison County Courthouse May 20-24
- Request for Proposals (RFP) for Environmental Classroom Exhibit Design Services Open
- We Are Water Exhibit, Art in Motion, Holdingford, April 25-June16
- Long Prairie Watershed Policy Committee Meeting, May 16th
- Buckthorn Clearing at Belle Prairie County Park, June 8 9:00-12:00 pm
- Area 2 WCTSA Meeting, Glenwood, June 12th
- Summer Soil Health Field Day, June 18th
- Rum River Watershed Policy Committee Meeting June 27th
- Lance Chisholm Last Day, July 31

*****Next Board Meeting May 24th at 8 AM, USDA Service Center

Meeting Adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING
Friday, May 24, 2024
USDA Service Center
16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345
8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Saehr, Faber, Brutscher and Scholl. Commissioner: Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein and Lawin; NRCS Staff: Zapzalka; BWSR: Mayers.

AGENDA

SECRETARY's MINUTES MSC Faber/Brutscher Motion passed.

TREASURER's REPORT MSC Saehr/Faber to approve. Motion passed.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Winscher talked about the tax forfeited properties going up for sale, working on getting ready for the county fair and that it is budget time and an election year.

STAFF REPORT – Zapzalka shared federal funding is coming in through the RCPP, CSP, EQIP programs. The Farm Bill is supposed to be done this year as well.

BWSR REPORT – Mayers gave the legislative report on BWSR it included legislation that says districts can now obtain loans and a provision that BWSR can penalize up to \$10K for violations and then forgive them once resolved. He also spoke about a request for interest that is opening and will be for soil health. The district would be able to express interest up to \$80K.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Wettstein shared comments are due on the draft work plan beginning of June, this then will go to the next Policy Committee meeting.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update -Wettstein shared that the Policy Committee heard the draft outreach plan that is being prepared by Kanati for the watershed. This group is also working on a second work plan.
3. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update – This group is also working on a work plan, it is their first and is set to receive initial funding beginning of June.
4. Mississippi River Sartell One Watershed One Plan Update – The staff for this watershed met for the first time so Wettstein shared you will be seeing a resolution later in the meeting and will have to decide who will attend these meetings from the board.
5. BWSR Board Responsibilities Meeting, February 13th – Scholl attended this meeting and wanted to share when Mayers was in attendance, so this was something he felt was worthwhile to attend. It went over BWSR's role with the district in that they are the ones setting the boundaries for a lot of the funding we get and then we as a board get to decide how to spend it. He also shared 85% of BWSR's appropriated funds go out to the counties and SWCD's with much of it being advanced for programs. BWSR also has disaster funds if the governor determines it was a disaster. Scholl asked Wettstein to look into surety bonds for the district, this is what townships have to protect themselves from litigation and financial risk. Wettstein will reach out to MCIT our insurance provider and ask them about this.
6. Request for Proposals (RFP) for Environmental Classroom Exhibit Design Services- Wettstein shared that the RFP was open for two months and that she spoke with five different design firms. We did receive one proposal from Split Rock Studios, a Minnesota based firm. They are a

very reputable design and build company, Wettstein shared their website with the board. Wettstein will reach out to them to discuss the potential of working on the project so at a later date the board will see a contract to consider if this moves forward. The estimate was much higher than expected as they charge what is industry standard of \$400/square foot to design a space. The design charge is 20% of that. The environmental classroom section of the new military museum was advertised as 2,500 square feet when we released the RFP but has since been lowered to 1,670.

7. Call for Resolutions – Wettstein shared she does not have any resolutions for the board to consider but that at the area meeting in June they will discuss resolutions to send to the state convention.
8. DNR Commissioner’s Order on Little Rock Creek – Wettstein shared on April 23rd the DNR issued a Commissioner’s Order. In the order it does give a link to the comments received and we are listed and paraphrased in the comments section.
9. Tree Sale Summary -Brutscher shared he was really impressed by the tree week activities, he helped at the garage on Thursday and Friday. Wettstein shared the report put together by Knopik that we pushed 105,775 trees out the door, 35,175 of which the district sold, the rest were DNR trees that we were a drop location for. All in all, it went well but it was way too many DNR trees to process and it was wearing on the staff. Knopik has told DNR that it was too much and that next year we may not be able to help with this.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Resolution to Support Mississippi River Sartell One Watershed One Plan – MSC Brutscher/Faber to support. Motion passed.
2. Employee Policy – Ratwik, Roszak and Maloney, P.A. Review – Wettstein shared she has reached out to this law firm to help update our employee policy as they recently have done work with other SWCD’s and did Crow Wing SWCD’s policy (which Crow Wing was using our current policy). The district policy is almost 10 years old and needs to be brought up to date. Wettstein asked if the board would be interested in having someone from the firm meet with them to discuss this work. MSC Saehr/Faber to have them come and present. Motion passed.
3. Wage and Compensation Study – New Structure and Policies – Wettstein followed up from last meeting to present the budgetary impacts of adopting a new pay structure and used the highest end estimation assuming frozen wages for two staff nearing retirement for the projections through 2027. The budget impacts were as follows: 2024- 1.19% or \$6,254; 2025 – 5.77% or \$31,027; 2026 – 5.81% or \$33, 018 and 2027 - \$35,146. The reason it is only 5-6% is because of the two employees were frozen on the pay scale and therefore only received a COLA increase, not a step increase over the next three years. If they are back filled with less experienced staff when they retire then the projected costs will be even less. MSC Saehr/Brutscher to pass approve the market analysis and adopt the new wage structure which will include 12 steps and 10 grades to go into effect July 1, 2024. Motion passed. Wettstein shared the current policies the district has for the probationary period and the possibility of adopting the longevity policy similar to Morrison County. These could be changed or updated when we update our employee policy.

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING
Friday, June 28, 2024
USDA Service Center
16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345
8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Saehr, Hubner, Brutscher and Scholl. SWCD Staff: Wettstein; NRCS Staff: Zapzalka; BWSR: Mayers.

AGENDA - MSC Saehr/Brutscher. Motion passed.

SECRETARY'S MINUTES MSC Saehr/Brutscher Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT MSC Saehr/Brutscher to approve. Motion passed.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Absent

STAFF REPORT – Zapzalka shared there are projects that are pouring concrete, working in between the rains. They are also doing contract modifications. Some EQIP funds are coming in but it is slowing down. Ringwelski shared he is doing cost share spot checks and buffer law spot checks. Ditch cleanings have slowed down.

BWSR REPORT – Mayers shared a legislative session overview and that BWSR grants would be opening with the return of Accelerated Implementation Grants.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl shared it was a very quick meeting with very little allowance for explanation or discussion. They have hired a new coordinator, set rates and policies for cost share practices such as stewardship plans and went through decision items such as the attorney selection and the new work plan.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Next meeting is in July.
3. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update – Next meeting is in October.
4. Mississippi River Sartell One Watershed One Plan Update – Wettstein shared staff from the surrounding Counties and SWCD's have submitted a grant application for the planning phase to start this watershed.
5. Area 2 WCTSA Meeting, Glenwood, June 12th – Faber and Wettstein attended. They gave a legislative update on all the money going to SE MN because of the nitrate issue in the karst region of the state, they discussed resolutions moving forward for consideration to the state convention and the Envirothon, which Mike Becker from the office was a judge at both the area and state competitions.
6. Summer Soil Health Field Day, June 18th - RESCHEDULED – Due to the weather conditions that day the event needed to be rescheduled.
7. Shamineau Project Update – Wettstein gave the board an update on this project. The pipe for the outlet project has been run but unfortunately it is popping out of the ground in multiple locations and needs to be repaired. The pumps have not been turned on yet and the engineers are coming up with a plan to how to keep the pipes in the ground.
8. Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail/Bellevue Township Assistance – the District was approached by Bellevue Township to review the wetlands along the trail and measure the impact to

wetland moving the trail over would have. Ringwelski, Lawin and Wettstein reviewed and presented the information to them as the impacts would be minimal.

9. MCIT Insurance/Bonding – The question of Surety bonds was brought up to our insurance provider MCIT for clarification and if there was any need for the additional insurance.
10. Employee Policy – Ratwik, Roszak and Maloney, P.A. Review – Discussed having the attorney come to present to the board once they have draft policies which legally need to be updated so that the board had something to review and ask questions on. Wettstein will communicate with them and set up a time for them to visit once they have a draft.
11. Nitrate Testing Summary from May 20-24th – 145 wells were tested during the weeklong clinic. A map and summary were shared.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Easement Coordinator Position – MSC Saehr/Scholl to appoint a hiring committee of Brutscher and Hubner to review applications, rank and authorize Wettstein to move forward with a job offer to the top candidate. Motion passed. The hiring committee will meet after the regular meeting.
2. What a Match! LCCMR Grant Cost Share Policy – Woodland Stewardship Plans Resolution – MSC Hubner/Saehr to adopt the resolution establishing 75% cost share with this pool of funds. Motion passed.
3. Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape RCPP Application – MSC Brutscher/Hubner to move forward with submitting this application. Motion passed.

MSC Brutscher/Hubner to approve action on the following items: 4a, 5b, 6b, 7a-c, 8a, 9a-d, 10a and 11a. Motion passed.

4. Long Prairie River Watershed Partnership – Cost Share Contract
 - a. Lee Arendt \$437.50 Well Sealing
5. Long Prairie River Watershed Partnership – Cost Share Payments
 - ~~a. Patrick Edeburn C23-3483 \$162.50 Well Sealing~~
 - b. Earl Edeburn C23-3483 \$212.50 Well Sealing
6. State Cost Share Payment(s) Correction
 - a. Sharon and Brad Schmidtbauer ~~\$5,022.66~~ \$2,511.33 Reforestation
7. State Cost Share Payment(s)
 - a. Friends of Crane Meadows 16-23/01-24 \$1,500.00 Conservation Cover
 - b. Mark Przybilla 03-24 \$1,152.00 Reforestation
 - c. Jerry VanKeuren 06-24 \$600.00 Forest Stewardship Plan
8. Clean Water Fund Cover Crop Contract Cancellation
 - a. Keith Lorenz 49-07-24 \$3,270.30 Cover Crop
9. Clean Water Fund Cover Crop Contracts
 - a. Chuck Gruber \$980.35
 - b. Alan Feirer \$3,969.35
 - c. Richard Blonigen \$3,575.00
 - d. Duane L. Kroll \$1,377.20
10. Soil Health Cost Share Contracts
 - a. Chuck Gruber \$951.60

11. Cost Share Contract

a. Jerome Yorek

\$380.00

Forest Stewardship Plan

INFORMATIONAL

- BWSR Easement Section Field Visit, Morrison SWCD Host on June 27th and 28th
- Rum River Watershed Policy Committee Meeting June 27th
- Long Prairie Watershed Policy Committee Meeting July 18th
- SWCD Budget Committee Meeting, July 19th, 8 am
- Audit with Michael Peterson, July 23rd All Day
- Lance Chisholm Last Day, July 31
- 2024 Green Fair Folk Festival, August 7th 4-8 PM, Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls
- Summer Soil Health Field Day, TBD
- Land Trust Alliance Conference, Providence Rhode Island September 24-28, 2024

*****Next Board Meeting July 26 at 8 AM, USDA Service Center

Meeting Adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

Hiring Committee comprising of Hubner, Brutscher and Wettstein met to review applications for the Easement Coordinator position after the regular meeting. Applications were ranked, and Wettstein will reach out to the top candidate to make an offer. Once an applicant has accepted, Wettstein will notify the other applicants and thank them for applying.

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, July 26, 2024

USDA Service Center

16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345

8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Saehr, Brutscher, Faber and Scholl. Commissioner: Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein, Chisholm and McDonald; NRCS Staff: Zapzalka; BWSR: Mayers. Guests: Moriya Rufer from HEI and Todd Holman, The Nature Conservancy

AGENDA - MSC Saehr/Brutscher. Motion passed.

SECRETARY'S MINUTES MSC Saehr/Brutscher Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT MSC Faber/Saehr to approve. Motion passed.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Winscher talked about the budget request and how their process works at the county. The group talked about the upcoming SWCD request and what the funds are used for which is mainly for IT services provided by the county and to pay for the SWCD staff time which goes to assisting the Public Works and Land Services department.

STAFF REPORT – Zapzalka said it was a big year for funding as they were able to fund 73 applications and \$5.472 million for just Morrison County.

BWSR REPORT – Mayers shared MDA has an equipment grant opening on August 1 and BWSR has various grants are open right now. Wettstein shared that Beehler is available to help farmers apply for the equipment grant and we have a flyer on the counter.

GUEST REPORT - Moriya Rufer, HEI – Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Strategic Plan (CRSL) Update – Rufer presented a power point of the updated plan and the contents with next steps of the plan being finishing up comments and then presenting it to the CRSL Coordinators Committee this fall. This plan is a refresh from an existing ten-year plan. Holman shared that the CRSL has added \$68M additional dollars to the landscape since the program started.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Lance Chisholm Appreciation – 17 years with Morrison SWCD – Chisholm thanked the board for the opportunity. Scholl presented a certificate of appreciation to Chisholm on behalf of the board.
2. Easement Coordinator New Hire – Destiny McDonald – McDonald thanked the board and felt honored to follow Chisholm and the work he has done. She also shared a handout with the board introducing herself and her family.
3. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl shared nothing is new.
4. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber said they are now in their second round of implementation funds. Last meeting they adopted the outreach and marketing plan.
5. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update – Brutscher said nothing is new, next meeting is in October.
6. Mississippi River Sartell One Watershed One Plan Update – Wettstein said staff have met and will be reaching out to policy members in the next couple of months.
7. Summer Soil Health Field Day, July 15 – Wettstein shared this had been rescheduled from the previous date because of weather. They had good topics including nutrient and irrigation

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|---|-------------|-------------------------|
| a. Duane and Mariah Steffes, #04-24 | \$1,320.12 | Critical Area Planting |
| 4. Clean Water Fund Cover Crop Contract Cancellation | | |
| a. Charles Gruber, #49-10-24 | \$980.35 | Cover Crop |
| 5. LCCMR What a Match! Cost Share Contract | | |
| a. Mike Fenske | \$1,072.50 | Forest Stewardship Plan |
| 6. Soil Health Cost Share Cancellation | | |
| a. Charles Gruber, #SH-07-23 | \$951.60 | Cover Crop |
| 7. Soil Health Cost Share Contracts | | |
| a. Jason Lorenz | \$463.20 | Cover Crop |
| 8. Cost Share Contract | | |
| a. Neil Korf | \$800.00 | Forest Stewardship Plan |
| 9. Clean Water Fund Cover Crop Amendment | | |
| a. Adam Kroll, #49-33-23 | \$18,484.40 | Cover Crop |
| b. Simon Kroll, #49-08-24 | \$17,860.15 | Cover Crop |
| 10. State Cost Share Contract | | |
| a. St. Stanislaus Catholic Church | \$447.50 | Well Sealing |
| 11. Nominations for Wildlife Habitat Steward & Outstanding Conservationist & Outstanding Forest Steward Award – Wettstein presented a grouping of recommendations that staff had put together, and Jenna Lawin put a short description for each nominee to help the board decide who to recommend for each award. The board would like each member to vote and then make the nomination off that process since not all board members were in attendance. Wettstein will compile the votes and work up the nominations as it is due mid-August. She also pointed out this would be the first year nominating the forestry award but that we have done the other two the last two years. | | |
| 12. Pine Country Bank Checking Account to Manage Mississippi Sartell Watershed Monies – Wettstein shared the auditor was at the office this week and she asked if he had a recommendation for the office in moving forward with the Mississippi Sartell One Watershed One Plan and the district serving as the fiscal agent for this project. Michael Peterson, our auditor, recommended having a separate account to house those monies. The board likes this recommendation. MSC Brutscher/Faber to open a separate checking account at our bank, Pine Country Bank for the purposes of the planning and implementation initiative with the Mississippi River Sartell Watershed. Motion passed. | | |

INFORMATIONAL

- Audit with Michael Peterson, July 23rd All Day
- Lance Chisholm Last Day, July 31
- 2024 Green Fair Folk Festival August 7th 4-8 PM, Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls
- MASWCD Area 2 and West Central Technical Service Area Meeting, September 18, Place TBD
- Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Policy Committee Meeting, September 19, 9-11
- Land Trust Alliance Conference, Providence Rhode Island September 24-28
- Tentative Forestry Field Day, October 11th, Belle Prairie Park
- Nitrate Clinic, Morrison County Government Center, October 21-25, 9-4 PM
- Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Policy Committee Meeting, October 29

*****Next Board Meeting August 23 at 8 AM, USDA Service Center

Meeting Adjourned at 10:57 p.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, August 23, 2024

USDA Service Center

16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345

8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Saehr, Brutscher, Faber, Hubner and Scholl. Commissioner: Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein, Hansen and Ringwelski; NRCS Staff: Zapzalka; BWSR: Absent.

SECRETARY'S MINUTES MSC Saehr/Brutscher Motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT MSC Saehr/Brutscher to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Winscher talked about the deadline of cannabis ordinances by January 1, 2025, they need to provide three licenses for selling. They also have a request for a Tier 4 feedlot of 9,000 animal units and anaerobic digesters which there is no ordinance for yet.

STAFF REPORT – Zapzalka said duties have shifted due to Steve Cole the Area NRCS manager is serving on detail in Louisiana, so Josh Hanson is acting in that role and Zapzalka is acting in Hanson's role. Ringwelski talked about several chicken barn expansions in the county, and solar panels going up. Hansen has been working on cover crops and the MN Ag Water Quality Program, Becker has been doing surveys for future projects, McDonald has been completing easement spot checks and planning the Water Festival and Knopik has trees ordered for next year's sale.

BWSR REPORT – Absent

OLD BUSINESS

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl said meeting will be at the end of September and that Mille Lacs Band hired a watershed coordinator. Wettstein shared this was the Morrison County Feedlot Officer.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – There is a meeting coming up in September as well, shared Faber. The grant agreement for the second round of funding has been executed.
3. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update – Brutscher said he hasn't been at a meeting for a while, but the next one is in October.
4. Mississippi River Sartell One Watershed One Plan Update- Wettstein reported only staff have met on this because we are still waiting to hear if the group got the BWSR grant. Should know in September.
5. 2024 Green Fair Folk Festival August 7th 4-8 PM, Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls – Hansen and Ringwelski worked this, Brutscher and Knopik volunteered. Event was on a rainy day, so it happened but essentially got rained out.
6. Intern Jenna Lawin Last Day, August 19 – Wettstein shared Lawin did a lot of good work for us since January. She is going on to study Wildlife Biology in Bemidji.

NEW BUSINESS

1. New Checking Account for Mississippi Sartell Watershed – Pine Country Bank (Signatures) – Wettstein passed around the signature card for all the board members to sign.
2. September Board Meeting Date Change – The next regular meeting date will not work as Wettstein and Brutscher will be attending a conference. The group decided to wait on picking a day until Wettstein knows we for sure need a meeting. Wettstein confirmed if the

meeting is needed it would be held to approve new contracts and to pay completed contracts, nothing else.

3. Nominations for Wildlife Habitat Steward & Outstanding Conservationist & Outstanding Forest Steward Award – This agenda item needed to be revisited because when Wettstein sent home the nominees for voting everyone voted for someone different. The deadline was extended so the opportunity to review these again was possible. After some discussion on the merits of all staff nominations, MSC Faber/Brutscher to nominate Czech Dairy this year and Curt Plante next year for the Outstanding Conservationist. Motion passed unanimously. MSC Hubner/Saehr to nominate Doug Ploof for Wildlife Habitat Steward. Motion passed unanimously. Wettstein presented one nomination for the Outstanding Forest Steward of Charlie Ehlen so he will also be nominated.
4. Long Prairie River Watershed Collaborative Fiscal Agent Agreement – MSC Brutscher/Hubner to sign onto the agreement. Motion passed unanimously.
5. FY24-25 Soil Health Delivery Grant Policy- Wettstein explained this is a new pot of money for a total amount of \$80K which can be used on soil health practices. The policy identifies them and the payment rate that will be used for the identified practices. MSC Hubner/Saehr to approve the policy. Motion passed unanimously.
6. Utility Pilot Program with BWSR and Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls – Wettstein shared the district has been approached to help facilitate the financial end of a pilot project which will be looking at native seed mixes under solar panels. The lead on this project, Dan Shaw from BWSR is willing to present at a later board meeting to explain the project and partners. Wettstein said she is looking for support to move forward with this project and the board agreed to act as the fiscal agent and offer coordination and technical assistance on the project as needed.
7. District Database Tool- Wettstein explained the need for a better tool than a lot of Excel spreadsheets for tracking grants, employee time and projects and how she has been researching companies that offer services to help with this over the last six months to a year. She presented some comparisons from seven different companies, with initial build price, subscription costs, field capability, mapping capabilities and other features. Just last month we were approached by NACD, they have left-over year-end funds in the amount of \$75K and asked if we had a project in mind to use that money for so Wettstein presented this project to them for consideration. The company Wettstein would like to move forward with is a local company, RT Vision as their price was competitive, the subscription fee on the lower end and they will be able to integrate the current mapping system we use, ArcMap, an ESRI product. Wettstein explained we have a previous database they built for the district that could be integrated into the new system. It also checked all the other boxes: we can do timekeeping, transfer data to Quickbooks, has the ability to do permitting for WCA and is field-capable for the technical staff so notes, pictures and location information is collected in the field, automatically saved into the program. Right now, everything we do is transcribed from paper notes and each program/project has its own Excel tracking sheet. MSC Saehr/Faber to move forward with a contract with RT Vision on this project once funding is approved by NACD. Saehr amended his motion to also include that before this happens that

staff have the chance to see a demonstration from RT Vision of the features. Motion and amendment passed unanimously.

8. Cost Share Contracts, Cancellations and Payments

a. CWF Soil Health Grant Contracts (a.1.-13.) MSC Brutscher/Faber to approve A1-13. Hubner abstained from voting. Motion passed unanimously by all those voting.

1. Kevin Zimmerman	\$19,250.00
2. Dean Zimmerman	\$19,250.00
3. Keith Ripplinger	\$767.25
4. Ryan Lanners	\$5,962.00
5. Dave Czech	\$11,063.80
6. Jason Lorenz	\$2,456.65
7. Craig Roerick	\$7,350.20
8. Chad Newman	\$8,085.00
9. Dave Hubner	\$11,299.15
10. Robert Knopik	\$7,579.00
11. Scott Prokott	\$4,200.90
12. Michael Jacobs	\$4,035.35
13. Darv Keehr	\$3,245.55

b. CWF Soil Health Grant Payment (b.1.) MSC Faber Brutscher to approve B1. Motion passed unanimously.

1. Richard Blonigen	CWF 49-12-24	\$3,575.00
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c. State Cost Share Contract (c.1.-2.) MSC Brutscher/Faber to approve C1. C2 will be approved further down on the agenda, this agenda item was included here in error by Wettstein. Motion passed unanimously.

1. Kari and Kevin Dembouski	\$1,180.00	Well Sealing
2. Stan and Geri Musielewicz	\$3,110.00	Wetland Restoration

d. State Cost Share Payment (d.1.) MSC Hubner/Brutscher to approve D1. Motion passed unanimously.

1. Jerome Yorek	#7-25	\$380.00	Forest Stewardship Plan
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e. FY23-24 Soil Health Delivery Grant Contracts (e.1.-3.) MSC Brutscher/ Faber to approve E1-3. Hubner abstained from voting. Motion passed unanimously by all those voting.

1. Dave Hubner	\$4,742.15	Cover Crops
2. Daniel Venske	\$1,212.75	Cover Crops
3. Pete Ratka	\$3,257.10	Cover Crops

f. Mississippi River Brainerd WBIF Contracts MSC Faber/Brutscher for F1-2. Motion passed unanimously.

1. Stan and Geri Musielewicz	\$3,110.00	Wetland Restoration
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2. Peter Vogel

\$43,165.00

Shoreline Restoration

INFORMATIONAL

- Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Commission Hearings – August 28th at 9:15-9:30, St. Paul
- Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Policy Committee Meeting, September 19, 9-11 AM
- Land Trust Alliance Conference, Providence Rhode Island September 24-28
- Rum River Joint Powers Entity Policy Meeting, September 26th, Princeton Public Library 4:30-7:30 PM
- MASWCD Area 2 and West Central Technical Service Area Meeting, October 3rd, Ortonville
- Forestry Field Day, October 11th, Belle Prairie Park from 10-2 PM
- Nitrate Clinic, Morrison County Government Center, October 21-25, 9-4 PM
- Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Policy Committee Meeting, October 29, 2-4 PM

*****Next Board Meeting September – TBD date at 8 AM, USDA Service Center

Meeting Adjourned at 10:52 p.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING
Friday, September 20, 2024
USDA Service Center
16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345
8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Brutscher, Hubner and Scholl. Commissioner: Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein; NRCS Staff: Zapzalka; BWSR: Absent.

SECRETARY’S MINUTES MSC Brutscher/Scholl Motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER’S REPORT MSC Brutscher/Hubner to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Winscher talked about the preliminary levy is set at 4.72%. He also said he has gotten oak wilt concerns and questions about if it is oak wilt. Wettstein said if people have concerns, we can add them to the list to check next July 4th timeframe because it is easy to identify at that point, otherwise a sample needs to be sent to the lab.

NEW BUSINESS – CONSENT AGENDA (a-h) – MSC Hubner/Brutscher to approve consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

1. Cost Share Contracts, Cancellations and Payments

a. Soil Health Cost Share Payment

1. Jason Lorenz	#SH-08-23	\$463.20	Cover Crop
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b. Clean Water Fund Cover Crop Payment

1. Michael Jacobs	#49-26-24	\$4,035.35	Cover Crop
2. Kevin Zimmerman	#49-15-24	\$19,250.00	Cover Crop
3. Dean Zimmerman	#49-16-24	\$19,250.00	Cover Crop

c. Rum River Watershed WBIF Contract Recommendation

1. John Lewer	\$720.00	Forest Stewardship Plan
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d. State Cost Share Contract

1. Al Tschida	\$500.00	Forest Stewardship Plan
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e. Soil Health Delivery Contract

1. Tyler Gulden	\$2,422.35	Cover Crop
2. Jason Lorenz	\$483.00	Cover Crop
3. Steve Kahl	\$3,799.60	Cover Crop
4. Doug Carlson	\$1,005.20	Cover Crop
5. Roger Lanners	\$4,154.70	Cover Crop
6. Eric LeBlanc	\$2,421.10	Cover Crop
7. Gerald Blonigen	\$5,881.70	Cover Crop
8. William Koopmeiners	\$3502.95	Cover Crop
9. Dennis Harold	\$6,666.55	Cover Crop

f. Long Prairie Watershed WBIF Contract

i. Greg Boesel	\$855.00	Well Sealing
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g. Mississippi River Brainerd Watershed Contract

i. John Holtz	\$19,250.00	Cover Crop
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h. Habitat Friendly Utility Program Contract

- i. Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls \$58,000 Critical Area
Planting

INFORMATIONAL

- Land Trust Alliance Conference, Providence Rhode Island September 24-28
- MASWCD Area 2 and West Central Technical Service Area Meeting, October 3rd, Ortonville
- Forestry Field Day, October 11th, Belle Prairie Park
- Nitrate Clinic, Morrison County Government Center, October 21-25, 9-4 PM
- BWSR Academy, October 29-31, Cragun's Conference Center Brainerd
- Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Policy Committee Meeting, October 29

*****Next Board Meeting October 25th at 8 AM, USDA Service Center

Meeting Adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, October 25, 2024

USDA Service Center

16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345

8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Brutscher, Faber, Saeher and Scholl. Commissioner: Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein; NRCS Staff: Miller; BWSR: Mayers.

AGENDA Wettstein asked for the Water Plan Extension to be removed from the agenda as it is not necessary to extend it until next year. MSC Saeher/Brutscher. Motion passed unanimously.

SECRETARY'S MINUTES MSC Faber/Brutscher to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT MSC Saeher/Faber to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Winscher talked about the variance for a feedlot expansion up to 5,000 animal units failed and that it will require an EAW. Also said the county needs to pass the cannabis ordinance by January 1st.

STAFF REPORT – Miller presented that October 1st is the start of the Federal fiscal year. They are paying on CSP, wrapping up projects and are expecting IRA funding to double this year.

BWSR REPORT – Darren mentioned Tom Schultz is the newest BWSR Board member, that 488 people are registered for BWSR academy and that he is working together with Morrison, Benton, Todd and Stearns managers on producing a white paper about feedlots and using WBIF funding.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Scholl reported they held a tour on September 26th. They also hired Troy Gilchrist as an attorney, and they are developing a cost share policy for the watershed.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber said their next meeting is in November.
3. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update- Brutscher said their meeting is coming up next week.
4. Mississippi River Sartell One Watershed One Plan Update- Wettstein has a new business item on adopting the MOA. After parties sign on to the MOA they will hold a policy meeting.
5. Land Trust Alliance Conference, Providence Rhode Island September 24-28 – Brutscher, Wettstein and McDonald attended this and were part of the group representing our Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape.
6. MASWCD Area 2 and West Central Technical Service Area Meeting, October 3rd, Ortonville – Faber and Wettstein attended. They elected a new co-chair, adopted the budget and heard two really good presentations on the Big Stone National Refuge and the Whetstone River Restoration.
7. Forestry Field Day, October 11th, Belle Prairie Park – Over 100 people attended, about half were staff from NRCS and SWCD's. The event has received a lot of compliments as it was a perfect day, good speakers and informative topics.
8. Planting for the Future, October 15, Camp Ripley – This event happened this year. There were 30 high school students who attended the event including students from the Nay-A-Shing school and Little Falls schools. They harvested sage and planting seed for cultural significant native plants.
9. Database Update – RT Vision and Grant Funding Secured – Wettstein shared that the REPI year end funding of \$80K is now official and that RT Vision did a demonstration for all of the staff as the board requested. This project will now begin.
10. Tree Sale – DNR Drop Ship Location- NEW Brainerd Location – Knopik has been working with the DNR to find a solution to last years issue with our staff processing so many DNR trees. The solution will be that DNR will have the drop location move to their Baxter office.

11. DNR Plot Based Inventory Update – Wettstein shared this project is complete and our assistance in the pilot is aiding the rest of the rollout on private lands.

NEW BUSINESS

1. WCA Update – Wettstein briefed the board that BWSR has required the re-opening of a comment period on a decision staff made regarding the Ellen Kalahar cartway. Wettstein expects the decision to be appealed within 30 days by Marvin Stroschein. She will inform the board once the appeal is made.
2. Easement Program Briefing – McDonald presented current funding for the easement program and landowners the district intends to move forward with. Wettstein asked the board if they would like additional information or if they would even prefer to approve these easements before they move forward as payment amounts are large. MSC Brutscher/Saehr to table this discussion for a future meeting. Saehr asked Wettstein to be prepared to present the process to the board for how they are ranked and what role staff play in the process. Motion passed unanimously.
3. State Aid Policy 2024-2025 – MSC Faber/Brutscher to adopt 2024 and 2025. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Water Plan Extension – Removed from agenda at the start of the meeting.
5. Mississippi River Sartell Watershed MOU – MSC Faber/Saehr to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
6. Audit – Draft Audit and Audit Engagement Letter – MSC Saehr/Faber to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
7. MASWCD Annual Convention Attendance – Wettstein will call to see who is planning on attending.
8. MASWCD Resolution Packet – Members voted. Wettstein will record the vote in the MASWCD system.
9. Correction Long Prairie Watershed WBIF Contract Approval - MSC Brutscher/Faber. Motion passed unanimously.
 - a. Greg Boesel was approved for \$855.00 should be \$427.50 or 50% of total cost, not 100% for well sealing
10. State Cost Share Payment – MSC Faber/Saehr for items a and b. Motion passed unanimously.
 - a. Neil Korf #06-25 \$800.00 Forest Stewardship Plan
 - b. Al Tschida #11-24 \$500.00 Forest Stewardship Plan
11. Rum River Watershed Payment Confirmation – This is just a formality, Rum has already approved payment. Board recommends funding the project.
 - a. John Lewer #2023-MSWCD-1-2 \$720.00 Forest Stewardship Plan
12. Soil Health Delivery Payments – MSC Brutscher/Faber to approve a through e. Motion passed unanimously.
 - a. Daniel Venske #02-25 \$1,212.75 Cover Crops
 - b. Tyler Gulden #04-25 \$1,722.35 Cover Crops
 - c. Jason Lorenz #05-25 \$483.00 Cover Crops
 - d. Doug Carlson #07-25 \$1,005.20 Cover Crops
 - e. Gerald Blonigen#10-25 \$5,881.70 Cover Crops
13. BWSR Clean Water Fund Cover Crop Payments – MSC Faber/Brutscher to approve a-e. Point of discussion about item b. Faber amends his motion to approve a, c, d, e. Motion passed unanimously. The question was the payment amount. Wettstein double checked the amount and it is correct on b. MSC Saehr/Faber to approve b. Motion passed unanimously.
 - a. Keith Ripplinger#CWF 49-17-24 \$767.25 Cover Crops
 - b. Dave Czech #CWF 49-19-24 \$11,063.80 Cover Crops

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| c. Jason Lorenz | #CWF 49-20-24 \$2,456.65 | Cover Crops |
| d. Craig Roerick | #CWF 49-21-24 \$2,488.20 | Cover Crops |
| e. Scott Prokott | #CWF 49-25-24 \$1,725.90 | Cover Crops |

14. Special Meeting Date, Initiative Foundation Nov. 15th – Workload Analysis and Budget Discussion
15. December Meeting Date, December 20th (Current scheduled date is December 27th)

INFORMATIONAL

- Nitrate Clinic, Morrison County Government Center, October 21-25, 9-4 PM
- BWSR Academy, October 29-31, Cragun's Conference Center Brainerd
- Mississippi River Brainerd Policy Committee Meeting, October 28
- Long Prairie Policy Committee Meeting, November 21
- MASWCD Annual Convention December 2-4, Bloomington MN
- Rum River Joint Powers Board Meeting, December 19

*******Next Board Meeting- Regular Board Meeting November 22nd at 8 AM, USDA Service Center, Little Falls**

Meeting Adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary

MORRISON SWCD BOARD MEETING

Friday, November 22, 2024

USDA Service Center

16776 Heron Road Little Falls, MN 56345

8:00 a.m.

Attending In-Person: Supervisors: Brutscher, Faber, Saeher and Scholl. Commissioner: Winscher; SWCD Staff: Wettstein and Ringwelski; NRCS Staff: Zapzalka; BWSR: Mayers; Appellants Tim Stroschein and Sharon Stroschein

AGENDA – MSC Saeher/Faber to adjust the original agenda to move up the Commissioners Report in front of the WCA Appeal to accommodate Winscher having to leave early. Motion passed unanimously.

SECRETARY’S MINUTES – MSC Saeher/Faber to approve October minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER’S REPORT - MSC Brutscher/Hubner to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONER REPORT – Winscher shared the elections are over, they are proposing a 4.27% levy, they have been dealing with the cannabis ordinance, junk yards, PFAS, anaerobic digesters and they are still debating the Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail.

WCA APPEAL- Appeal by Marvin Stroschein of the Notice of Decision issued by Morrison SWCD for the Ellen Kalahar-Grissom Access Road in Darling Township. Tim Stroschein presented to the board the reasons the family is appealing the decision. The reasons were included in the attachments the board had received. A lengthy discussion was then had between Tim Stroschein and the Morrison SWCD Board and staff members as part of the proceedings. The Stroschein’s continue to argue there is 33,000 square feet of wetland in the cartway area and that the road the SWCD claims is instead a property fence line. They were reminded several times that the access which they would prefer through Mike Roach’s property is not what the board is considering as the appeal is on the LGU’s WCA decision, not on the township’s decision. Wettstein explained there was evidence of fill in the cartway area as well as failed culverts, elevation differences and old electrical poles leading to an abandoned house. She also pointed out that avoidance had already been completed through the townships cartway determination with the help of Wettstein and that staff had processed a complete application from Kalahar-Grissom just like any other access road application. MSC Brutscher/Faber to uphold the staff decision. Motion passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORT- Zapzalka reported they are making CSP payments, EQIP payments and RCPP payments as projects are completed.

BWSR REPORT – Mayers shared reporting in eLink is due on February 2nd.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Rum River One Watershed One Plan Update – Wettstein shared all staff attended a refresher course the staff at Rum gave on process and policies for the watershed. JPE meeting is in December.
2. Long Prairie One Watershed One Plan Update – Faber shared they had a meeting this week with a very good presentation from Douglas SWCD on a stormwater project within the City of Alexandria. They are on their second round of funding.
3. Mississippi River Brainerd One Watershed One Plan Update – No updates.
4. Mississippi River Sartell One Watershed One Plan Update –The memorandum of agreement between the partnership is just waiting on a signature from the Mile Lacs Band and will then hold the first policy meeting, most likely after the new year.
5. Nitrate Clinic, Morrison County Government Center, October 21-25, 9-4 PM – McDonald prepared a map and summary for the board. Attendance was very low for the clinic this year.
6. MASWCD Annual Convention Attendance – Wettstein was just updating the rest of the board that Saeher and Brutscher will attend the conference.
7. NRCS RCPP Award for the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape- Wettstein shared the news that the grant we applied for in June was fully funded at \$12.5M. This is third RCPP the district has been awarded. The

money will not go through our office but will go directly to the local NRCS office for contracts and payments. SWCD will be helping by working with landowners planning conservation projects and there are funds to reimburse us for our time.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2025 Budget Proposals – The board had reviewed the 2025 budget last week and offered changes after the special meeting where the workload analysis was presented. MSC Saehr/Brutscher to approve the alternate budget proposal which included funding to backfill staffing numbers back to eight people as it was before Chisholm retired. Motion passed unanimously.
2. 2025 District Tree Sales Policy – MSC Saehr/Hubner to approve New Business #2 and 3. Motion passed unanimously.
3. 2025 District Tree Sales Discount Policy
4. PRAP Application to Update Employee Policy – The board had previously voted to move forward with updating the employee policy but there may be an opportunity to have some of these costs offset with a PRAP grant, it is not guaranteed but we can submit an application. MSC Brutscher/Saehr to approve Wettstein moving forward with an application.
5. National Association of Conservation Districts Annual Convention, February 7-13 – Information on the upcoming meeting will be sent out, please consider attending.
6. Cost Share Contracts, Cancellations and Payments – MSC Faber/Hubner to approve a,b,d,e and f. Motion passed unanimously. MSC Brutscher/Saehr to approve cancelling c and g. Motion passed unanimously.

a. State Cost Share Contract				
i.	Friends of Crane Meadows	\$1,500.00	Conservation Cover	
b. State Cost Share Payment				
i.	St. Stanislaus Catholic Church	\$447.00	Well Sealing	
c. LCCMR What a Match Cancellation				
i.	Mike Fenske	#WAM24-01	\$1,072.50	Stewardship Plan
d. Mississippi River Brainerd WBIF Payment				
i.	Stan Musielewicz	#MRBRD24-01	\$3,110.00	Wetland Restoration
e. Soil Health Delivery Cost Share Payments				
i.	Roger Lanners	#SHD08-25	\$4,154.70	Cover Crop
ii.	William Koopmeiners	#SHD11-25	\$3,204.30	Cover Crop
iii.	Steve Kahl	#SHD06-25	\$2,731.05	Cover Crop
iv.	Peter Ratka	#SHD03-25	\$2,756.60	Cover Crop
f. CWF Soil Health Grant Payments				
i.	Neal Loidolt		\$782.95	Cover Crop
ii.	Jayne Schilling		\$2,372.65	Cover Crop
iii.	Allan Feirer		\$3,969.35	Cover Crop
iv.	Ryan Lanners		\$5,962.00	Cover Crop
v.	Robert Knopik		\$6,820.00	Cover Crop
vi.	Darv Keehr		\$3,245.55	Cover Crop
vii.	Duane Kroll		\$19,250.00	Cover Crop
g. CWF Soil Health Grant Cancellations				
i.	Duane L. Kroll		\$1,377.20	Cover Crop
ii.	Shawn Winscher		\$5,519.25	Cover Crop
iii.	Gerald Herzog		\$4,323.00	Cover Crop

INFORMATIONAL

- Notice of Intent to Amend the Rich Prairie Sewer and Water District Wellhead Protection Plan
- Long Prairie River Watershed Policy Meeting, November 21, 2024
- MASWCD Annual Convention December 2-4, Bloomington MN
- Rum River Joint Powers Board Meeting, December 19

*****Next Board Meeting- Regular Board Meeting December 20th at 8 AM, USDA Service Center, Little Falls

Meeting Adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Tom Brutscher, Secretary