



# Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District

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**March 10, 2020**

## **REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

The March Board meeting of the Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District was convened at the Chisago SWCD office in North Branch on March 10, 2020. Chair Birkholz called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Supervisors present: Jim Birkholz, Roland Cleveland, Craig Mold, David Tollberg and Justin Wilson (arrived at 8:05)

Staff: SWCD District Administrator Craig Mell and NRCS District Conservationist Debra Hermel

### **AGENDA**

Motion by Cleveland and seconded by Mold to approve the agenda as listed. Motion carried.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Tollberg and seconded by Cleveland to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Recent correspondence was reviewed by the Board.

### **STAFF/SUPERVISOR REPORTS**

NRCS District Conservationist Hermel and District Administrator Mell reviewed the past months office activities.

### **COST SHARE PROGRAMS**

#### **Lawns to Legumes Grant Program**

Motion by Wilson and seconded by Cleveland to adopt the following program requirements for the Lawns to Legumes program for the City of Taylors Falls and the Chisago Lakes Chain of Lakes watershed.

- City of Taylors Falls
  - Pocket Gardens (install using native plant plugs or containers)
    - Minimum size – 100 sq. ft.
    - Cost Share rate – up to 90% of total cost to install project not to exceed \$500/landowner
- Chisago Lakes Chain of Lakes Watershed
  - Lakeshore buffers
    - Minimum size – 50% lot width, 10 ft. length (as feasible, determined by SWCD staff)
    - Cost Share rate – up to 90% total cost to install project not to exceed \$3,000/landowner
      - 1) Up to \$1,500 Demonstration Neighborhood cost share
      - 2) Up to \$1,500 LID cost share

Motion carried.

#### **Chisago County Public Ditches 1, 2 and 3 Cost Share Policy**

The Board discussed whether or not to provide financial assistance in the form of state cost share funds to landowners to establish a perennial vegetative buffer along recently reestablished Chisago County Public Ditches 1, 2 and 3. The consensus of the Board was to continue to offer financial assistance in the form of state cost share funds to landowners to establish a perennial vegetative buffer along Chisago County Public Ditches 1, 2 and 3. No Board action taken.

*Bringing Conservation to Chisago County*

### **2020 Construction Season Projects Review**

Administrator Mell reviewed with the Board a list of upcoming agricultural and urban best management practices projects that staff are currently developing. No Board action taken.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Lower St. Croix One Watershed One Plan**

Supervisor Birkholz and Administrator Mell updated the Board on recent activities of the Lower St. Croix One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee. Topics reviewed included the Implementation Plan Organizational Arrangement, the Draft Watershed Management Plan, and the Chisago SWCDs staff involvement in the long-term implementation plan. No Board action taken.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Chisago SWCD Cost Share Policy**

Motion by Cleveland and seconded by Wilson to approve the Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District 2020 Cost Share Policy as drafted (see attached). Motion carried.

#### **Chisago County Cooperative Weed Management Area Program**

Motion by Wilson and seconded by Tollberg to authorize District Administrator Mell to finalize a Professional and Technical Services Contract with Chisago County (Public Works and Environmental Services Departments) for up to \$10,000 to assist with the inventory, treatment and outreach components of the FY20-21 Cooperative Weed Management Area grant agreement. Motion carried.

#### **Chisago SWCD Volunteer Request**

District Administrator Mell informed the Board that one of the Chisago County Master Gardeners has recently completed the University of Minnesota Master Naturalist program. As part of this program they need to have 40 hours of volunteer service in a natural resources field. The consensus of the Board was to utilize the volunteer to assist with the Lawns to Legumes and/or the Cooperative Weed Management Area grant programs. Their assistance could be both in the office and out in the field assisting current SWCD staff. No Board action taken.

#### **Chisago SWCD Emergency Office Closure Policy**

The Board discussed the potential impacts of an epidemic outbreak locally, such as the COVID 19 virus, and the affects that it could have on the SWCD staff and office. The consensus of the Board was to allow SWCD employees who are under a self-quarantine the ability to work from home. Administrator Mell will consult with Supervisor Birkholz on each individual employee's self-quarantine situation and their remote work schedule. No Board action taken.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No action taken.

### **UPCOMING BOARD MEETING**

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 14, 2020, at 8:00 a.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mold and seconded by Tollberg to adjourn the Board meeting at 10:15 a.m.

  
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Secretary

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April 14, 2020

Date