

**POPE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MEETING MINUTES
Supervisory Board Meeting 7:00 am March 15, 2011**

**Meeting site: USDA Service Center,
1680 N. Franklin Avenue
Glenwood, MN 56334**

Supervisors: Keith Nygaard, Gary Reents, Randy Anderson, Ralph Peterson, Absent: Tom Talle

SWCD Staff: Kelly Erickson, Matt Fischer, Luan Johnsrud

Guests: none

1. Meeting called to order by Chair D. Gary Reents at 7:06 a.m.
2. Motion by Ralph Peterson, second by Keith Nygaard to approve agenda with additions: Feedlot Grant contract, Insurance for tree pickup, WesMin/Tastefully Simple Rain Barrel grant, Conservation Corps Agreement. Carried
3. Motion by Ralph Peterson, second by Keith Nygaard to approve February 15, 2011 meeting minutes as presented.

4. Reports-

- o Paul Gerde, County Commissioner, by phone

Pope County will be hiring an interim County Coordinator from Stevens County while they advertise and search for a new Coordinator.

There have been a record number of people using Rainbow Rider in January and February 2011 compared to the same months in 2010. Eight busses are now housed in the new garage in Alexandria.

The exterior courthouse bricks are on their way and should be delivered within the next two weeks.

Randy Anderson entered at 7:25 a.m.

- o Kelly Erickson, Technician

Attended and set up a display at the Beef Cow/Calf Day at Minnewaska House and Prairie Lakes Coop annual meeting with Matt in February. Attended 'Day at the Legislature' with Matt, Luan and Keith Nygaard. Met with Rep. Paul Anderson and Senator Joe Gimse to discuss conservation issues that affect Pope SWCD and landowners. Attended Area II meeting with Matt, Luan and D. Gary Reents in Long Prairie March 3rd. Attended West Central Irrigation open house and set up a display. Submitted 2 bids for WRP-they were not accepted.

WCA TEP meeting was held. Kelly typed up meeting minutes and will start a file to track projects that were discussed.

Continuing to work on tree plans.

Kelly has been working on the drills so that they are ready this spring.

The 3010 needs repair. Kelly received best case scenario bid of \$500, worst case \$2,000. Discussion. Motion by Keith Nygaard, second by Ralph Peterson to repair the 3010 as discussed. Carried.

Presented two (2) cost share projects, Lyle Hovendick and Steve Schurmann, for consideration. Motion by Keith Nygaards, second by Randy Anderson to approve request for Pope WCD to encumber \$5328.75 for a sediment basin project for Lyle Hovendick. Carried. Motion by Ralph

Peterson, second by Randy Anderson to approve request for Pope WCD to encumber \$8040.00 for a sediment basin project for Steve Schurmann. Carried.

Kelly received two(2) requests from DNR for new wells for WCA reviews. Craig Bower indicated that removing trees & stumps, including willows, will be reviewed for Swamp Busters.

- Matt Fischer, SWCD Farm Bill Technician

Participated in teleconference for the Walk-In Access Program, attended NEPA (federal program form) training and CRP sign-up training, completed RIM seed sequencing for a RIM project, and participated in the Pope County Pheasant Restoration annual banquet.

Matt and Kelly are working on a DNR Conservation legacy Grant for Siberian elm removal on a 96.2 acre RIM project. This project needs local support, so letters to conservation partners will be sent.

Matt has talked with 20-25 landowners that have CRP contract expiring this year. There are 94 contracts that will expire in 2011. County rates have increased to \$64-\$127/acre. Landowners still have to 'bid in' to the program.

- Luan Johnsrud, Office Manager

Attended WesMin RC& D annual meeting March 16th, attended Ordway Prairie WLI meeting to discuss 2011 work plan, coordinate Langhie WLI meeting and 2011 work plan, and coordinated Pope County 8 Lake TMDL Implementation Planning meeting.

Submitted the draft work plan for two (2) Conservation Corps apprentices that will begin in May.

Discussed accounts receivable. Kelly and Luan discuss these monthly and we are in better shape than 2 years ago. The Board instructed Luan to send letters to the two accounts regarding the open balances.

- Craig Bower, NRCS

Attended the following meetings & trainings: presentation at Stoen Ag Supply luncheon, Prairie Lakes Coop annual meeting, NEPA training, NRCS –Area II meeting, WRP teleconference, DC teleconference, EQIP nutrient management teleconference, and CRP teleconference.

Completed 2 determinations to FSA for compliance with EL/wetlands.

Processed 16 application for CSP program. The applications are in the CMT ranking process for the program.

Received 5 applications for WHIP-1 was accepted for funding. Receive 1 MRBI application and 23 EQIP applications. The applications are in processing.

Closing documents almost ready on tow easement applications.

NRCS grazing specialist is working with 6 landowners for grazing assistance.

Hats off to Pope County Pheasant Restoration to providing a landowner with assistance so that the Round Lake Restoration project could be completed.

- Ralph Peterson, WesMin RC&D/Glacial Trail

Ralph did not attend the last Glacial Trail meeting-Tom Talle attended in his place.

WesMin received a \$9700 grant from NRCS. \$700 will be used for another printed of the grazing brochure.

The Wadena Tree Plan is moving ahead. Two interns will be working on the tree planning designs for the project. Boy Scouts, Conservation Corp. crew and volunteers will help plant the trees this year.

Tastefully Simple grant funds are still available for Douglas and Pope Counties. Ralph advised us to think of ways to spend the money.

The RC&D program may be cut at the federal level, so the WesMin RC&D office could close as early as the end of March 2011. WesMin RC&D still owes the Phelps Mill foundation \$15,000, so paying that out would take care of most of their reserves.

Melissa and Craig have taken pictures of the dry hydrant installed at Gilcrest Lake.

5. Financial Report-Current Bills. February 2011-March 2011

Randy Anderson conducted the review of the 2010 Year - End Financial Statements. We are in good share for the time being, however, we can expect additional cuts. We need to continue to aggressively seek grant programs to bring money into the county and provide T&A or administration funds to the District. Randy suggested sending out a copy of the Personnel Policy to board members before the April board meeting. It's time to review the sick and annual leave policies and update the Personnel Policy in general.

Randy suggested including the Card Member Services statement in the financial report. This is the company credit card. The Cenex card is all gas for the trucks, tractors and ATV. The report for this card is in the monthly Profit and Loss report. Motion by Randy Anderson, to accept the Financial Reports and 2010 Year End Financial Report as presented. Second the motion by Keith Nygaard. Motion carried.

Barry Bouwman, Pope County Feedlot officer entered at 8:30 a.m.

6. New Business

- Barry Bouwman presented additional information on the feedlot cost share project. Discussed the option to include a roof structure as part of the project when documents alternatives analysis shows this to be part of the most feasible and practical alternative that meets applicable state feedlot rule requirements. Luan passed out State Feedlot cost-share policies for board members to review. Motion made by Randy Anderson, to sign the Feedlot Quality Management Grant Agreement from BWSR to provide cost share for this project. Second by Ralph Peterson Carried. Motion made by Keith Nygaard to recommend approval for use of funds on a roof structure contingent upon an engineer's approval. Second the motion by Randy Anderson. Motion carried. The Board advised Luan to contact the engineer for review.
- Policy for Advertising in the quarterly newsletter-Conservation News discussed. Motion by Ralph Peterson to discontinue advertising in the newsletter. Second by Randy Anderson. Carried. The Board instructed Luan to return money that we had already collected for advertising.
- Government Shutdown Policy- The board discussed the possibility of a government shut down as early as March 18, 2011 and how this could affect operations for Pope SWCD. As of today, there is a 3 week continuing resolution on the table. Craig has been checking on federal policies for the use of the building. SWCD staff is part of the federal computer system so we would not be able to access computers or the phone system. The board instructed staff to continue as best we can, use the laptop for QuickBooks if needed and continue to contact landowners. Pope SWCD has their own lease for the building and will continue to pay rent, so we should be able to access the site, not all of the equipment.
- Internship interviews will be scheduled for Monday, March 28th beginning at the 5:00 p.m. for the Pope Swift CWMA intern and Monday, April 4th beginning at 5:00 p.m. for the Rosholt Farm Water Quality intern. Luan will distribute applications/resumes to interview committees and make arrangements for the interviews.
- WesMin RC&D approved the request for Tastefully Simple grant fund of \$1,000 for a rain barrel project. Motion by Ralph Peterson to sign the agreement for the project. Second by Keith Nygaard. Carried. Ralph indicated that Pope SCWD should look for additional water quality projects that are very visible. There are an estimated \$8-9,000.00 left in this fund.
- Reviewed Conservation Corps Minnesota Agreement, Project #: 18017-501. The agreement is for one of the two Conservation Corps apprentice positions that have been awarded to Pope SWCD. Motion by Ralph Peterson to sign agreement for Project #: 18017-501 and the additional agreement yet to be received with the Conservation Corps Minnesota. Second by Keith Nygaard. Carried.
- Discussed purchase of a SPAD meter for the Rosholt Farm Project. Motion by Keith Nygaard, second by Randy Anderson to purchase the SPAD meter. Carried.

- Discussed insurance coverage for tree sale and special events. Motion by Keith Nygaard to draft a written agreement with the landowner in accordance with MCIT recommendations. Randy Anderson second the motion. Carried.
- 7. Closed meeting to discuss Kelly Erickson's letter to the Board. Motion by Randy Anderson to eliminate utilizing the federal grade and step scale for determining compensation for District Employees. Second by Ralph Peterson. Motion carried unanimously.
- 8. Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.