



2008 Mahogany St Ste 3
Mora MN 55051
(320) 679-1391
Deanna@KanabecSWCD.org

Outcomes Documents – Regular Board Meeting

Wednesday January 24, 2024, 12:00 pm

Location: SWCD Conservation Office 2008 Mahogany St., Ste #3 Mora MN 55051

SUPERVISORS: Jon Sanford, Kim Johnson, Kevin Belkholm, Gene Carda

STAFF: Deanna Pomije, Jerah Mattson, Emily Larsen, Stephanie Paulsen, Brian Steffen,
Mary Krueger*

*Remote Attendees **Others:** **Absent:** Norma Heggernes

1. 12:10 Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Acting Chair: Johnson

2. *Board Elections

Motion by Sanford, second by Johnson to retain the same officer and committee assignment positions as held in 2023 until further notice. Holding off on the appointments to the district land committee; to be reviewed with Belkholm present.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

*Board Committee assignments

Motion by Sanford, second by Johnson to approve Carda and Belkholm to remain on the district land committee. Sanford volunteered as an alternate.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

3. *Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Sanford, second by Carda to approve the agenda as presented with moving the board elections and committee assignments until after Belkholm arrives. The special meeting 1/2/24 outcomes has been added to the consent agenda for approval. Item 7.1 will have 3 Snake Partnership service contracts seeking approval. Item 7.10 will be omitted, the buffer law grant contract approval, as this was previously approved and replace it with Josh Tank's Rum Watershed Staff time contract. Add item 9.2, approval on a Non-Structural Practice Policy with cost share rates

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

4. *Consent Agenda (no discussion unless Supervisor requests)

4.1. Financial – receipts, disbursements, balance sheet, profit & loss reports

4.2. Outcomes Document:

- Kanabec SWCD Board Mtg. – December 20, 2023
- Special Board Meeting – January 2, 2024

4.3. Staff Reports

4.4. Upcoming Staff Meetings / Outreach / Training

4.5. AIS funding requests

Motion by Sanford second by Johnson to approve the Consent Agenda as presented with the addition of the Special Board Meeting outcomes held 1/2/24.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

5. *Approve Treasurer’s Report

Motion by Carda second by Sanford to approve the December 2023 Treasurer’s Report as presented by Johnson

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

6. NRCS Report (Brian Steffen)

- The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has zero classic assessment and ranking and zero renewals for FY24
- CSP- Grassland Conservation Initiative (GCI) is no longer a program
- EQIP-25 applications received in Kanabec County. 5 decided to defer until next year, 19 moving forward this year and 1-SU2. More funding is anticipated to arrive this summer.
- Resource Conservation Partnership Project (RCPP) has 2 applications that moved to approve.
- Steve Cole to attend our meeting in Feb. to discuss our cooperative service agreement

Belkholm arrived at 12:40, Acting Chair: Belkholm

The Annual NRCS Civil Rights Review - the agreement was reviewed and signed by all members. Steffen responded to a clarifying question from Belkholm.

7. Business Section

7.1. Snake Watershed Partnership Update. The SRWMB denied funding 2 minor proposals. One for a map to be developed summarizing all our priority maps into one and another outreach proposal using rain barrels. These were not funded due to the SRWMB seeking dissolution.

Seeking approval on three Snake Watershed Partnership service contracts with us:

1. Master contract for services
2. Statement of Work (SOW) for outreach services for \$83,666
3. SOW for shoreland protection projects (<\$20,000 threshold) totaling \$5,000, one project ready to contract on Fish Lake, will be seeking a contract amendment with the landowner

In discussion on our Watershed Program Coordinator position: With our last posting of this position; the applicants were not at the level of experience we were seeking. The position description was revised to increase the minimum level of experience sought. The revision now also includes all watershed activities into this one position, instead of 1/3 of the activities under the

District Manager position. To seek input on the description from Paul S. with Pine SWCD prior to finalizing. The board was recommending a new review of the description against the county pay scale and then to report the position until it's filled.

Motion by Johnson second by Sanford to approve the 3 services contracts listed above with the Snake watershed Partnership

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.2. Update on Snake Watershed Position

Motion by Johnson second by Sanford to approve the consolidated watershed coordinator position to add the additional responsibility to have the counties' consultant re-evaluate the position. Will seek final comments from Paul Swanson with Pine SWCD. The job is to be listed as an exempt employee, paid on a salary basis, using an assessed pay grade based on an hourly rate. Once approved it will be posted with an open-end date until filled. Salary will be pending, upon completion of the counties' consultant's pay grade review.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.3. *Annual Dues:

- MASWCD \$6,802.95 (last year \$5,301.80)
- Envirothon donation \$250 (last year \$250)
- Area 3 Assn. dues \$600 (last year \$300)
- Area 3 Forestry Assn. dues \$265 (last year \$60)
- Wild Rivers \$50 (donation)
- MN Soil Health Coalition \$25 (membership fee)

Motion by Johnson second by Carda to approve the annual dues as listed above.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.4. *Renew annually:

- Newspaper, Kanabec County Times
- Banks
 - Neighborhood National Bank
 - Blaze (formerly Spire)
Plans are in place to continue to pay our rent out of this account.
- Supervisor per diems (\$100 last year)

Motion by Sanford second by Johnson to continue using the Kanabec County Times as our newspaper

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

Motion by Johnson second by Sanford to continue using the current banks with the new name of Blaze, formerly Spire.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

Motion by Sanford second by Carda to continue using the supervisor per diem of \$100 per meeting attended.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.5. *Rent new space proposal, requesting approval on a new 4-year lease, starting March 2024
Motion by Carda second by Sanford to pay the new rent increase \$1,375/ month or \$16,500 per year for 1,322 square feet of space.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda
Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.6. Grant Reporting Update – pay back to BWSR
Pomije explained the circumstances for the funds to be returned.
\$25,059.13 (*confirmed amounts*) total funds will be sent back to BWSR.

- *Knife River Grant* \$15,272.42
- *SCS FY 2020* \$1,968.49
- *SCS FY 2021* \$2,904.40
- *Buffer Law FY 2021* \$4,913.82

***Motion by Johnson second by Carda** to approve the new billable rate as follows:

- District Manager \$72.35
- Conservation Technician \$60.10
- Administrative Assistant \$59.18

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda
Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.7. *MCIT Ins. Trust Property coverage \$2,887
 Worker’s Compensation \$2,422

Motion by Sanford second by Carda to approve the insurance premium payments

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda
Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.8. *RIM Easement Monitoring Contract approval, \$450, 9 existing easements
Motion by Sanford second by Carda to approve the monitoring contract and authorize Pomije to sign the grant contract

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda
Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.9. *RIM Easement Master Contract approval, \$2,500 per new easement, staff easement development
Motion by Johnson second by Sanford to approve the RIM Easement Master Contract for \$2,500 per new easement and authorize Pomije to sign the grant contract.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda
Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.10. *Proposed Rum staff time for Tank in the amount of \$800. Authorize Pomije to sign contract
Motion by Carda, second by Belkholm to approve Tank’s staff time to work on Rum Watershed forestry work as described in the amount of \$800 and for Pomije to negotiate the amount of time Tank can be contracted with Mille Lacs SWCD for work in the Rum Watershed on forestry services and authorizing Pomije to sign the contract as needed

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda
Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.11. *Walk in Access Program contract with DNR, \$250 ea. Sign-up - Failed for lack of a motion, the board has decided this program does not match well with our SWCD mission.

7.12. *Utilize credit card cash-back for employee rewards, at the discretion of the District Manager
Motion by Sanford, second by Johnson to approve the District Manager to use the credit card cash back for employee rewards.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

7.13. *District Land, food plot preparation (Belkholm)

The local chapter of Pheasants Forever may provide assistance on the seeding, possibly using our no-till drill for the job. It was suggested to have Tank visit the District Land site to advise on harvesting the hybrid poplar. A private sector forester may also be recommended for their knowledge of forestry markets.

Motion by Sanford, second by Carda to approve two days per-diem for Belkholm on work done to prep (brush clearing, tillage) food plot planting on district land.

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** Belkholm

7.14. *AIS 2024 Hiring of 2-3 Boat Inspectors, authorize posting and hiring within budgeted amount of \$14,631.22 to offer \$16/hr. & \$16.50/hr. on returning inspectors

Motion by Johnson, second by Second to approve the AIS budget of \$14,631.22

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

8. Public Input – none

9. Project Updates

9.1. *Hwy 65/Fish Lake Shoreland Project, MN DOT maintenance project within right of way seeking rock paid through us, \$3-5,000. Thanks to Sanford's persistent work with MN DOT to encourage them to include this as a maintenance project of theirs. The work is currently in progress.

Motion by Carda, second by Johnson to approve up to \$10,000 towards the rock used on this MN DOT project

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

9.2. *Non-Structural Policy on incentive payments for cover-crops, nutrient management and prescribed grazing.

Motion by Sanford, second by Johnson to approve the Non-Structural practice incentive payments rates as provided

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

Opposed: None **Abstain:** None

10. Discussion Session: Proposed SWCD Board/Staff Retreat

The idea of holding a SWCD board / staff retreat was discussed. The purpose is to meet and discuss our strategic direction / objectives for 2024 with many of the recent changes we are going through. It was suggested to go through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) exercise. Possibly a 4-hour event in an outside location, a few locations were suggested. Some sort of fun group activity was suggested to be incorporated with the event. A BWSR - Performance Review Assistance Program (PRAP) grant was suggested to apply for and hire an outside facilitator for the event. It was also mentioned to have a staff capacity assessment done as part of this grant request.

There was also a suggestion to schedule the MOLEAER Company to come present on their Nanobubbles product for the treatment of algae with the COLA group.

11. Set Next Meeting Dates / Committee Reports – next meeting dates

- 1/22/24 – SRWMB Annual Organizational Meeting 9am, Courthouse (Pomije, Belkholm)
- 1/22/24 – Snake Watershed Partnership Meeting, 10:30am, Courthouse (Pomije, Belkholm)
- 1/24/24 – TSA Area 3 Meeting, 10am remote (Johnson, Pomije)
- 1/25/24? – Rum RRWP Meeting, 4:30, Milaca (Johnson)
- 2/1/24 – Annual Grant Reporting Deadline
- 2/12/24 – Snake Steering Meeting, as needed 9-11am (Pomije)
- 2/13/24 – **Supervisor Training** w/Darren, Brainerd, 9am-12pm (Heggernes, Sanford)
- 2/15/24 – Internal Annual Newsletter article submissions due (Staff)
- 2/23/24 – Potential multi-county Amish Outreach (Staff)
- **2/21/24 – Regular SWCD Board Meeting, 12pm**
- 2/22/24 – Leadership Training webinar, 10am (Pomije)
- 2/26/24 – Snake Watershed Partnership Meeting, 10:30am, Courthouse (Pomije, Belkholm)
- Feb. TBD – Snake/Kettle RIM Easement Tech. Committee (Mattson)
- 2/26/24 – Snake Watershed Partnership Meeting, Courthouse (Pomije, Sanford)
- 3/13/24 – Day at the Capital, evening prior legislative briefing (Belkholm, Sanford)
- 3/14/24 – COLA/AIS Meeting, 5pm (Larsen, Sanford)
- 3/14/24? – Kettle PC Meeting, 9am, Sandstone (Johnson)

- 3/21/24? – Forestry Assn. Meeting, 10am, McGregor (Carda or Sanford, Tank)
- June 7 or 14 – proposed dates for the Area 3 Resolution Meeting, Cloquet Forestry Ctr. – any conflicts?

*Seeking Supervisor report on meeting attended

12. Evaluate the Meeting – What worked? What needs further discussion?

Agenda items for next month

13. 3:20 Adjourn Regular Meeting

Motion by Sanford second by Johnson to adjourn Regular Board Meeting at 3:20pm

Affirmative: Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda,

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

14. Closed Session – Personnel Committee to review staff's 2024 performance objectives

***Seeking Board Decisions**