



**Minutes of the September 13, 2023
Brown SWCD Regular Board Meeting
Brown County Office Building, Sleepy Eye, MN**

Meeting was called to order at 4:22pm by Craig Fischer.

PRESENT

1. Craig Fischer - Chair
2. Mark Wellner – Vice-Chair
3. Brad Augustin – Secretary
4. Bill Eckstein – Treasurer
5. Rae Runck – PRI
6. Melanie Krueger – District Manager

AGENDA

- ◆ Motion was made by Augustin and seconded by Eckstein to approve the agenda as presented.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried

CONSENT AGENDA

- ◆ Reviewed the consent agenda items presented which included the August 9, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes, the August 2023 Treasurer's Report, and the Bills Report dated August 5, 2023 to September 8, 2023. Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Runck to approve the consent agenda items as presented.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried

SWCD STAFF REPORTS

- ◆ Reviewed the staff reports provided by Krueger and Larson.

PF/FARM BILL WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST REPORT

- ◆ Reviewed report provided by Fore.

NRCS REPORT

- ◆ Reviewed report provided by Kjorness.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- ◆ Commissioner Braun was not able to attend the meeting but emailed manager a list of current updates from activities at Brown County to share with the group.

COST SHARE REPORT & CONTRACTS

- ◆ Reviewed the updated cost-share report and then presented a contract for approval.

- ◆ SHCS2023-01, Kenneth Hanson, Cover Crop, Albin 26, 68 acres, 3 years. Flat rate cost share of \$32.87 per acre per year. Cost share amount of \$6,705.48 through the FY23 Soil Health Cost Share Grant. A motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Wellner to approve the SHCS2023-01 cost share contract with Kenneth Hanson.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS

- ◆ **MCIT Notices:** Reviewed annual notices from MCIT about a 2023 dividend payment and the 2024 estimated contribution costs.
- ◆ **2022 Draft Audit:** Discussed the draft audit and edit needed. Motion was made by Augustin and seconded by Eckstein to approve the 2022 Draft Audit from Peterson Company with one edit on page 11 in the Unearned Revenue paragraph: change Clean Water Management Funds to Cooperative Weed Management Area Program.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **Amended RCRCA Joint Powers Agreement:** Discussed the revised agreement received from RCRCA. A motion was made by Augustin and seconded by Runck to approve the Amended RCRCA Joint Powers Agreement as presented and ratify RCRCA delegate Bill Eckstein's signature on the agreement for Brown SWCD.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **Cover Crop Job Approval Authority:** Discussed the Job Approval Authority worksheet received from NRCS for Dru Larson. A motion was made by Runck and seconded by Eckstein to authorize Cover Crop Job Approval Authority for Dru Larson as shown on the Skills Matrix Worksheet dated 6/20/2023.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **WCA TEP Coverage:** Krueger explained the need to find coverage for the SWCD's WCA TEP member on a temporary basis until staffing vacancies are filled. Discussion was held. A motion was made by Augustin and seconded by Wellner to ratify hiring Cottonwood SWCD staff member Dave Bucklin to complete WCA TEP Panel activities for Brown SWCD at current hourly billable rates.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **Personnel Committee Recommendations:** Personnel Committee members gave an update on the hiring process so far and then gave recommendations for board consideration: 1) hire a lawyer to develop a Personnel Policy for the district at an estimated cost of \$2,000-\$2,500, 2) presented a draft version of an updated Performance Review Policy, and 3) recommend to increase the pay scale grade level for all district positions by one level.
 - ◇ Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to authorize hiring Anne Goering with Ratwik, Roszak, & Maloney P.A. to develop a Personnel Policy for the district.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
 - ◇ Motion was made by Augustin and seconded by Eckstein to approve the Performance Review Policy as presented.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◇ Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Augustin to approve increasing the pay scale grade level by one level for all current job descriptions- District Manager, District Technician 3, District Technician 2, and District Technician 1, effective the current pay period, and current staff will move to the step closest to current wage on the new grade level.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

◆ **Meeting Reports:**

- ◇ Eckstein and Krueger gave an update about the budget request meeting with Brown County Commissioners on August 14.
- ◇ Eckstein, Augustin and Krueger gave an update about the Policy Committee meeting attended in Springfield on August 16 for the Cottonwood-Middle MN 1W1P.
- ◇ Eckstein attended the RCRCA meeting in Marshall on September 7 and gave a report.

◆ **Upcoming Meetings/Events:** A motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Wellner to approve the upcoming meetings/events:

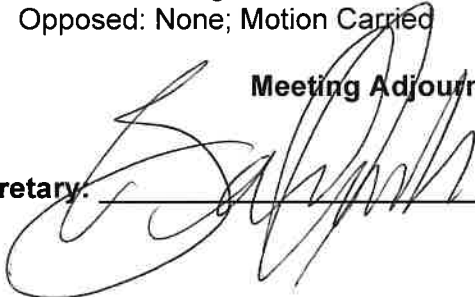
- ◇ Personnel Committee Meetings as needed (Eckstein, Wellner, Krueger)
- ◇ September 19 or 21 – SCTSA Board Meeting, Mankato (Runck)
- ◇ Friday, September 22 – GBERBA Policy Board Meeting, Mankato or Webex (Augustin)
- ◇ ~~CANCELLED- Wednesday, September 20 – Cottonwood-Middle MN 1W1P Policy Committee Meeting, Springfield or Zoom (Wellner, Eckstein)~~
- ◇ Thursday, October 5 – RCRCA Board Meeting, Redwood or Zoom (Wellner)
- ◇ Wednesday, October 11 – Brown SWCD Board Meeting, 4:15pm (All)

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned – 5:44pm

Secretary: _____



Date: _____

10-11-23