



**Minutes of the December 12, 2024
Brown SWCD Regular Board Meeting
Brown County Office Building, Sleepy Eye, MN**

Meeting was called to order at 1:05pm 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
7. Teddy Giefer – Conservation Technician (exited at 2:17pm)
8. Hailey Olson – Conservation Technician (exited at 2:17pm)
9. Jarin Spence – Conservation Technician (exited at 2:17pm)

ABSENT

1. None

AGENDA

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

CONSENT AGENDA

- ◆ Reviewed the consent agenda items presented which included the November 12, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes, the November 2024 Treasurer's Report, and the Bills Report dated November 7, 2024 to December 4, 2024. Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Eckstein to approve the consent agenda items presented.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried

SWCD STAFF REPORTS

- ◆ Discussed staff reports provided by Botz, Giefer, Krueger, Olson and Spence.

PF/FARM BILL WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST REPORT

- ◆ Reviewed report provided by Ecker.

NRCS REPORT

- ◆ Reviewed report provided by Kjorness.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- ◆ Commissioner Braun was not able to attend the meeting today.

COST SHARE REPORT & CONTRACTS

- ◆ Reviewed the cost-share report and then presented contracts for approval.
- ◆ Amendment 4, WBIF-WW-21-08-01, Lorin Helget, WASC0B(2), Albin 14. Amendment 4 increases the project cost share amount by \$1,110.95 to a new total of \$29,155.43 cost share due to additional work that was needed to meet technical specs and standards. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Augustin to recommend for approval to GBERBA, Amendment 4, WBIF-WW-21-08-01 with Lorin Helget for increase in cost share funds.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ WBIF-WW-21-08-01, Lorin Helget, WASC0B(2), Albin 14. Final project cost of \$34,300.50 with cost share payment of \$29,155.43 (85% cost share). Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Augustin to recommend for approval to GBERBA, cost share payment of \$29,155.43 for WBIF-WW-21-08-01 contract with Lorin Helget
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ WBIF-WW-24-08-02, Keith Brekken, WASC0B (2), Lake Hanska 32. Final project cost of \$25,392.50 with cost share payment of \$21,583.63 (85% cost share). Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Augustin to recommend for approval to GBERBA, cost share payment of \$21,583.63 for WBIF-WW-24-08-02 contract with Keith Brekken.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ SHCS2023-03, Jared Krueger, Cover Crop, Stately 22, 30.5 acres. Year one installed on 10/22/2024. Total cost share payment of \$4,117.50 from the FY23 Soil Health Cost Share Grant. Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Runck to approve SHCS2023-03 cost share payment of \$4,117.50 to Jared Krueger.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ CC2024-01, Kevin Braulick, Grade Stabilization & Diversion, North Home 29. Final project cost of \$6,051.20. Total cost share payment of \$4,538.40 (75% cost-share) from the FY24 Conservation Contract grant. Project slippage of \$6,149.10. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Augustin to approve CC2024-01 cost share payment of \$4,538.40 to Kevin Braulick.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ CC2024-02, Charles Moldan, Grassed Waterway, Leavenworth 15. Final project cost of \$2,250.00. Total cost share payment of \$1,687.50 (75% cost-share) from the FY23 State Cost Share grant (\$1582.43) and the FY24 Conservation Contract grant (\$105.07). Project slippage of \$2,767.50. Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Wellner to approve CC2024-02 cost share payment of \$1,687.50 to Charles Moldan.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ CC2024-03, Jason Windschitl, Grassed Waterway, Leavenworth 21. Final project cost of \$4,776.50. Total cost share payment of \$3,582.38 (75% cost-share) from the FY24 Conservation Contract grant. Project slippage of \$2,095.12. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve CC2024-03 cost share payment of \$3,582.38 to Jason Windschitl.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ CC2024-04, Bill Vogel, Grassed Waterway, Bashaw 31. Final project cost of \$14,319.00. EQIP funding fully covered expense of project. Landowner requested cancellation of the Brown SWCD contract. Project slippage of \$12,304.00. Motion was made by Augustin

and seconded by Eckstein to approve cancellation of CC2024-04 cost share contract with Bill Vogel.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ Amendment 1, CAP2024-02, Steve Gode, Grassed Waterway, Stately 32. Amendment is to increase cost share funding from \$10,147.50 to \$11,156.18 due to a new project cost of \$14,874.90. The increase is due to additional work to reconstruct existing waterway further to the east. FY23 Capacity Grant Cost Share funds will be encumbered for the additional amount requested. Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Eckstein to approve Amendment 1 to CAP2024-02 cost share contract with Steve Gode for additional cost share funding.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ CAP2024-02, Steve Gode, Grassed Waterway, Stately 32. Final project cost of \$14,874.90. Total cost share payment of \$11,156.18 (75% cost-share) from the FY2023 Capacity Grant Cost Share grant. Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Augustin to approve CAP2024-02 cost share payment of \$11,156.18 to Steve Gode.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS

- ◆ **2025 WCA Agreement:** Reviewed the annual WCA agreement with Brown County. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Wellner to approve the 2025 WCA Agreement with Brown County.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **AIS Monitoring Data Evaluation:** Discussed the information provided to complete the evaluation of the monitoring data collected by the SWCD during 2019-2023 as per the five-year AIS work plan. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve quote from Limnopro for the Aquatic Invasive Species program data evaluation work at a cost of \$15,000.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **2025 AIS Prevention Work Plan:** Discussed the work plan presented which outlines planned program activities for next year. Once approved, a copy is sent to the DNR as required by statute. Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Wellner to approve the 2025 Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan for Brown County as presented.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

*Staff members, Olson, Spence, Giefer exited at 2:17pm

- ◆ **2025 Pay Scale:** Brown SWCD follows the non-union Brown County pay scale grid and for 2025 it includes a 3% general wage increase. Discussed. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to adopt the 2025 Brown County Non-Union Pay Scale for Brown SWCD employees effective January 1, 2025.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **District Manager Staff Review Recommendations:** District Manager conducted a training phase performance review with one employee. The review was successful with a recommendation from manager to continue employment and offer a 1-step pay scale increase according to policy and with board approval. District Manager conducted annual performance reviews with three employees and all had successful evaluations

with recommendation from manager for the COLA increase for part-time employee, Mary Beth Botz, effective January 1, 2025 (not eligible for a pay step increase until 2080 hours worked) and a 1-step pay scale increase for each full-time employee, Hailey Olson and Jarin Spence, effective January 1, 2025.

- ◇ Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Runck to approve District Manager's recommendation for training phase performance review of Teddy Giefer and authorize a 1-step pay scale increase effective the December 2024 board meeting date pay period.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◇ Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve District Manager's recommendation for annual performance reviews conducted and authorize the recommended pay scale increases effective January 1, 2025.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **Personnel Committee – Manager Review Recommendation:** Personnel Committee members Wellner and Eckstein conducted Krueger's annual performance review and gave a report to the board with a recommended 1-step pay scale increase due to a successful performance review. Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Eckstein to approve Personnel Committee's recommendation for annual performance review and authorize the recommended pay scale increase effective January 1, 2025.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **Personnel Committee – Manager Vacation Leave Payout Recommendation:** Personnel Committee members Wellner and Eckstein advised a recommendation to payout manager's vacation leave hours down to an 80-hour balance at end of this year to avoid any need to waive accrual caps during 2025. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to authorize payout of vacation leave hours to Melanie Krueger at end of the year down to an 80-hour balance.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **Meeting Reports:**

- ◇ Augustin gave a report about the GBERBA Joint Policy/Technical meeting attended in Mankato on November 15.
- ◇ Wellner and Eckstein gave a report about the Cottonwood-Middle MN 1W1P Policy Committee meeting attended in Springfield on November 20.
- ◇ Eckstein gave a report about the November 20 RCRCA meeting and Legislative Gathering held in Springfield and about the December 5 RCRCA board meeting.
- ◇ Runck gave a report about the MASWCD Area 6 meeting attended on November 21 in Mankato.

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

- ◇ Banquet – discussed and decided not to hold one this year.
- ◇ Personnel Committee Meeting as needed (Eckstein, Wellner, Krueger)
- ◇ Thursday, January 2 – RCRCA Board Meeting, Marshall (Eckstein)
- ◇ Tuesday, January 14 – Brown SWCD Board Meeting, 10:30am (All)

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned – 2:58pm

Secretary: _____

Date: _____

1-14-25