



PENNINGTON SWCD BOARD MEETING
(Held at the American Legion
and Via Zoom Video Conferencing
Due to Covid-19)
April 15, 2021
10:00 A.M.

Supervisors Present:

Ricky Peterson, Chair
Linda Hanson, Vice-Chair
Greg Hilgeman, Treasurer
ADawn Nelson, Secretary
Kevin Wilde, PR

Staff Present:

Peter Nelson, District Manager
Barb Molskness, District Coordinator
Bryanna Grefthen, Water Resource Specialist
Matthew Sorvig, Resource Technician
Donna Christianson, Outreach Coordinator
Jill Fejszes, Farm Bill Biologist
Nico Bennett, NRCS

The meeting was held at the American Legion and via Zoom Video Conferencing. Ricky Peterson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m.

Ricky completed a roll call of all supervisors and staff and asked if there were any visitors joining the meeting. All supervisors present. All staff present. No guests present.

Greg made a motion, seconded by ADawn to approve the revised agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

Brenda Szymanski's resignation letter didn't arrive at the office in time for the Board meeting, but she had talked with Peter and confirmed her resignation.

Kevin Wilde read and signed the Oath of Office. Ricky Peterson, Chair, signed the Oath of Office appointing Kevin Wilde to the Pennington SWCD Board of Supervisors as Brenda Szymanski's replacement for District III.

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ADawn made a motion, seconded by Linda to approve the March 18, 2021, meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

Barb reviewed the March 2021 Financial Report. **Greg made a motion, seconded by ADawn to approve the March 2021 Financial Report. All in favor, motion carried.**

Linda made a motion, seconded by ADawn to approve payment for the following bills:

Sjoberg's	\$ 66.95
Chase Card Service	\$ 627.44
Verizon	\$ 50.16
Becker SWCD	\$ 359.65
School Specialties	\$ 428.07
Houston Engineering	\$ 2,705.75
GreenWorld Project	\$ 950.85
Pennington County	\$ 493.61
MN IT Services	\$ 62.79

All in favor, motion carried.

Greg made a motion, seconded by ADawn to approve the following percent-based Buffer Cost-share contract:

BFY18-96 Kevin Tharaldson \$5,250.00

All in favor, motion carried.

Larissa Fitzgerald was offered the District Technician job starting at \$19/hour. She countered the offer at \$21/hour. After some discussion about where salaries are ranging throughout the community, the Board felt they needed to reevaluate wages for the Resource Technician, Water Resource Specialist, and Outreach Coordinator. **Motion by ADawn, seconded by Linda to increase the salaries for Matt Sorvig, Bryanna Grefthen, and Donna Christianson by \$3/hour starting pay period 9. All in favor, motion carried.**

ADawn made a motion, seconded by Linda to offer Larissa Fitzgerald the District Technician position starting at \$21/hour. All in favor, motion carried.

Greg asked about the shared positions for the Technical Service Area (TSA). The plan includes hiring one engineering technician and one engineer for each of the two areas. All four of these positions would be SWCD employees. The proposed south area already has a technician and an engineer. The proposed north area has a technician but would need an engineer. A question was then raised about whether the north area would be able to find an engineer with the dollars that are available. If there isn't a significant cost savings, it

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might be easier to farm out all the engineering work to an outside firm versus retaining our own engineer. Hiring two technicians and an outside engineer to sign off on their work in the north area is another possibility. No matter which option is chosen, the TSA dollars will be distributed to the 16 SWCD's to use as they choose for engineering services.

Linda made a motion, seconded by ADawn to approve Matt Sorvig's increase in Job Approval Authority to Job Class II for side inlet design and Job Class III for inventory and evaluation. All in favor, motion carried.

Bryanna explained the Cooperative Weed Management Area MOU was examined by the County Attorney and the County Board signed the document. The MOU explains the mutual goals, interest, and benefits of the program along with the roles each of the pending partnering agencies would play in implementing the program. **Greg made a motion, seconded by ADawn to sign the Cooperative Weed Management Area MOU. All in favor, motion carried.**

Greg made a motion seconded by Linda to hire Dave Bennett, as needed for seasonal help this summer, at a rate of \$15/hour. All in favor, motion carried.

Linda made a motion, seconded by ADawn to rent a booth at the 2021 Pennington County Fair. All in favor, motion carried.

Employee reports were reviewed.

NRCS report was reviewed. Nico Bennett talked about NRCS guidance regarding the opening of the office to one customer at a time but still having to keep staff at a maximum of 50% due to COVID. Because of the regulations that would need to be put in place regarding screening, cleaning, etc., the Board felt it would be better to insert a plastic shield in the outside front window (making it a drive-up window) or continue to meet customers outside in their vehicles.

Discussion took place about the efficiency and cost of information being mailed to the Board. ADawn proposed the use of email or Teams for members to retrieve Board packets and other information. The Board was split on electronic delivery of information (Linda, ADawn, and Kevin were in favor of electronic delivery; Ricky and Greg were in favor of postal delivery). Going forward, information will be sent electronically to Linda, ADawn, and Kevin. Ricky and Greg will continue to receive their information via the postal service.

The next Board meeting will be held at the American Legion on Thursday, May 20th, at 9 a.m.

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Greg made a motion, seconded by Kevin to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

ADawn Nelson, Secretary