



PENNINGTON SWCD BOARD MEETING

March 19, 2020

9 A.M.

Supervisors Present:

Ricky Peterson, Vice-Chair
Greg Hilgeman, Treasurer
Linda Hanson, Secretary
Grant Nelson, PR&I

Staff Present:

Bryan Malone, District Manager
Barb Molskness, District Coordinator
Peter Nelson, Water Plan Coordinator
Donna Christianson, Outreach Coordinator
Bryanna Grefthen, District Technician
Matthew Sorvig, Resource Technician
Luther Newton, NRCS

Absent:

Brenda Szymanski, Chair
Jill Fejszes, Farm Bill Biologist

The meeting was held in the USDA/SWCD Conference Room and called to order at 9:20 a.m. by Ricky Peterson, Vice-Chair.

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

A draft Working Remotely Policy was presented to the Board. **Greg made a motion, seconded by Grant to adopt the Working Remotely Policy and to incorporate it into the Employment Policy Handbook. All in favor, motion carried.**

A Public Health Emergency Policy was reviewed by the Board. **Greg made a motion, seconded by Linda to approve the Public Health Emergency Policy. All in favor, motion carried.** Bryan then declared the Public Health Emergency Policy in effect due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Greg made a motion, seconded by Grant to approve the February 18, 2020, meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

Barb reviewed the February 2020 Financial Report. **Linda made a motion, seconded by Grant to approve the February 2020 Financial Report. All in favor, motion carried.**

Greg made a motion, seconded by Linda to approve payment of the following bills:

Chase	\$	1,720.43
MN IT Services	\$	63.94
Innovative	\$	490.36
TRF Times/Watch	\$	162.18
Verizon	\$	50.16

All in favor, motion carried.

Barb reviewed the 2020 billing rates with the Board. Greg felt the rates were a bit low. **Greg made a motion, seconded by Grant to approve the 2020 billing rates. All in favor, motion carried.**

Bryanna presented the different avenues we use to spread the word about AIS prevention and the cost for each. **Grant made a motion, seconded by Greg to approve the following AIS prevention purchases for 2020:**

- ❖ **Linder's Angling Buzz ads - \$350.00**
- ❖ **The billboard located on Highway 32 North - \$2,400.00**
- ❖ **Curt Quesnell (NCOR) - \$3,500.00**
- ❖ **Zebra mussel monitoring on the Red Lake River - \$500.00**

All in favor, motion carried.

Due to the recent spread of COVID-19, the Board decided to cancel the Pennington SWCD Banquet for this year. Donna informed the Board that the teachers sent the poster contest information home with students to work on during their leave of absence from school. Students will return the posters to the SWCD office by the end of the school year. Winners of the contest will be honored during a future event.

Donna contacted the local churches for the number of bulletin inserts and litany sheets needed for Soil Stewardship Week. Quick Print quoted \$385.00 to print 1,100 bulletin inserts. The Board decided not to purchase the bulletin inserts for Stewardship Week due to the number of churches canceling services because of the Coronavirus.

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Greg made a motion, seconded by Linda to sponsor 2 campers at a cost of \$425.00 each to attend the Long Lake Conservation Camp in July. All in favor, motion carried.

Bryan received a donation request for the TRF FFA Chapter Annual Banquet that is usually held in May. It has been postponed at this time but will hopefully be held sometime in June. **Greg made a motion, seconded by Linda to donate some trees to the TRF FFA Annual Banquet. All in favor, motion carried.**

Bryan presented a spreadsheet estimating the cost of space needs for the office. After looking at the projections, it was decided further research and information is needed.

A Cover Crop Incentive Program Policy draft was presented to the Board. After some discussion a few items were requested to be incorporated into the document:

1. Change the wording of land occupier to land operator.
2. Acres must be identified in the PTMApp.
3. Maximum number of contracts a land operator can enter is three.
4. The cover crop must be season long or fall seeding – no early termination will be allowed.
5. A higher payment rate will not be available for reduced tillage.

Greg made a motion, seconded by Linda to adopt the Cover Crop Incentive Program Policy with the changes incorporated. All in favor, motion carried.

Bryan reported the District was charged \$1,500.00 in shipping trees last year from the nursery. Roseau SWCD has proposed to partner with us and Kittson SWCD to hire a driver to pick up the trees for us instead. Half of the cost of shipping could be saved by doing this. Bryan was instructed to go forward with coordinating this.

Molly Costin, from the MPCA, recommended Bryanna take over the duties of Feedlot Officer for both Pennington and Marshall Counties. The Board is in favor of this recommendation but wants to make sure the reimbursement for these extra duties includes the \$7,500 compensation fee through the State Grant plus the required \$7,500 match in cash. Bryan will contact the Marshall County Auditor.

Employee reports were reviewed.

Luther Newton, NRCS, reviewed his report with the Board.

Bryan passed around a copy of the Visitor Screening Form for review which will be kept in the COVID-19 Visitor Log. A COVID-19 protocol handout will be given to each person that passes the screening.

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Each of the Board members received a copy of the 2020 Annual Plan and the SWCD Planning Meeting notes. Other correspondence included MASWCD Area Meeting Report for March 2020 and information about data practices and open meeting law requirements during a state of emergency.

The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 21st, at 9 a.m.

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

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Linda Hanson, Secretary