OUTCOME DOCUMENTS – March 12, 2019 - REGULAR BOARD MEETING

SUPERVISORS: Joyce Sawatzky, Kevin Belkholm, Jan Anderson, Gene Carda, Paul Hoppe

STAFF: Deanna Pomije, Anne LeRoy, Jacque Kelzenberg

OTHERS: Shannon Rasinski, NRCS; Dennis McNally, Kanabec County Commissioner; David Andrews, PERA

1. Call to Order – Chair Sawatzky called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. Approval of Agenda

   M/S: Anderson/Belkholm Motion to approve the agenda as presented.
   Affirmative: Sawatzky, Belkholm, Anderson, Carda
   Opposed: None
   Abstain: None


   David Andrews presented information to explain PERA retirement funding requirements, operations, and liabilities specific to the Kanabec SWCD. Andrews confirmed that the District would not be called upon to make a large payout in the event of PERA funding instability. He answered questions and explained that based on PERA’s current analysis they will be done paying off this current liability by about 2036. PERA is also currently using about ½ of their available income to pay off this liability. Their average rate of return is 7-8%. Annually PERA evaluates their financials and adjusts where they can to ensure stability in paying benefits and this liability.

3. NRCS Report

   Shannon Rasinski updated the board with recent business of the NRCS. NRCS staff has been working on Wetland and Highly Erodible Land Determinations. The next EQIP deadline will be April 19, 2019. So far there are 21 applications for a variety of practices, including rotational grazing, nutrient management, cover crops, high tunnels and wildlife habitat practices. A contract termination was done because the landowner didn’t complete the required enhancements. The landowner is appealing the termination. A local work group meeting will be scheduled with SWCD and NRCS to identify and rank issues within the county.

4. Consent Agenda (no discussion unless Supervisor requests)

   Pomije requested to slightly modify the consent agenda for clarification, from comments received. A new consent agenda was handed out to all attending.

   3.1. Financial – receipts & disbursements
   3.2. Outcomes Document - February
   3.3. Staff Reports
   3.4. Upcoming Staff Meetings / Outreach / Training

   M/S: Anderson/Belkholm Motion to approve the consent agenda with modifications as requested by Pomije.
   Affirmative: Sawatzky, Belkholm, Anderson, Carda
   Opposed: None
   Abstain: None

   (Hoppe arrived at 4:01pm)
5. Approve Treasurer’s Report

The board asked for an update on the QuickBooks conversion from 2 to 1 company. LeRoy said she is currently doing double entries on all financial matters now into the two companies, apart from deposits. She’s been communicating with a couple local accountants and Peterson to check on pricing for assistance in this conversion. Peterson seems the most familiar with District’s unique operations. Looking at May to install the new QuickBooks version and contract with an accountant for this assistance (after tax season).

Pomije commented that the treasurer report’s program funds have been reconciled with the total SWCD cash. This was possible due to the confirmed grant fund balances of the new year.

M/S: Belkholm/Anderson Motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report.
Affirmative: Sawatzky, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson, Hoppe
Opposed: None Abstain: None

6. Business

6.1 AIS Educational Purchases – Education Budget $6,834.41 (Total Request $2,644.23)

- 2,000 Placemats, 1 Tear Drop Banner, 3 Banners with logo from Wildlife Forever $649.23
- 500 koozies, 1000 key chains from Discount Mugs $1,995

M/S: Carda/Belkholm Motion to approve AIS Educational purchases in the total amount of $2,644.23
Affirmative: Sawatzky, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson, Hoppe
Opposed: None Abstain: None

6.2 Renewal of General Shoreland Permit, 5-year term with DNR

Pomije recommended renewal of the General Shoreland Permit with the DNR. She presented the Isanti permit as an example. The permit authorizes the District to do shoreline work. Details of each project need to be submitted to the DNR. There is no cost for this permit.

M/S: Hoppe/Anderson Motion to approve renewal of the General Shoreland Permit with the DNR for 5 years.
Affirmative: Sawatzky, Hoppe, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson
Opposed: None Abstain: None

6.3 Website Security options (LeRoy)

LeRoy explained how the District website was hacked, causing the website to lose functionality. Providers for website security offer different levels of service and support. LeRoy reviewed the plans available for providing more security. Discussion followed that the current $50/mo. plan may not be providing adequate security. This was a recent incident and the staff needs more time to come up with a long-term recommendation on fixing this website security issue. An option to change website providers was also discussed as an option.

M/S: Hoppe/Carda Motion to work with Sitelock at the $70 per month rate for up to two months to resolve hacking issues with the website. Website security needs will be re-evaluated.
Affirmative: Sawatzky, Hoppe, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson
Opposed: None Abstain: None
6.4 District Technician Position

- Position Description, Pay Scale
- New Job Application

Pomije presented an updated Technician position description and new draft job application form to be used by the District. Using a job application is recommended by other Districts and MCIT, as well as including the veteran’s preference points. The job application originally came from Stearns Co. Pomije said that the position description didn’t change substantively; and she’d recommend the pay scale to remain at the same level as originally reviewed by the County’s contracted HR company.

M/S: Belkholm/Hoppe Motion to approve the District Technician Position description as updated with the recommended change from Hoppe. Also, to begin the hiring process and work with the Personnel Committee to revise the job application form and whether and how to use Veteran’s preference points.

Affirmative: Sawatzky, Hoppe, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson  
Opposed: None  
Abstain: None

6.5 Tree Sale Ad in paper

LeRoy reported that tree sales are down this year and expressed a need to promote the sale via the local paper. Historically the District has run ads in the Kanabec Times and Advertiser. LeRoy will also promote the sale via social media.

M/S: Belkholm/Hoppe Motion to approve advertising the tree sale for both the Kanabec Times and Advertiser for one week, then to run a second week, as needed to boost tree sales. Rate of $156 per week.

Affirmative: Sawatzky, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson, Hoppe  
Opposed: None  
Abstain: None

6.6 District Work Plan

Pomije presented the 2019 District Work Plan to the board. The plan is a compilation of individual work plans from the 3 staff. We reviewed the SWCD strategic plan in putting them together. It focuses on incorporating organizing into our everyday work activities. This may involve 1-on-1 meetings with producers, lake assn. members and partnering with organizations on grants. The plan is organized into broad categories, identifying staff responsible for each activity with listed time frames.

M/S: Belkholm/Carda Motion to approve the District Work Plan with the addition of inclusion of duties specific to the AIS technician.

Affirmative: Sawatzky, Hoppe, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson  
Opposed: None  
Abstain: None

6.7 Approval to following the annually released Federal IRS standard mileage rates for business mileage for staff and supervisor reimbursements; for 2019 the rate is $0.58 / mile. The board requested this to be up for review every year.

M/S: Hoppe/Anderson Motion to approve utilizing the 2019 Federal IRS standard mileage rates for business mileage staff and supervisor reimbursements; for 2019 the rate is $0.58 / mile.

Affirmative: Sawatzky, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson  
Opposed: None  
Abstain: None

6.8 2019 budget updated with 2018 year-end balances

Pomije presented the 2019 updated budget with no planned District forester to the board.

M/S: Carda/Anderson Motion to approve the updated 2019 budget that reflects adjustments made to the 2018 year-end balances.

Affirmative: Sawatzky, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson, Hoppe  
Opposed: None  
Abstain: None
6.9 Completed 2018 Year End Financials - Informational only
Total District Operating Expenses of $227,400 – Allows for operations for 8.4 months to pay staff if current funding sources were removed. The goal is to have 3-6 months of reserves. It may be time to hire more staff. Hoppe asked what unfunded liabilities we have. Pomije mentioned Jacque’s final paycheck of ~95 hours of annual leave. A brief discussion occurred where Belkholm updated Hoppe on the PERA presentation earlier. That we indeed will not be asked to pay the PERA liability that we are required to show in our financial books.

6.10 Forest Stewardship Plans completed, approval to pay Dickson Forestry $768 from TNC Forestry Services contract
Durbin Plan – 272 acres
Erickson Plan – 62 acres

M/S: Hoppe/Anderson Motion to approve payment to Dickson Forestry in the total amount of $768.00 as paid through a grant from The Nature Conservancy
Affirmative: Sawatzky, Carda, Belkholm, Anderson, Hoppe
Opposed: None
Abstain: None

7. Project Updates:
The consent agenda now includes details on the Snake Board projects.

8. Supervisor Check-In (Supervisors weigh in on topic)

9. General Discussion / Public Input

- 2/14 – Rinke/Noonan, Drainage & Water Conference (Belkholm, Carda)
  Belkholm stated he learned information about ditch law.

- 3/5 & 3/6 – ‘Day at the Capitol' (Hoppe, Kelzenberg)
  Senator Ruud – Crow Wing County led 3 bills. Hoppe and Kelzenberg met with Senator Mathews, Sondra Erickson, Senator Rarick, and Commissioner Thom Petersen of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Hoppe reported good representation, and that the District was well received.
  $100,000 capacity funding with Clean Water Fund may be removed from the General Fund. Hoppe and Kelzenberg attended Senate committee meetings. Each SWCD District in state has different needs and funding sources.

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

- 3/8 – MN Forest Resources Council (MFRC) East Central Regional Landscape Committee Meeting (Hoppe) Next meeting is Thursday March 21st.

- 4/11 - COLA-AIS Meeting, 5 pm, courthouse basement (Sawatzky)

- 3/5-6 – Day at the Capital (Hoppe, Kelzenberg) Hoppe reported on the visits with Rarick, Erickson and Mathews. They handed out a photo story of 2018 work of our District. He mentioned that 20% of NRCS implementation comes from District work. Hoppe also mentioned 3 District funding plans up at the legislature currently.
3/20 – TSA Area 3 Meeting - Duluth (Anderson)

3/21 - Forestry Association Meeting – 9:30 in McGregor (Carda, Hoppe)

3/25 - Snake River Watershed Board, 9am (Hoppe, Pomije) Craig Smith and Bill Pratt are new board members. Most meetings have 12-15 people in attendance.

4/29 – Rum 1W1P Policy Committee Meeting, RFP consultant review, location TBD (Belkholm) Belkholm reported a good turnout. Selection for a plan writing consultant will be done at the next meeting.


3/29 – 9am – Basement of Courthouse Snake River Watershed; Commissioner, Supervisor & SWCD Manager Meeting to continue discussion on the board’s 3 voting options for structuring the board through the 1W1P process. (Pomije, Sawatzky can attend, Carda will try to make it if he doesn’t go to the St Croix Forestry Conference in Siren WI)

4/9 - Regular SWCD Board Meeting, 3 PM

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

Agenda items for next month…

12. Adjourn Regular Board Meeting

M/S: Carda/Anderson Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:58 pm

Affirmative: Sawatzky, Belkholm, Anderson, Hoppe, Carda

Opposed: None    Abstain: None

Approved: __________________________    Date: __________________