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## **Outcomes Documents – Regular Board Meeting**

Wednesday February 15, 2023, 2:00 pm

Location: SWCD Conservation Office 2008 Mahogany St. Ste #3 Mora MN 55051  
Or Remote Google Meeting

**SUPERVISORS:** Jon Sanford, Kim Johnson, Kevin Belkholm, Gene Carda,  
**STAFF:** Deanna Pomije, Jerah Mattson, Stephanie Paulsen, Shannon Bodle, Mary Krueger  
**Others:** Darren Mayers, BWSR **Absent:** Norma Heggernes  
\*Remote Attendees

**Motion by Johnson, second by Carda** to appoint Sanford as acting chair until Belkholm arrives  
**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Carda  
**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

### 1. 2:07 Roll Call – \*Approval of Agenda

**Motion by Johnson, second by Carda** to approve the agenda as amended.  
**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Carda  
**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

### 2. NRCS Report (Shannon Bodle)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) deadline is 2/17. 4 applications have been received all being low priority. The EQIP applications in Kanabec total \$366,738. All are on a waiting preapproval list. There are 10 applications in the EQIP Conservation Incentives Contracts (CIC) funding pool, totaling \$424,443 received from Isanti, Mille Lacs and Kanabec counties. More jobs are coming through on the USA jobs for Soil Conservationists and Soil Con. Techs. Another possible round of funding may be available depending on the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) money. This will be announced Friday 2/17. Paulsen has been working on a pipeline design for an applicant.

### 3. \*NRCS Updates

- Civil Rights Partner Check List
- Acknowledgment of Sec. 1619 Compliance  
Bodle led the board through a review of the annual civil rights partner checklist and Section 1619 Compliance on data privacy and answered a couple questions from the board. Those board members present signed the acknowledgement checklist.
- Unfunded Cooperative Agreement – This item was not discussed. We await guidance from NRCS prior to finalizing and signing this agreement.

Belkholm arrived at 2:20

### 4. Darren Mayers (BWSR Board Conservationist) provided a legislative funding update. There are a few climate initiatives such as soil health promotion and increased opportunities for conservation easements. A lot more funding is expected and encourages us to think outside the box as BWSR may open up the funding for more conservation possibilities. Our Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG, fund annual SWCD allocations) is proposed for a 30% increase. This led to a discussion on TSA with Johnson mentioning possible restructuring

and using a rapid response team for completing site assessments. A PRAP application was suggested to aid in assessing TSA or the increased workload with watershed plans implementation pending. Encouraged us to continue to tell our story on the good conservation work we're doing.

There was a discussion on what causes landowners to pull out of doing of a conservation project. Belkholm volunteered that a provision in the BWSR cost-share contract is not helping to keep landowners pursuing projects. This provision specifies that up to 150% pay back may be required if the landowner does not maintain the practice for its' lifespan. This provision was brought up for viewing. It was explained why this provision is there. A couple of suggestions were given on how to reword this or just omit it from the cost-share contracts. Just discussed, no action taken.

**5. \*Consent Agenda** (no discussion unless Supervisor requests)

- 5.1. Financial – receipts & disbursements, balance sheet, profit & loss reports
- 5.2. Outcomes Document:
  - Kanabec SWCD Board –January 18, 2023
- 5.3. Staff Reports
- 5.4. Upcoming Staff Meetings / Outreach / Training

**Motion by Sanford, second by Johnson** to approve Consent Agenda as presented

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

**6. \*Approve Treasurer's Report**

**Motion by Sanford second by Carda** to approve the January 2023 Treasurer's Report as presented by Johnson

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

**7. Project Updates, in consent agenda – any questions.**

Johnson asked about how to request more funds for the Snake / Kettle RIM by July 1, 2023. Staff will look into the details of requesting more funds for RIM.

**8. Public Input - none present**

On the use of non-TSA engineers it was commented that private engineers generally look for the quickest way to remover water / runoff from a project site as apposed to looking for water retention possibilities, which is what TSA does.

**9. Business Section**

9.1. \*Personnel Committee – Formal Actions

- 2023 Cost of Living Increase – 3%
- District Manager promotion, up one step
- Performance Merit Promotion policy proposal-table until March meeting

The draft Performance Merit Promotion policy was discussed with input from staff suggesting some of the ways to earn points be omitted as they are specific to certain job titles and thus are not fair for all staff. Input from the board was sought. After more discussion this item was tabled for the personnel committee to meet again to bring forth recommendations for the board after the staff have fully provided input on this policy.

**Motion by Johnson second by Carda** to approve a 3% cost of living increase for 2023 built into the new 2023 pay grade table. To be effective the first pay period of 2023.

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda  
**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

**Motion by Johnson second by Sanford** to approve the District Manager’s promotion from a 14B to a 14C on the 2023 employee pay scale. To be effective the first pay period of 2023.

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda  
**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

9.2. \*New Billable Rates, effective 12/25/22, 1<sup>st</sup> pay period of 2023

	New Billable Rate	Old Billable Rate	New Base Rate (per hour)
District Manager	\$64.07	\$63.26	\$32.12
Adm. Assistant	\$50.25	\$50.78	\$22.57
Conservation Tech	\$53.42	\$57.61	\$25.30

**Motion by Johnson second by Sanford** to approve the new billable rates, effective 12/25/22.

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda  
**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

9.3. Grant Summary – Pomije provided a large page summary of all the current SWCD grants and for each grant explained the available funding, the intent for the use of the funds, priority location and the expiration date. This can be kept as a reference. The board suggested another update about mid-year.

- 9.4. Snake Watershed Plan Update – Fully Approved 1/25/23
- \*Plan Adoption to replace our County Water Plan
    - PC Committee January Meeting
    - Work Planning Update

With the 3 new members on the PC, their Jan. meeting did not vote on the organizational structure for implementation. They wanted more time to learn / discuss options with their boards yet. At the Jan. meeting Pomije provided a presentation on the steps needed yet for implementation and what assets the counties and SWCD’s both bring to the implementation table. Watershed staff plan to provide a map summary to the Feb. PC of the current draft first 2-year work plan.

**Motion by Johnson second by Carda** to approve the resolution to adopt the Snake River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to replace our current county water plan for that watershed part of the county

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda  
**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

- 9.5. Grant Reporting – January Administrative Actions (informational)
- Please see the enclosed Capacity FY2021 Grant Report

- Buffer Grant FY2020, expired 12/31/22, paid back \$2,724.38

9.6. \*2023 Draft SWCD Work Plan  
Pomije reviewed the draft work plan with the board.

**Motion by Sanford second by Johnson** to approve the plan omitting 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph on page #4 (starting with ‘Due to our budget’)

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda  
**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

9.7. \*2022 Audit proposal from Peterson for \$3,500  
Johnson reported looking into the auditor options and said that 95% of the SWCD’s use Peterson for their auditing needs as they are very familiar with the complex SWCD grant bookkeeping.

**Motion by Johnson second by Carda** to approve Peterson for the 2022 audit with a fee of \$3,500.00

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda  
**Opposed:** None      **Abstain:** None

## 10. Discussion Session:

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

Johnson mentioned that he may be out for jury duty in March. Others volunteered that alternates or other supervisors could attend meetings in his absence.

- New – set personnel committee meeting to discuss Snake Plan watershed staffing
- 2/20/23 – Office Closed: President’s Day
- 2/22/23 – Mora Hwy 65/23 Corridor Study, 5-7pm, City Hall (Sanford, Pomije)
- 2/27/23 (4<sup>th</sup> Monday) – SRWMB, 9am Courthouse basement, (Belkholm, Pomije)
- 2/27/23 – Snake PC Meeting 10:30 Courthouse basement, (Pomije, Mattson, Belkholm)
- 3/7-3/8/23 – MASWCD Day at the Capital, 4:30pm on the 7<sup>th</sup>, at the Capital on the 8<sup>th</sup> (Supervisors or Staff) Belkholm & Sanford to meet with Legislators on 3/8
- 3/9/23 – COLA – AIS Meeting, 5pm SWCD office (Sanford, Pomije)
- 3/9/23 (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday) – Kettle PC Meeting, Sandstone, 9am (Johnson)
- 3/15/23 – Regular SWCD Board Meeting, 2pm (all)
- 3/16/23 – Forestry Association Meeting, remote option, 10am (Carda or Sanford)

- 3/16/23 – Groundwater Atlas of Kanabec Co., 9-11:30, jail training room (Pomije)  
Sandford, Johnson and Pomije expressed interest in attending this training. Pomije will RSVP.
- 3/22/23 – TSA Meeting, remote 10am (Johnson)
- 3/23/23 (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday) – Rum Watershed Partnership Meeting, Milaca, 4:30pm (Johnson)

\*Seeking Supervisor report on meeting attended

**12. Evaluate the Meeting** – What worked? What needs further discussion?

**13.** 4:51 pm Adjourn Regular Board Meeting

**Motion by Johnson second by Carda** to adjourn meeting at

**Affirmative:** Sanford, Johnson, Belkholm, Carda

**Opposed:** None

**Abstain:** None

**\*Seeking Board Decisions**