

**March 9, 2015 Monthly Meeting
USDA Service Center
Board meeting 3:00 pm**

Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

Supervisors present: Ron Johnson, Tom Wolles, and Bob Woerman

Absent: Jeff Oyen, Jim Pfeifer

Others present: John Parker, Denise Fletcher, Deron Ruesch, Nathan Blankers, Larry Olson, Barry Berg, and Brian Top

Agenda: Handed out at meeting. MSP to approve with the addition of a Wetland Report under NRCS activity report by Wolles and Woerman. All ayes.

Minutes of February meeting: Handed out. MSP to approve by Woerman and Wolles. All ayes.

Treasurer's report: Handed out at meeting. MSP to approve by Wolles and Woerman. All ayes.

Bills: Reviewed at meeting. Approved to pay. MSP to approve by Wolles and Woerman. All ayes.

Accounts Receivable: Reviewed at meeting.

Activities Reports:

WETLANDS report by Nathan Blankers:

The current backlog is about 49 outstanding certified wetland determination requests, including 10 for the consultants. Nathan will be working in Hamlin County this spring. Gene will work in Minnehaha County.

NRCS activity report by Deron Ruesch:

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP):

Applications are being processed.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP):

All payments and contract reviews have been completed for 2014. 12 applications have been received for 2015. The deadline is on 3-13-15. All applications will be processed by 6-01-15.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP):

Rankings were completed on 12 applications, including 2 honey bee, and 1 ag. waste facility. There is an \$183,000 allocation for a 6 county area to share; over \$600,000 in applications has been received.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM (ACEP):

One wetland restoration project is being worked on.

Big Sioux River – RCPP Report by Barry Berg:

They are working with producers to potentially enroll 170 acres into the SRAM program, which will expand out to Big Sioux tributaries for 2015. RCPP funding will be spent on EQIP programs. There is a March 25th steering committee meeting. MSP to sign a Memorandum of Understanding for the RCPP Program by Wolles and Woerman. All ayes.

FSA Update by Larry Olson:

The first and second steps of the new Farm Bill are being enacted. This consists of the reallocation and update yields on crops and the election process (where the program is selected to enroll in). The third step (enrollment) will start on 6-01-15. Farm splits can be done after that time, as well. 2012 livestock drought programs have been completed. This is the 30th anniversary of CRP. Continuous CRP sign-up continues.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Service Report (bio-solids, tree planting, grass planting, etc.)

The bio-solids contract with the city is ready to be signed for the next 5 years (to be renewed each year). 25 tree plantings are paid for and 15 – 20 more are possible this year. Bare root sales are good. 450 acres are to be planted with the 15' drill; 225 acres to be planted with the 10' drill. 100 acres to spray for weeds.

2. Update on Equipment

The fabric machine and drills are being worked on. Jim will get prices on a loader for the John Deere. A used seeder is being considered through a loan program. A new seeder would cost about \$700 – 800, including shipping. MSP to buy a new 3 pt. seeder by Wolles and Woerman. All ayes.

3. Summer Job - SDSU

John has an outline of the job and will get it ready to send to SDSU.

4. March Events - Water Festival Volunteers and Workers (approximately 2500 people - March 16-18) and Ag Day – March 21st at Pavilion (10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.)

MSP to approve the new list of volunteers for the Water Festival (for insurance purposes) by Woerman and Wolles. All ayes.

5. Newsletter Advertising (Millborn, Sioux International, Schuneman's John Deere, working on others)

Discussion about other possible advertisers and posting a newsletter on the website.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Gevik Easement and Farm Program Papers

Jeff will review the easement process for Gevik. MSP to give John Parker the ability to sign Farm Program papers by Woerman and Wolles. All ayes.

2. Big Sioux Nursery Voter (board member or employee)

MSP for John Parker to be the voter representative for the Big Sioux Nursery by Wolles and Woerman. All ayes.

3. Future Opportunities

Discussion of possible business generated through RCPP, East Dakota, Urbanology, Isaak Walton League and Silver Creek Watershed.

4. Distracted Driving Policy (cell phone use)

MSP to approve a new district policy on cell phone use by Wolles and Woerman. All ayes.

5. Local Work Group

A work group meeting will be held in April before the Board meeting. The Board should consider what practices they want to see funded.

6. Employee Pay Review (seasonal and regular)

This was tabled until the April meeting, when a closed session meeting will be held to discuss the issue.

CONSERVATION PLAN APPROVALS

None

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Correspondence

Reviewed at the meeting.

MSP to adjourn at 5:15 pm by Wolles and Woerman. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, April 13, 2015 at 3:00 pm – USDA Service Center

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, District Employee