

Renville Soil & Water Conservation District  
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**MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 9, 2020 REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
located at the Renville County Office Building**

Board Members Present: Koenig, Kelly, Schroeder, Kokesch  
Staff Present: Holly Hatlewick  
Other Present: Jeremy Maul- Board Conservationist with BWSR, Rick Schmidt- Renville County Commissioner, Richard Jepson

- I. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kokesch at 7:30 A.M.  
The Renville SWCD regular monthly meeting is being held via GoToMeeting and was not physically open to the public due to COVID-19, and the State of Minnesota governors stay at home order. **(Kelly, Schroeder) MSC**
- II. Public Address to the Board (2 minutes per person): Dispensed, no citizens present
- III. Consent Agenda, Meeting Minutes, Bills, and Treasurer's Report: Approved the meeting minutes from March 12, 2020 regular meeting and bills. **( Koenig, Kelly ) MSC**
- IV. Old Business:
  1. Operational items/staff concerns: None at this time
  2. COVID-19, update and operations: Discussed Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and operational adjustment related to COVID. Motion to appoint Administrator Hatlewick to make operational decision on the Board behalf and as needed the Administrator will confer with Chair. **(Kelly, Schroeder) MSC**
  3. SWCD Supervisor appointment: Motion to appoint Richard Jepson to Renville SWCD Board of Supervisor to serve the remaining term through 2020 as District 5 Supervisor. **(Koenig, Schroeder) MSC**
  4. County Road Tour: Cancelled, alternatives, possibly look at a mid-summer, fall tour with SWCD Board and staff Aug or Sept.
  5. Personnel
    - a. Staffing plan: Vacancy of the Conservation Technician is currently being advertised. Motion allows the Personnel Committee and Administrator to make the offer to the best qualifying applicant, after interviews are completed. **(Jepson, Koenig) MSC**
    - b. Pheasant Forever/Farm Bill position: Discussed the possibility of partnering with PF on a Farm Bill Biologist position. Discussion was had, Administrator Hatlewick will gather additional details and evaluate budget for a discussion at a later date.
- V. New Business:
  1. MASWCD Resolutions: Discussed the process and the Renville SWCD has no resolutions to bring forward at this time.
  2. MDA Noxious Weed Grant: Larkens will handle spraying for Flora township; relevant to this grant. Motion to approve grant agreement and authorize Administrator Hatlewick to oblige on the Boards behalf. **(Kelly, Schroeder) MSC**
- VI. Program Updates
  1. Cost Share Programs

**Supervisors:** Chair/District 2 **Kevin Kokesch**, Vice Chair/District 3 **Dean Schroeder**

Treasurer/District 5 **Vacant**, District 4 **Kathryn Kelly**, District 1 **Mark Koenig**,

**Staff:** District Administrator **Holly Hatlewick**, WCA/Water Plan Coordinator **Cody Dale**, Administrative Assistant **Melissa Edmondson**

- a. Groen West Easement 65-02-93-02 & East Easement 65-03-93-02: Motion to delegate the authority to Administrator Hatlewick, to enter into contracts with landowners on their behalf, for the use of funds under the Conservation Delivery 2019 Grant. **(Kelly, Schroder) MSC**
  - b. Groen West Easement 65-02-93-02 & East Easement 65-03-93-02 and future cost share projects)
  - c. Ruebel Proposal Easement 65-14-19-01: Motion to approve as presented. **(Keonig, Schroder) MSC**
2. Staff Reports: Board appreciate the staff flexibility and appreciation for their patience at this time. Want to know when employees are working and when, document.
  - a. Cody:
    - RIM/CREP
    - Submitted 6 CREP offers for March batch period. More to come in April.
    - Funding requested to update pollinator habitat on 35 acres of existing RIM
    - Easement repair. Groen wetland repair plans in final review.
    - CREP construction plans received for Wiess CREP
    - 2019 CREP receiving title insurance and consents to record easements
    - Two 2019 CREP projects recently recorded
    - New CREP proposals
    - RIM sales, meetings with new owners and updating ownership information.
    - Wetland Conservation Act
    - 2 solar garden applications
    - 1 county wetland determination
    - Bird Island assisted living center
    - Morton ditch cleaning
    - Local road bank easement sign-up. Working with interested parties.
    - Cost-Share Projects
    - Waiting for contractor bids on Malecek waterway
    - Other
    - Received 5 Ag Water Quality applications.
    - Placed soil thermometers
  - b. Holly:
    - USDA Soil Health Bus tour planning
    - Collaborating with MOSH on Soil Health Symposium
    - Collaborating with MSHC on 2020 School.
    - COVID-19 Operations plan and Special Board meeting March 19, 2020
    - Attended Hawk Creek Annual meeting
    - Assessing workload and prepare position announcement for Conservation Outreach Technician
    - 3/26/20 Buffer Committee meeting
  - c. Melissa
    - Created soil posters for outreach events
    - Emailed the board packet, drafted meeting minutes, put together board packets for meeting
    - Outreach event planning Farm Fest planning, Bus Tour planning
    - Attended the HCWP Annual Meeting

- Update Supervisor Handbook
  - Conference Call – Buffer & Ag Inspector Committee
3. NRCS Report, Jeff Kjorness: Attached. The Board would like to meet Loren Clarke at a future meeting.
  4. Board Reports
    - Koenig:** Hawk Creek Annual Meeting and Special Board Meeting March 19<sup>th</sup>. MASWCD Scholarship deadline April 3<sup>rd</sup>- 3 applications to date
    - Schroeder:** Attended the Hawk Creek Annual Meeting and Special Board Meeting, attended the 1W1P Planning Meeting. Unable to attend Buffer and Ag Inspector Meeting.
    - Schmidt:** Welcomed our new Board Member. Ditch hearing and redeterminations on hold, due to the public side of things. Dolezal CREP programs berm up to Co Rd 1 using the right of way as a dike to hold water. Jeff Marlow is concerned about this. Board and Commissioner Schmidt asked the Administrator to follow-up.
    - Kelly:** Attended the March 4<sup>th</sup> 1W1P Meeting, March 11<sup>th</sup> Hawk Meeting, likes how Hawk and SWCD are focusing on all aspect of agriculture not just soil health and cover crops even though they are important. They should be applauded for being receptive to their customers needs. Also attended the March Regular Board Meeting and Special Board Meeting.
    - Kokesch:** Has had multiple calls with Hatlewick over COVID-19 and operations, remind staff that if they need help to ask for help. Remind staff of resources available to them.
    - Jepson:** No report at this time.
    - Jeremy Maul:** All state employees are working form home, all BWSR staff are working from home. We are progressing on 1W1P plan for the Hawk Creek. Crow will be applying 1W1P this summer.

VII. Upcoming meetings and dates to remember:

VIII. Motion to adjourn at 9:26 A.M. (**Schroeder, Jepson**) MSC

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**CHAIRMAN**