

**Branch County Conservation District
Board Meeting Minutes from October 10, 2017**

Board Members present: John Mitchell, Duane Clover, and Diana Lutz

Staff present: Kathy Worst

The meeting was called to order by chair John Mitchell at 7:05 p.m.

Secretary's Report: board minutes for the September 12th regular meeting and the September 26th special meeting were tabled until November.

Treasurer's Report and Payment Voucher List for the last month were reviewed and discussed. These also included a balance sheet. Quarterly reports will be presented at the November meeting, once the transition is completed and adjustments made from the State of Michigan financial payment site changeover. There is currently a bank balance of \$63,871.76, which includes \$44,950.82 in the checking account, \$14,932.40 in the savings account and \$3,988.54 in the checking merchant account. Bills in the amount of \$11,823.61 have been pre-paid and \$27,941.91 still needs to be paid out. Diana Lutz moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, to approve all pre-paid bills totaling \$11,823.61 and to approve payment of all outstanding bills in the amount of \$27,941.91; Duane Clover seconded the motion; treasurer's report was approved and put to file for audit.

New Business

Approve resignation: Grant Newton providing accompanying proof of power of attorney for Mary Ellen Newton's (added to our files) submitted her resignation due to medical issues and via email on September 29, 2017. Upon review at this board meeting, Diana Lutz made the motion to regretfully approve her resignation; Duane Clover sighting the same seconded the motion; the motion carried. John noted Kathy had nominated Mary Ellen for Director of the Year to MACD. He suggested that if she did not win, we should do something special for her at the annual meeting; the board agreed.

NACD Dues: The board discussed offering annual support to NACD for fiscal 2018. A motion was made by Diana Lutz to provide \$100; John Mitchell seconded the motion; the carried.

The Board reviewed a Request from the St. Joseph Watershed Initiative (Erie) - Doug Pasick for someone to serve on their board. John Mitchell may be interested. His contact information will be provided.

MACDE is requesting auction items to help support training scholarships for staff in statewide. The board authorized providing a roosting box. John Mitchell will provide some other items.

Vantiv provided a letter of change over to the district. They will be taking over as the district's credit card provider for processing client purchases. The change requires an annual fee, plus our normal costs. The board decided to try this arrangement for one year to see how it works.

Lakeland School is requesting the district provide speakers for another outdoor education day this spring. The board agreed to do so. Further arrangements will be made.

Kevin King as noted by John Mitchell recently lost his father, who was a great supporter of the District. He has made a request that people provide donations to the District in lieu of flowers. The board and staff expressed appreciation for his thoughtfulness.

Old Business

Annual Meeting, Election and Conservation EXPO: Kathy said the Date of March 3rd, 2018 has been confirmed and requested topic preferences for the EXPO. The board made several suggestions to build upon.

Tree Sale: From choices given, the board chose the dates of April 20 and 21, 2018 to hold the annual tree sale at the fairgrounds. Kathy will work on the rest of the details. Updates to come.

State of Michigan SUW Tax Issue: Colleen is continuing to work on fixing the new 2016 State of Michigan tax issues. These taxes have been paid, but appear to be a part of the State's financial communication issues.

MDNR Landowner Incentive Program: Kathy again mentioned the progress on the one HAP enhancement project in Branch County. We are still waiting for the go ahead from the State.

Work Day for District Shed: was successfully held on Tuesday, September 26 in the heat wave. It has been re-shingled and painted completed, with the help of John, Duane, Marcus, Tyler Sheila, and Kathy. The shed still needs a bit of work completed around the entrance, but should be basically sound for a few years.

Land Judging FY 2018: Shed Farms, Tekonsha are hosting October 12. Five of the six schools have set a time slot and submitted a student headcount. John, Adam, Sheila and Tyler will be setting up on September 11th. John has asked that we try to get some donations for donuts and cider for the students; possibly asking Gleis.

Southern Michigan Invasive Species Team CISMA Grant: the grant application has been submitted – Nothing new.

Video Project: Kasey – still working, but not quite complete.

Mission Statement: no progress.

Smith Farm: John working on other site issues; provided a signed lease from the current hunters to file. Kathy stated the fee of \$400 for this year has been paid.

Projector: still exploring options.

County Commission next steps: Kathy will write a letter to submit financial assistance request for \$15,000 per board the board's directions. John mentioned the RC&D may still be able to provide a non-profit support to push forward a possible mileage election.

Directors' and Staff Reports

Directors - None

NRCS District Conservationist: Marcus Reynolds – absent

CTAI Specialist: Sheila Wald – see written report

MWSP / MAEAP Technician: Mike Censke – see written report

Farm Bill Biologist: Tyler Tankersley – see written report

Conservation District Administration: Kathy Worst - present

Public Comments: none

Adjourn: the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Insa Raymond, secretary.

Insa Raymond

Signature

11-14-17

Date