

**Branch County Conservation District
Board Meeting Minutes from April 18, 2018**

Board Members present: John Mitchell, Duane Clover and Bing Johnson

Staff present: Mike Censke, Lyndsay Morrison, Kathy Worst, and Sheila Wald

Guests: Gail Clover and Denny Worst

The meeting was called to order by chair John Mitchell at 12:39p.m.

Secretary's Report: the District Board meeting minutes for February 21st and March 13th were reviewed. A motion was made by Bing Johnson to approve both as presented; Duane Clove seconded the motion; the motion carried, and the minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report and Payment Voucher List for the last month were reviewed and discussed. There is currently a bank balance of \$27,940.30, which includes \$5,135.21 in the checking account, \$14,934.41 in the savings account and \$7,754.54 in the checking merchant account. Bills in the amount of \$17,166.19 have been pre-paid and \$13,927.73 still needs to be paid out. Duane clover made a motion to approve the treasurer's report and payment of all bills including the pre-paid bills, Bing Johnson seconded; the motion carried, and the treasurer's report was put to file for audit.

New Business

State MACD summer conference attendance funds were discussed for staff and one director. Attendance is required by grants for most staff. Bing Johnson moved to provide up to \$1,735 to cover all hotel and conference fees all. Duane Clover seconded the motion and the motion carried.

The Michigan Envirothon program has requested annual assistance from the district totaling \$100. After short discussion, Duane clover moved to approve the request at \$100; Bing Johnson seconded the motion; the motion carried.

Postage for district expenses will all need to be covered by the district from this point on. In the past NRCS has assisted with some of this, because we most often create mailings directed at their clients. As of now these will no longer be covered unless the mailing is directly related to a specific NRCS client. Bing Johnson moved to make an initial purchase up to \$100 of postage for our mailings; Duane Clover seconded the motion; the motion carried.

Our current financial status was discussed. We show very little in our regular checking at the moment, because second quarter grant reimbursements are coming in very slowly with the new state of Michigan financial process. We are hoping to receive them soon.

Clean storage may be an upcoming issue. We may need to find a new location to retain files and materials where mice cannot get at them. The current office could be shifted to a different client if the current landlord rents the adjacent rooms out. We are to let John know if this happens.

Barry Associates fees have increased for their services. We will be making budget amendments as soon as Kathy has a better understanding of how much they will actually be this year. For the time being, the board decided to continue to work with Barry.

Old Business

Michigan Sales Tax Issue: Kathy received a letter stating we are officially under review for the dispute concerning unpaid sales taxes. Hopefully it will be resolved soon.

The Natural Stewards Shoreline Workshop went very well, with 19 in attendance. We have had very good comments on the program, with a lot of interest for future programs and assistance.

Our Tree Sale Progress has been hampered. We are splitting and delivering what we can this week, but many of our trees are still frozen in the ground at a northern nursery. We will need to make at least one more pickup. Our sale and first delivery are this Friday and Saturday.

Our upcoming Native Plant Sale and Workshop has had a strong interest for RSVP's, but not many sales. Kathy will keep working on this with additional advertisements.

Lakeland School Outdoor Day is ready to go with 7 topics and speakers.

The Self Review Audit for Fiscal 2017 in-house portion is complete. We are still waiting on Barry Associates for their review and letter; in progress now.

The No Till Drill has some issues and we still need to order parts for the repairs. Kathy will do so soon.

MAEAP Tablet Proposal for an MDARD trial is still on hold until Kathy has time to work on this one, with Mike.

The "Southern Michigan Invasive Species Team CISMA" grant has been finalized between St. Joseph CD and MDNR. Our first "required" program will be the Blitz with a potable boat wash and Clean Boats Clean waters demonstrations on July 7, 2018, at Messenger Lake. John will help with this one.

Our Prescribed burn assistance volunteers are ready to go as soon as this weekend. We have several lined up for this spring.

In planning for our MAEAP Cost Share Grant we will keep \$1,000 for practices and the rest for supplies, which Mike will begin obtaining soon.

PF & State – Coldwater Lake State Park Project: We be doing the seeding only; Kevin King has offered use of his tractor again to help install the project.

Smith District Property: John will walk and mark the property boundary, with the Amish and neighbors. He will also install a gate at the road where are having trouble with too much access to the property and a lot of damage – rutting. Staff will once again be growing an organic garden on site as well.

Mission Statement: no progress – John may have something.

John Mitchel said the County Commission Millage will not happen for us this time around.

We have not heard anything more concerning the City of Coldwater, Water Trails yet.

Directors' and Staff Reports

Directors: Above

NRCS District Conservationist: Marcus Reynolds – Absent

CTAI Specialist: Sheila Wald reported

MWSP / MAEAP Technician: Mike Censke mentioned Mastronardi tour for staff and board, he is working on a farm field day for late July or early August.

Farm Bill Biologist: Lyndsay Morrison discussed the Wildlife Habitat workshop which went very well. She will also be attending the one-week conservation planner training through USDA. (Sheila is still waiting to hear.)

Conservation District Administration: Kathy Worst – present

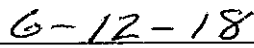
Public Comments: none

Adjourn: the meeting was adjourned at 1:29 p.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Insa Raymond, secretary.



Signature



Date