

**Branch County Conservation District
Board Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2018**

Board Members present: John Mitchell, Duane Clover, Diana Lutz, and Bing Johnson
Staff present: Kathy Worst, Alyssa Tarnowski, and Lyndsay Morrison

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

Secretary's Report: The District Board meeting minutes for the regular October 9th meeting were reviewed. Bing Johnson moved to accept the minutes; Duane Clover seconded the motion; the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report and Payment Voucher List for the last month were reviewed and discussed. There is currently a bank balance of \$87,698.95, which includes \$73,221.31 in the checking account, \$13,380.91 in the savings account and \$1,096.73 in the checking merchant account. Bills in the amount of \$38,010.45 have been pre-paid and \$22,336.71 still needs to be paid out. An increase in staff rates for our CTAI at \$19 / hour, FBB at \$20.00 / hour, and MAEAP at \$22.00 / hour technicians to better help them with expenses and make the District's end of year grant expenses more easily managed beginning with the next paycheck. Diana Lutz made a motion to approve the treasurer's reports and payment of all bills including the pre-paid bills and to approve the staff hourly increases; Duane Clover seconded; the motion carried, and the treasurer's report was put to file for audit.

Guest Speaker: Pam Reed from a local group concerned about the size, placement and other issues stemming from proposed wind generators / farms in Branch Co. discussed the groups concerns. The presentation included a good deal of data and information from studies completed covering wind generators. They consider themselves a proper placement group not an anti-wind group and feel the proposed generators are too close together, to residences,

New Business:

The potential need to redo our five-year resource assessment and plan of work this year instead of 2020 was discussed by Kathy. This would make us eligible for possible funds from the state of Michigan, which MACD is currently working on for all compliant districts. Jack will review what we have already done to see how far we need to go.

An update on Fischer insurance was given by Kathy. They may be adding a more substantial coverage component for herbicide and pesticide liability to work with the commercial side of anything we may be doing and related to CISMA work. Fischer thinks each District in a CISMA may need their own beyond the CISMA. A new law in Michigan may eliminate the requirement of the commercial license for the CISMA. It seems reasonably priced, but there will be more to come.

Christmas baskets as a thank you to two very helpful supporters were discussed. One for Kevin King, who has allowed us to use his equipment for Coldwater Lake project, land for judging and so many other things; the other to Sperry Farm for their help with the Coldwater Lake project and other support efforts. **MACD annual dues** were also discussed at the same time. Our normal support is \$1,000 per year paid quarterly. Bing Johnson made a motion to approve up to \$75 per each of the baskets and to pay the \$1,000 to MACD at a rate of \$250 per quarter; Diana Lutz seconded the motion; the motion carried. Diana will put the baskets together, then staff will deliver them in mid-December.

The proposed 2019 Board Meeting dates were reviewed and discussed. Diana moved to accept the dates as listed, with most being the second Tuesday of each month; Duane Clover seconded the motion; the motion carried. The list will be posted and shared.

The possibility of hosting an electronic recycling event was discussed by Kathy. She has been looking into this a bit and asked the board to for their level of interest. They approved looking into the possibility more. Kathy will get back to them, with any information.

Old Business:

Our Regional Envirothon this year will be handled by our district and Van Buren CD. The State and Regional Envirothon competitions will each be held at Fort Custer and we will assist with both. John mentioned we should expect an ask for financial assistance as well.

Land Judging Day at Kevin King's went very well. We only had the BACC show in two sessions, with a total of 43 students and 2 teachers. The other school had last minute issues. The event still went very well and the students had a good time. Kevin's place is very nice for these types of demonstrations and competitions.

Our FY18 Audit is set for December 4th.

Our Annual Meeting and Election is set for March 9th at the BACC. Director petitions for the election are ready and a notice will be in the local Shoppers Guide tomorrow. Staff is continuing to work on the events details and speakers.

Tree sale arrangements are being worked on by staff. We still have the fair available for April 19-21. The board is still exploring possible other areas to hold the sale to help us meet the new restrictions from MDARD.

Colleen at Barry is still trying to work out the sales tax issue with the State. They withheld money from our grant reimbursement to cover these funds, however we had paid in full. Hopefully these will be resolved soon.

The no till drill is still in use. It currently needs to be moved. The MDNR will be overhauling our drill along with others this winter.

No progress has been made on the plan for our Smith property yet.

John Mitchell has been working on the mission statement. Kathy will type of a draft and run through grade level programming.

Directors' and Staff Reports

Directors:

DEQ notices were discussed as to what we do with these and why.

NRCS District Conservationist: Marcus Reynolds – Absent

CTAI Specialist: Alyssa Tarnowski – Present & Submitted a written report.

MWSP / MAEAP Technician: Mike Genske – Absent – Will submit a two-month written report next time.

Farm Bill Biologist: Lyndsay Morrison – Present & Submitted written report.

Conservation District Administration: Kathy Worst Present

Public Comments: none

Adjourn: the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Insa Raymond, secretary.



Signature

12-11-18

Date