OTTAWA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Your Land, Your Water, Your Michigan

Minutes

Regular Meeting, USDA Service Center, Grand Haven MI
7 pm, Tuesday, August 3rd, 2021

Attendance:

Lexie Kasper, Administrative Specialist
Benjamin Jordan, Watershed Technician
David Pyle, Chairman
Tim Van Dyke, Vice Chairman
Douglas Grotenrath, Treasurer
Callie Melton, Director
Lester Langeland, Director
Heather Varboncouer, NRCS District Conservationist
Jack Knorek, MDARD Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER Time: 7:00 PM

- **Invocation-** Laster Langeland

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Regular Board Meeting:** Tuesday, July 6th, 2021
- **Motion to approve minutes:** Lester Langeland **Second/Support:** Callie Melton **Vote:** Passes

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comments

STAFF AND PARTNERING AGENCY REPORTS

Megan Boos, Executive Director- Report attached
Lexie Kasper, Administrative Specialist – Report attached
Keely Dunham, CISMA Coordinator-Report attached
Caryn Dawson, Ottawa MAEAP Technician
Mike Ludlam, Allegan MAEAP Technician
Forest Pest Technicians-Report attached
Heather Varboncoeur, NRCS District Conservationist –Report given

Olivia's last day is the 13th. Have 3 or 4 new CRP applications. Had 3 CSP applications but the applicants pulled them because they want to do RCPP. Had a large number of new field appointments. The board asks what the draw is for farmers to want to participate in RCPP? Heather explains that it is essentially EQIP for Ottawa county and there is basically no competition to them getting 75-90% cost share if they fill all of the paperwork out and meet the normal USDA eligibility guidelines. This RCPP will most likely pay more per acre for cover crops than the district's current 319 cover crop cost-share. Discussion ensues on what the income requirements are for qualifying for NRCS funding. Heather notes that FSA handles the eligibility requirements and would be a good resource for answering very specific eligibility questions.

Ben Jordan, Conservation Technician- Report given

Days away from signing the contract for the Sand/Crockery 319. Once we have the official letter from EGLE we will be ready to go. Already have 3 septic sites lined up, and numerous cover crops lined up. BRDC is in cover crop season. Currently lining up people with Dennis Bosch for aerial seeding. Ben anticipates spending all of the agriculture money out of BRDC, and then all that will be left is septic, and phase 3 of BRDC will be closed out. Currently discussing writing a phase 4 for BRDC because there are enough producers in the area to continue BMP practice funding. Phase 4 may be a slightly smaller version than the other phases, mostly funding some farmers that have been putting in cover crops for 3 years. Have 3 septics for BRDC also. The Pigeon draft is going to be finished by the end of this year. Currently Ben and Frank are drafting it and they're about ⅔ of the way through that grant. The board asks about Ben's working connection to Joe Bush? Ben answers that Joe Bush partners with the district when he has a project benefitting conservation and it makes sense for us to be a part of that natural resource work. Discussion ensues on the county's old Sand Creek grant and the ways in which that project was made visible to the public and the board. Discussion ensues on how the old Sand Creek project was ecologically beneficial.

Frank Schroyer, Watershed Technician- Report attached

Ben Savoie, Forester- Report attached

MDARD - Report attached

OLD BUSINESS

- **Ottawa County Request**
    - The request was submitted and approved by the county administrator, it will be voted on at the next county board meeting on August 26th.
- **Events**
    - Cultivation Resilience
        - We are working hard at planning this event, and if the board would like to take the promotional materials that were brought to the meeting tonight, they can do so.
    - Scrap Tire Recycling
        - We collected over 2500 tires, up last year from 1800. We will not be renewing this grant or completing any more of these events.
    - Beach Clean up
    - Highway Clean up
        - Both cleanups went well. The board asks what these cleanups cost the district. Lexie answers that most of these cleanups run 3-4 hours, and Megan and Lexie are paid from District funds but the remaining staff is not. The benefit of these events is visibility in the community to help convey other projects.
    - Fall Native Plant Sale and Workshops
        - This sale is taking place on October 9th, and we hope to hold an in-person workshop in conjunction with the sale. Pre-orders will open this Friday, August 6th.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Financial:**
    - **Financial Statements: July bank reconciliations and bill payment:** *See financial packet for our profit & loss, balance sheet, and account reconciliations.* (Vote)
        - **Motion to pay the bills:** Doug Grotenrath
          Second/Support: Callie Melton **Vote:** Passes

        - Scheduled Audit - Megan has scheduled the 2021 audit and she will be conveying that date to the board shortly.
        - ~~Appropriations Budget: Draft~~
        - ~~District Budget: Draft~~
        - ~~Grant indirect per project with projected indirect for FY 22~~
        - ~~Ottawa County investment~~
    - Due to Megan's absence at the board meeting, the last four financial agenda items are being postponed until next month (September).
- **Human Resources**: *Work agreements & Position Descriptions* (Vote)
    - CISMA Coordinator, Keely Dunham
    - Invasive Species Coordinator, Natalie Sweeting
    - Forest Pest Technician (4)
    - Forest Pest Technician Trainer: Kara Ermatinger
    - Ecological Technician, Emily Albright
        - The board asks if these are all new hires. The answer is no, only 3 of the 5 are new hires and one of those is seasonal. The other 5 positions are adaptations to position descriptions and the continued employment of two strike team members.
        - Discussion ensues on what the board thinks a farmer is.
    - **Motion to approve all 8 work agreements:** Doug Grotenrath
      Second/Support: Callie Melton **Vote:** Passes
    - NACD Technical assistance: Position Description & Posting
        - Interview Committee
            - Lexie asked Dave if he would like to be on the interview committee for this position when the time comes. Dave says yes. Megan will get him further information.
- **Grant Update**
    - Executions:
        - Crockery Creek and Sank Creek 319 (700,000, Federal)
            - Ben gave grant updates under staff reports
        - NACD (56,000 Federal)
            - To Lexie's knowledge, this grant was approved but she has no further information.
    - **Closeouts:**
        - NOAA
        - MISGP Core 19
        - MISGP Survey
        - All of these grants are closed out.
    - **RFP (Request for proposals)**
        - 319 Watershed funding- Phase 4 of BRDC
            - NOI is due in a month, Ben will be working on this document.
    - **Pending:** None

CORRESPONDENCE: N/A

- Dave Pyle addresses the board and asks if the board still has issues with personnel choices. Other board members think Megan Boos needs 1 board member plus herself to let people go. Discussion ensues on how far down the employee line that would go, as well as the legality in labeling which positions would need that policy versus which don't. The board is informed by Jack Knorek that each individual position would need to be decided on if they needed the board involved in HR, otherwise, this isn't allowed. Discussion continues on the history of the employee that was let go and the check-ins Megan had had with Dave and Doug. The board supports the idea that Megan needs to call the chairman before she lets people go. Tim Van Dyke expresses a desire to make sure Megan knows she is supported in her role as executive director. Discussion continues on what type of information is directed under human resources and what type is board relations.

P.A. 116: H. Walcott Family Farms LLC, Parcel #: 70-11-12-100-003 and H. Walcott Family Farms LLC, Parcel # 70-12-22-400-010

- Discussion ensues on how this parcel is eligible for PA 116. The board decides they have no questions for the application.

ADJOURN – Time: 8:38 PM

- **Motion to adjourn:** Tim Van Dyke **Support/Second:** Callie Melton **Vote:** Passes

Next Meeting: September 7th, 2021

Sign: _____ Date: _____