OTTAWA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Your Land, Your Water, Your Michigan

Minutes

Regular Meeting, USDA Service Center, Grand Haven MI
7pm, Tuesday September 13th, 2022

Attendance:

Megan Boos, Executive Director
Sarah Bowman, Watershed Technician
Lexie Kasper, Administrative Specialist
Matt Hehl, Chair
Tim Van Dyke, Vice Chair
Douglas Grotenrath, Treasurer
Rivka Hodgkinson, Director

CALL TO ORDER- 7:01 PM

Invocation – Matt Hehl

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting: August 9th, 2022
- **Motion to approve:** Rivka Hodgkinson **Second:** Doug Grotenrath **Vote:** Passes

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comment

STAFF AND PARTNERING AGENCY REPORTS

Megan Boos, Executive Director- Report
Lexie Kasper, Administrative Specialist – Report
Keely Dunham-Adkins- WM CISMA Coordinator- Report
Natalie Bekins- Invasive Species Project Coordinator - Report
Caryn Dawson- MAEAP Technician - Report
Forest Pest Technicians-Report - Report
Ben Jordan, Conservation Technician- Report
Sarah Bowman, Watershed Technician-Report
Alex Svoboda, RCPP Project Manager-Report
Kyle Hildebrandt, Soil Conservation Technician-Report
Ben Savoie, Forester-Report
MDARD-Report

- Discussion on if our public reach is actually growing and if the board expectations for staff are too low. Further discussion on if we can include a piece on who we impact or encounter. Board wants more metrics on MAEAP including site visits and risk assessments. Board wants to know who sets the payout rate for RCPP. Answer: It is NRCS, the district has no control over that. Discussion on where the board could give feedback to NRCS on their payout rates. What is brush management? Kyle Hildebrandt will follow up with answer. Discussion on how to enrich or standardize these reports without adding to staff stress, and Rivka asks to meet with Megan before annual reviews to discuss staff metrics that are required for grants and how that information is being collected.

Monthly Program Highlight: Rain Drop Rescue- Lexie Kasper

- Lexie gives an overview of the goals of the program, the steps already taken, and next steps. The board discusses various ways that funding could be found for this program.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Legislative Committee**
  - **Motion that Rivka Hodgkinson and Matt Hehl are on this committee:** Doug Grotenrath **Second:** Tim Van Dyke **Vote:** Passes
- **MACD update:**
  - Region meeting: Rivka is now vice president of region 7. She has been having discussions with other region 7 board members to gain understanding about the organization. 2 votes that were approved at the region meeting included: not calling tillage "conservation tillage," and to call on the state to standardize regulations for septic system installation & maintenance.
  - Dues: Discussion on what dues the district has paid in the past and what was offered for those dues. Now that Ottawa is to more involved, it would be a good time to think about what the district would like to recommend for dues benefits. In the past we've gone with the bronze level due. Megan reviews what each due level receives. While MACD has not been able to provide the specific things we need, Dan has done a great job and the consensus is that paying dues to MACD is important.
  - **Motion to go bronze level at $350:** Doug Grotenrath **Second:** Tim Van Dyke **Vote:** Passes
  - Winter Conference: Moved to December 5-7 at Shanty Creek Resort. Megan is on the planning meeting. No agenda is out yet but there may be a track just for directors.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Human Resources:**
  - H/R activity report
    - Report from Rivka: hired Morgan Anderson as the new Produce Safety Technician. There is excitement for what she'll bring to the role. Next up for the HR Committee will be the annual personnel reviews with all employees.
  - Work agreements: All FY 23 agreements (vote)
    - Megan reviews a newly developed wage snapshot table for how employees' wages are broken down between district funds, grant wage funds, and grant fringe funds. There is discussion on how fringe funds come out of grants and apply to wages. Megan gives a breakdown of wage funding sources according to the chart.
    - **Motion to approve work agreements as presented:** Rivka Hodgkinson **Second:** Doug Grotenrath **Vote:** Rivka Hodgkinson: Aye; Tim Van Dyke: Aye; Doug Grotenrath: Aye
- **Financial:** Megan Boos
  - August bank reconciliations and bill payment**:** *See financial packet for our profit & loss, balance sheet, and account reconciliations.* (Vote)
    - Megan gives an overview of the financial packet, balance sheet, and breakdown of the close the door fund. Next month will be the end of the fiscal year and all numbers will be official. Megan reviews the FY 23 appropriations budget. For FY 23, the budget will be voted on quarterly. Discussions on what our interest-bearing rate is on the savings account with Chase, and if we've looked anywhere else for a higher interest bearing rate. Megan gives an overview of the new Streams of Income table.
    - **Motion to pay the bills:** Tim Van Dyke **Second:** Doug Grotenrath **Vote:** Passes
  - Financial Committee Report

        - Discussed cost of living increases versus district budget was and that led wage increase discussions. Discussion on Megan's wages and what each employee takes home.
    - Wages for Executive Director (Vote)
        - When Financial Committee met and discussed director wages, they felt it was important to bring Megan's wage closer to what typical directors make. A 15% increase will bring her closer, but it will still not reach the midrange. Would like to bring her wages before fringe to $75,000.
        - **Motion to increase Megan's salary 15%:** Doug Grotenrath **Second:** Rivka Hodgkinson **Vote:** Doug rescinds the original motion
        - **Motion to make Megan Boos' base salary $75,000 a year plus fringe benefits:** Doug Grotenrath **Second:** Rivka Hodgkinson **Vote:** Doug Grotenrath: Aye; Tim Van Dyke: Abstain; Rivka Hodgkinson: Aye; Matt Hehl: Aye
    - Appropriation Budget (Vote)
        - Adjusted to reflect the vote on Megan Boos' wages for next fiscal year
        - Megan gives overview of the appropriations budget for next fiscal year and how it is broken down between each employee and program. Takes out all anticipated yearly activities.
        - **Motion to approve the appropriations budget:** Rivka Hodgkinson **Second:** Doug Grotenrath **Vote:** Tim Van Dyke: Aye; Rivka Hodgkinson: Aye; Doug Grotenrath: Aye; Matt Hehl: Aye

- **Grants:** Megan Boos
    - **Pending:**
        - Sustain our Great Lakes Grant (SOGL): Invasive species management
        - America the Beautiful (ATB): HWA management
    - **Preparing:**
        - Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Grants - Federal Clean Water Act Section 319-Watershed Management
        - Grand Haven and Allendale Community Foundation: Rain Drop Rescue
    - **Executing:** Produce Safety, MAEAP, NACD TA 2022 & State Operations Grant
    - It is grant writing season, we will be preparing many proposals. Our renewing grants and beginning Produce Safety grant are all being executed.

Policy

- Pam Evans offered to write some policy pieces for us that may be helpful for our specific situation.
- **Public Presentations, Education and Outreach Activities Guidelines:** *Document drafts were provided to us by Pam Evens*
    - Rivka felt this policy was incredibly helpful in laying out the framework for outreach and clarifying board roles in outreach. There were some clarifications to discuss for our organization:
        - Under #6: Who is doing the annual evaluation of outreach as listed in the guidelines? Discussion: The HR Committee together with Executive Director
        - Under #5: Who is developing the templated presentations? Discussion: It will be by staff members relevant to the topic area.
        - Under #1: The list of community organizations will be developed by whom? Discussion: Individual board members will utilize organizational relationships to propose to audiences and explain how a presentation will promote district goals. Point #3 will be added to point #1.

        - Under #4: Clarify the board will share outreach opportunities monthly and then the board will vote on if they agree and want to use district resources on this presentation.
    - Discussion on if this is more work for employees and if voting on each board outreach opportunity. Megan can give feedback on the capacity of staff and if they're able to take on these other presentations. Discussion on how these connections are overall valuable and should be aligned with the strategic plan goals.
    - **Motion to accept Public Presentations, Education, and Outreach Activities Guidelines:** Rivka Hodgkinson **Second:** Tim Van Dyke **Vote:** Doug Grotenrath: Aye; Rivka Hodgkinson: Aye; Tim Van Dyke: Aye
- **Majority Vote Policy:** *Document drafts were provided to us by Pam Evens*
    - Discussion on how these policies can be enforced. Gives the chairman the capacity to ask a board member to step down if not followed, but ultimately this does not mean they have to.
    - Discussion on whether this conversation should be tabled for next month and the consensus is that any matter should not be shelved based on any board member's schedule.
    - **Motion to accept the majority vote policy as written by Pam:** Rivka Hodgkinson **Second:** Doug Grotenrath **Vote:** Doug Grotenrath: Aye; Rivka Hodgkinson: Aye; Matt Hehl: Aye; Tim Van Dyke: Aye
- **Pre-written Statements**
    - Not an official policy, so the board reviewed but there is nothing further to be done.

Board updates: (Hehl, VanDyke, Grotenrath, Melton, Hodgkinson)

- *Van Dyke*- Asks if the solar issue previously brought up is going to be on the agenda. Rivka wants to know if there's value with someone going to the county preservation meeting to see what they discuss and become educated on what they are doing. Megan asks what he wants them to dig into. Overview: They want to take agricultural land and turn it into solar fields. Wants the district to prepare a letter for legislators that they can't use farmland for solar fields so that farmland is preserved.
- *Grotenrath*- Asks Megan to talk about Farm Bureau donation: We have an extensive historical collection and a professor, Matt Daley, has worked on preserving and documenting our collection and has used it for teaching and presentations. Farm Bureau wanted to use this collection for a special project and they offered to pay Matt Daley, but he asked if the money could be donated to us in honor of the strong partnership we've had over the years. We will be recognized at the Farm Bureau Annual Meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE: See attached email
PA 116: Reviewed and accepted.
ADJOURN – 9:16 pm

- **Motion to adjourn:** Tim Van Dyke **Second:** Rivka Hodgkinson **Vote:** Passes

Next meeting: October 11th, 2022

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Board Chairman
Signature