

# MINUTES FROM THE MAY 20, 2015 BOARD MEETING

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The regular monthly board meeting of the East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District was held on Wednesday May 20, 2015 at 7:30 a.m. at the USDA Service Center Conference Room at 801 Jenny Ave S.W., Perham, MN.

*The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lyle Dittmann at 7:29 a.m.*

**Members Present:**

Chairperson: Lyle Dittmann  
Vice Chairperson: Steve Inwards  
Secretary: Dennis Reynolds  
Treasurer: Marion Gill  
Public Relations: Terry Greenwaldt

**Others Present:**

County Commissioner: Doug Huebsch  
Acting District Conservationist: John Frie  
Soil Conservationist: Ryan Antholz  
District Manager: Darren Newville  
Administrative Secretary: Chantal Tougas

*7:30 a.m. County Commissioner Doug Huebsch entered the meeting.*

## Agenda

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Motion made by Dennis Reynolds, seconded by Terry Greenwaldt to accept the Agenda as presented with one change. The quotes for the vehicles did not arrive.

Opposed: None, motion carried.

**Approve Board meeting Minutes:** Motion made by Dennis Reynolds, seconded by Marion Gill to approve the previous month Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

Opposed: None, motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Motion made by Dennis Reynolds, seconded by Marion Gill to approve the last month Treasurer's Report. Opposed: None, motion carried.

CD 35028 to mature on 5/28/2015. Motion made by Steve Inwards, seconded by Terry Greenwaldt to renew for 36 months at a higher interest rate. Opposed: None, motion carried.

CD 34320 to mature on 7/30/2015. Motion made by Steve Inwards, seconded by Marion Gill to cash in this CD at its maturity date and use the funds to pay down the building loan. Opposed: None, motion carried.

**Bills Paid & Bills Payable:** Motion made by Steve Inwards, seconded by Terry Greenwaldt to approve the Bills Paid and Bills Payable as presented. Opposed: None, motion carried.

## Cost Share

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### **Water Plan Cost Share**

**2-WPCS-2015, Diann or Glenn Herdman;** Motion made by Steve Inwards, seconded by Marion Gill to approve final payment for cost share for a Well Sealing. In Henning, Elmo Township 132, Section 19, Range 37. The cost estimate is \$565.00 and cost share of \$300.00. Opposed: None, Motion carried.

**3-WPCS-2015, Lawrence Dykhoff;** Motion made by Terry Greenwaldt, seconded by Marion Gill to approve the request for cost share assistance. Perham Township, Section 32. The cost estimate is \$565.00 and cost share not to exceed \$300.00 or 75%, whichever is less. Opposed: None, Motion carried.

**4-WPCS-2015, Joe Rice;** Motion made by Dennis Reynolds, seconded by Marion Gill to approve the request for cost share assistance. Ottertail Township, Section 14. The cost estimate is \$565.00 and cost share not to exceed \$300.00 or 75%, whichever is less. Opposed: None, Motion carried.

## Agenda cont.

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**District Manager's Report:** See attached report as written by Darren Newville.

### **District Conservationist's Report:**

John Frie (Free) is the acting DC here in East Otter Tail. He is the Area Biologist His report follows:

This position is not to exceed 120 days, however, it is looking like longer since Bruce Becker's job has yet to be posted.

CPS round finished, we had 5 applicants. There were four times the applicants they thought they could fund.

EQIP is finished. There are two contracts by Deer Creek and one tree planting.

State Conservationist: Cathy Pullman, from Maine, started on Monday.

### **County Commissioner Report:**

Transportation: Nothing passed in Legislation for roads.

Ditches: work is being finished up on a few ditches.

## Old Business

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**Department of Ag Update:** Still working with Luke on the agreement. Two more reviews needed before staff can be hired. This project is evolving as it moves forward.

**TSA Update:** Nothing to report.

**EOT/Wadena SWCD Joint Meeting:** The sub-committee members Lyle Dittmann and Dennis Reynolds met last Friday with the sub-committee members of the Wadena SWCD Ken Berg and Nancy Benson. Also in attendance were Chad & Pete from BWSR, and two County Commissioners (one from each district). Topics included benefits

of concepts, programs & staff. Meetings were set for the fourth Monday of the month with the exception of May. The meeting will Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> due to the holiday.

## New Business

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### ***Upcoming Training/Events***

Area 1 Meeting - Motion made by Steve Inwards, seconded by Dennis Reynolds to approve the registration fee for any staff or board member wishing to attend this meeting. Opposed: None, motion carried.

Soil & Water Conservation Society – Motion made by Dennis Reynolds, seconded by Steve Inwards to send Darren Newville, District Manager to this session in Greensboro, NC. Opposed: None, motion carried.

Farm Bill Assistance Grant Amendment – Motion made by Steve Inwards, seconded by Terry Greenwaldt to sign the agreement for an additional \$2,500 funding from the Farm Bill Assistance Grant. Opposed: none, motion carried.

### Personnel:

Motion made by Marion Gill, seconded by Terry Greenwaldt to remove Chantal Tougas from probationary status to permanent employee. Opposed: none, motion carried.

Buffer Technician Update: The announcement is out for this position until the deadline of May 22, 2015. Review of applicants will start after the deadline.

Vehicles are needed for the district however the quotes were not received by time the meeting started. The discussion is tabled for the next meeting.

8:50 a.m. County Commissioner Doug Huebsch exits the meeting

Pens – Board could not reach a decision. This needs more research.

Credit cards – Motion made by Steve Inwards, seconded by Terry Greenwaldt to get credit cards for EOT staff for District purchases only. Opposed: none, motion carried. Darren will research and develop an employee credit card policies/rules for Credit Card use and stiff consequences for misuse.

Public Comments - none

Motion made by Dennis Reynolds, seconded by Lyle Dittmann to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 a.m. Opposed: none, motion carried.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS AND TRAINING SESSIONS**

<b>Training/Meetings</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attending</b>
Administrative Session	Two Harbors, MN	June 17-18, 2015	Chantal Tougas
Leadership Training	Lansboro	June 24-25, 2015	Aaron Salo
Leadership Training	Grand Rapids	Aug 12-13, 2015	Aaron Salo
Little McDonald Lake Assoc. Mtg		June 20, 2015	Gabe
DNR Prairie Plant ID Training	Clay County	June 24-25, 2015	Gabe & Aimee
County Ag Inspector Short Course	Otter Tail	July 13-14, 2015	Aimee
EOT SWCD Board Meeting	Perham	July 15, 2015	Staff & Board Members
DNR Groundwater Workshop	Otter Tail	July 29, 2015	

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Chantal Tougas  
Administrative Secretary

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Dennis Reynolds  
Secretary

**District Managers Report**  
**June 17th, 2015**  
**Submitted by Darren Newville**

1. **Conservation Corps Apprentice** – Elizabeth (Liz Reed) started on May 27<sup>th</sup>. She will be assisting us until mid-August. She has already been very helpful assisting with projects from tree matting, shoreland buffer installations, to well monitoring.
2. **Adaptive Ag Program** – Aaron is going to be following up with those producers interested in the Adaptive Ag program to get field data. We also have two pilot fields that we are working with on nutrient management with thermal imaging and a program called Ensirca. We hope to expand this next year to 5-7 fields.
3. **Township Private Well Nitrate Sampling** – About half of the nearly 14,000 letters and sampling kits have been sent out. This will continue to happen at about 1,000 kits a week for the next 6 to 7 weeks. We continue to take calls from homeowners that have questions about the program. Katelyn and Aimee have been doing a great job fielding the calls.
4. **Shoreland Program** – Gabe and Aimee with the help of a Minnesota Conservation Corps Crew, the EOT and Wadena SWCD Conservation Apprentices, Chantal and Katelyn installed 14 projects in 7 days in the past month. They also have a few more projects that they will be working with private vendors to install in the near future. Most of these projects are funded through the Community Partners Grants.  
Gabe and Aimee attended the COLA Lake Seminar in Otter Tail on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Gabe was part of their panel discussion. They have also attended and are scheduled to attend a few Lake Associations Annual Meetings to give presentation about the SWCD's assistance for shoreland owners.
5. **Irrigation Scheduler** – Arnie and Aaron have been working together on the irrigation scheduler routes. Right now Arnie is running the routes on Monday through Wednesday and Aaron is running on Thursday. I believe they have about 90 fields and will likely be adding a few more fields.
6. **District/ Farm Bill Technician Position** – Since they finished up with the tree plant and matting Mitch has been spending almost all of his time on custom seeding projects and the drill rental programs. He has 15 sites left to seed before the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. We will probably be working with the WOT staff to see if they have some time to assist us with a few of the sites to make sure we get them all complete. The rental drill has been very busy and is booked out for the next few weeks.

7. **County Buffer Initiative** – We continue to be in contact with the WOT SWCD staff as we work on this program. Cassie Walz will start next Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, as the EOT Buffer Technician. This will allow us to speed up the process of identifying and contacting landowner who may not be in compliance.
8. **County Feedlot Program** – Brad Mergens and I meet with the Clay SWCD staff last month to discuss the process that they used when they took on the program a few years back. I have also talked with staff from the MPCA about feedlot numbers and possible grant allocations for Otter Tail County. Rick West, County Highway Engineer, is in the process of scheduling a County Public Works Committee meeting with Commissioners to start the County Board process to review if this is something the County and SWCD would like to take on.
9. **County Ag Inspector Program** – Aimee has been assisting with the planning for the CAI summer short course tour as the training will be held at Thumper Pond, in Ottertail. The tour will consist of a visit to Wensman Seed, a RDO tour & lunch, a visit to North Central Reforestation, and sit visit to pasture to discuss management methods for weed control (buffalo & cattle). Aimee has also been visiting leafy spurge site to evaluate them for flea beetles as a biocontrol. She has been finding the beetles on some sites. I am sure that weed complaint calls will start ramping up as the summer progresses.
10. **Nitrate Sampling Clinics** – Katelyn has been working with Mary, WOT SWCD, to set nitrate sampling clinic dates. They have the Fergus Falls Clinic scheduled for July 9<sup>th</sup> and the Ottertail Clinic scheduled for July 21<sup>st</sup>.
11. **DNR Groundwater Workshops** – The DNR working with MASWCD and BWSR have scheduled a series of groundwater workshops around the state. They will be hosting one of the workshops on July 29<sup>th</sup> at Thumper Pond in Ottertail. They have the day split into two workshops – one for staff and one for elected officials. I would encourage all of you to attend and will be getting you more information as it is available.
12. **Irrigation Conference** - Last week Wade Salo, Wadena SWCD, and I attended the North Central Region Irrigation Conference in Lincoln Nebraska. There we received a lot of information on advance soil moisture monitoring methods, new technology, and what the issues with Ag irrigation are in other states. We visited several field trials and heard about ongoing research in Nebraska. This group is also looking to apply for a \$10 million dollar USDA grant to quantify the benefits of proper irrigation management practices on water quality. We will discuss this later in the meeting.
13. **Legislative Update** – The special session was held and all of the major budget bills were passed. SWCDs will be receiving additional state funding as part of this legislation and will play a larger role in buffer enforcement. John Jaschke, BWSR Executive Director, will be hosting several meeting around the state in the next month to discuss how the funding will be distributed.