

**MINUTES OF THE BUCHANAN SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S MEETING  
INDEPENDENCE, IA  
Tuesday, February 27, 2024  
2:03 p.m. at the Independence Field Office**

Those present were:

**Commissioners**

Sean Dolan

Dale Priebe

Becky Lindsay

Doug Kaiser\*

Tim Halligan\*

\*Absent from Meeting

**Staff & Others**

Julie Althaus, Conservation Assistant

Evan Ronnebaum, District Conservationist

Claire Carlson, Planning Coordinator, Northeast Area via Telephone

Shane Wulf, Wetlands Project Manager

Mike Webster, Wetland Field Specialist, Iowa Drainage District Assoc.

Clark Porter, Environmental Specialist

Russ Wright, Landowner

The meeting was called to order by Dolan at 2:03 p.m.

Dolan moved guests to the top of the agenda.

**Claire Carlson, Planning Coordinator, Northeast Area –**

Items covered she went over the survey that was sent out to everyone and thanked them for completing it. If they haven't completed it, she definitely wants them to be put in there what they like about her work with them on the 5-year plan.

She explained that her position had been extended to September 24, 2024.

She also went over the Public Input Sessions in the 5-year plan. Any changes that need to be made we need to send them to her.

**Russ Wright, landowner, Dunkerton, IA**

Russ wanted to discuss with the commissioners cover crops and No-Till. He stated that he has had some questions and concerns. He stated that he had some concerns when he visited with the Black Hawk Staff. He met Julie at a music event, and she explained what she does for her work. She invited him to come to the commissioners meeting here since he didn't live very far away. He stated that he lives 90 ft away from the Buchanan County line.

He had sent Julie a link to Maion Calmer's you-tube video regarding cover crops, strip-till, and no-till. Julie had shared this with the commissioners prior to the meeting. He is looking for some input on this. There was discussion on the positives and negatives. Wants to make sure that we are all helping the land for the future. The commissioners stated that they will definitely stay in touch, and he is more than welcome to attend out next meeting if he would like to.

**Shane Wulf, Wetlands Project Manager, IDALS and Mike Webster, Wetland Field Specialist, Iowa Drainage District Assoc.**

They came to update the commissioners to bring them up to date on the Dick Sloan Wetland Project. This is a big project, and they also have Clark Porter assisting them, also.

- This project has 631 acres of drainage.
- Permits with Army Corp of Engineers and DNR have been taken care of.
- Geo Research completed.
- Licensed surveyor for legal purposes. The easement will be held by the District for Dick to sign.

Wulf stated that if there are interested contractors, to email him and they will be put on a list, they all need to be bonded.

This project is state funded. This is one of Buchanan's first big project and it is exciting.

Water sampling – approximately 60 – 70% reduction, it varies due to weather conditions.

Wulf state there could be another possibility in Buchanan County.

The biggest thing is that the district needs to decide, how the easement is handled, the district needs to make sure that they work with the partners, just due to if there is an issue, it will need to be addressed since it is in Buchanan County.

**Clark Porter/Environmental Specialist**

Reported that there will be a field day held on Friday, March 22 from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. at Alan Wulfekuhle Farm Shop. This field day will be attended by Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Naig. A Planter Workshop conducted by Pete Youngblut. There will be a Conservation Update by the IA Pork Producers Association. Refreshments will be provided.

Clark also reported on the Bioreactors and Saturated Buffer projects that are taking place.

**Adopt Agenda**

Dolan called to adopt the agenda.

**24-46 Motion** by Lindsay to approve the agenda. Seconded by Priebe. Motion carried.

**Approval of ORGANIZATIONAL Meeting Minutes January 11, 2024**

Dolan called for a discussion and approval of the Organizational meeting minutes from January 11, 2024, no discussion.

**24-47 Motion** by Lindsay to approve the Organizational Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2024, meeting. Seconded by Priebe. Motion carried.

**Approval of Monthly Meeting Minutes dated January 11, 2024**

Dolan called for a discussion and approval of the regular meeting minutes from January 11, 2024, no discussion.

**24-48 Motion** by Priebe to approve the Monthly Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2024, meeting. Seconded by Lindsay. Motion carried.

**Treasurer’s Report & Financials –**

Treasurer’s Report & Financials approval for January 31, 2024.

**24-49 Motion** by Priebe to approve the January 31, 2024, Financial Report. Seconded by Lindsay. Motion carried.

CD Renewed for 5 month on 02/13/2024 in the amount of \$82,623.61, for 5 months. It will expire on 07/13/2024. The rate is 4.93% (5%). Dolan moved the interest of \$1,707.46 into the revolving fund.

It was suggested that the commissioners update the number of signatures required to renew the CD to just 2.

**24-50 Motion** by Lindsay to update the requirement of signatures to renew the CD to any 2 individuals that are on the current signature card. Seconded by Priebe. Motion carried.

**FARMS Cost Share Applications**

**FARMS Ledger Remain Balance as of February 21, 2024 – IFIP \$10,505.87/REAP F/NG \$2,590.53/ REAP P \$5,414.78**

Practice #	Name	Program	Practice	Estimated Cost	Cost Share Amt	Action

**FARMS Completed Cost Share Projects & Maintenance Agreements**

Practice #	Name	Program	Practice	Cost Share Amt	Action
105834	Hansen, Chris	IFIP	Grassed Waterway	\$4,472.68	Approve

**FARMS Cancelled Cost Share Projects & Maintenance Agreements**

Practice #	Name	Program	Practice	Cost Share Amt	Action
87728	Brustkern Farms, LLC	IFIP	Grassed Waterway	\$4,472.68	Approve
113841	Lindsay, Scott	WQI	Cover Crops	\$1,050.00	Approve

**FARMS Amendment**

Practice #	Name	Program	Practice	Cost Share Amt	Action
102681	Hoover, Patrick	IFIP – Extension of completion date 12/30/24	Grassed Waterway	\$3,221.62	Approve
97272	Brustkern Farms LLC	IFIP – Extension of completion date 12/30/23	Grassed Waterway	\$8,191.15	Approve

**24-51 Motion** by Priebe to approve the completed cost share for payment; cancelled cost share; and amendments. Seconded by Lindsay. Motion carried.

**District Conservationist Report – Evan Ronnebaum, District Conservationist**

## NRCS Updates –

- EQIP – 18 Applications.
- CSP – 4 applications
- There will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of EQIP applications.
- Getting started on CRP status reviews that are up this fall for renewal.

## Watershed Reports

- Middle Cedar/SF512 Middle Cedar HUC 8 Project – Althaus asked if there was anyone that attended the January 18<sup>th</sup> workshop – no one attended the workshop from Buchanan County SWCD.
- Maquoketa River Watershed Management Authority – brought commissioners up to speed on including Erin Erickson on the agenda. Also, gave her, Evan and Sean’s contact information.
- Upper Wapsi Watershed –  
Upcoming meeting on Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. at Fontana Park Nature Center. Dolan plans on attending. It was suggested for Evan to attend.

## Conservation Districts of Iowa – Report from Sean

- February 8<sup>th</sup> is Partnership Day in Des Moines – Dolan attended and gave a brief report. Wages were discussed of getting them increased for our current employees and new employees. Other topics discussed were REAP Funding and Water Quality Incentive (WQI) funding.
- CDI Administrative Support – They are currently interviewing have not heard any updates regarding Independence.
- Spring Regionals – Region 4 will be in Dubuque in the morning of March 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:00, Dolan plans on attending. Along with Dale Priebe and Julie Althaus, Conservation Assistant.
- Time to think about Resolutions – Possibility of one would be training for new people, whether it be NRCS, IDALS, or District.

## IA Department of Ag and Land Stewardship

- District Policy on cost share right now for IFIP dollars for Buchanan SWCD has a cap of \$5,000.00. The question is can it be raised for cost share projects that are not getting funding from NRCS? Althaus went over some different scenarios that are not getting funding through EQIP, that the project would qualify for IFIP money.

After discussing and giving the commissioners examples, it was decided to lift the cap.

**25-52 Motion** by Priebe to remove cap for state cost share eligibility. Seconded by Lindsay. Motion carried.

## NACD – National Association of Conservation District

- Nothing at this time.

## District Activities

- Julie Althaus is still filling in at Linn County, new started December 8<sup>th</sup>, down to once a month. She sees it really winding down. Jeanette is doing wonderful.
- Received FY24 Allocation of \$3,000.00 from the Buchanan Cty Supervisors, it has been deposited and also Althaus sent out a thank you to them.
- Tree Sale – Althaus has been working on that.

- Update on Newsletter and Annual Report – Althaus will be double checking the Policy and Procedures Manual regarding the Annual Report, since we no longer have the Winthrop News, to go to.
- Plat Books, it is time to update the plat books in the office, they are \$28.00 each. We will need to have 3 of them.

**25-53 Motion** by Lindsay to purchase 3 – 2023 plat books for the office. Seconded by Priebe. Motion carried.

**Conservation Plans** – 5 at this mtg for signature


**25-54 Motion** by Lindsay to approve the conservation plans. Seconded by Priebe. Motion carried.


**Other Items:**

- Priebe discussed the upcoming meeting at the Falcon Civic Center, regarding the windmills. He wanted to know the commissioners’ feelings on this and gave them the details of the meeting.
- Lindsay will be gone from March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 22<sup>nd</sup>?
- Next Commissioners meeting will be on March 26<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. at the Field Office.

**24-55 Motion** by Lindsay to adjourn. Seconded by Priebe. Motion carried.

Adjourned @ 4:40 p.m.

      3-26-24  
 Chairman                                      Date

      3-26-24  
 Secretary                                      Date