



# Dickinson Conservation District

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## Dickinson Conservation District BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday December 17, 2020 | 5:00 pm (CT)

VIA: Zoom

### MINUTES

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed By: \_\_\_\_\_

1) WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER: Chairman B. Rice called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm. Board members in attendance were Bill Rice, Sue Pope, Mark Rossato, Sarah Blanz, and Kurt Lehmann. Also, in attendance were Lindsay Peterson (WRISC), Rachael Guth (MDARD), and Amber Butterfield (DCD). Absent was Amy Walker (FAP Forester)

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA: S. Blanz moved to accept the meeting agenda. K. Lehmann supported. Motion carried.

3) PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

4) CONSENT AGENDA: The consent agenda, containing the following items, was presented. K. Lehmann moved to accept the consent agenda as presented. S. Pope supported. Motion carried.

a) Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2020

5) NEW BUSINESS:

a) Vacation/Sick/Maternity Leave: A. Butterfield informed the Board that L. Peterson was pregnant and due in January of 2021. She stated that after reviewing the policies and work agreements, that there was not stated maternity leave for an employee at the District. Updating the Board of a discussion had at the WRISC Board Meeting early in the month of December, A. Butterfield was asked to discuss options at the DCD Board Meeting for some sort of leave to be provided for L. Peterson. A. Butterfield asked R. Guth to explain to the Board the route that other Districts take within Michigan. R. Guth stated that historically Districts have not had to put a maternity leave policy in place but that recently younger individuals have been working at conservation districts and that other Districts are facing the issue of maternity leave as well. She explained the ability to roll over sick leave from year to year to build up leave that could be attributed to a person expecting, and that this route is

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what most Districts were planning to follow. She also gave an option for using fringes from grants, such as the FAP grant, to allow employees to save for this type of leave. A. Butterfield stated that the District has not allowed employees to roll over their sick leave but that she was almost positive that L. Peterson had not used all her sick leave from the last fiscal year. She stated that she would be able to confirm that by looking at the timesheets from the previous year, to see if any of L. Peterson's sick leave could be rolled over. L. Peterson spoke that she was okay with using her current vacation and sick leave to cover any maternity leave that she was taking and that the transition back to working part-time or full-time would be easier, as she was still working from home. She stated that she was not too concerned with the matter and was comfortable with the route that was already set. B. Rice confirmed his understanding and stated that a discussion should be had to form some sort of maternity leave for the future. M. Rossato inquired where the funding for this leave would come from. A. Butterfield stated that the decision would not be an easy one, as L. Peterson was fully grant funded but considered a District employee and thought and careful consideration would have to be given to where the funding for this type of leave would come from. The discussion was wrapped up with the decision to discuss L. Peterson's leave between A. Butterfield, B. Rice, and L. Peterson.

- b) Benefit Stipend for Amy: A. Butterfield reminded the Board that they had approved a stipend to be given to A. Walker. She stated that not much discussion regarding the monthly amount had been had, and that she would like to get the stipend approved fully to be given to A. Walker. A. Butterfield informed the Board that she had spoken with R. Guth on the topic and that it was stated that the stipend could come from the FAP grant itself. She explained to the Board that the stipend would come from the administration portion of the grant funds, or it could also come from the District funds, or a combination of both. S. Blanzly inquired whether an amount had been agreed upon by the Board and A. Butterfield stated that it had not. S. Pope spoke that she remembered that the stipend amount had been about \$300-\$400 previously, but that the District should investigate that more. M. Rossato inquired whether the stipend would have to be paid retro actively, and A. Butterfield said she would speak on this further with A. Walker. After further discussion B. Rice informed the Board that he and A. Butterfield would dig into the stipend further and notify the Board on an amount to be paid to A. Walker.
- c) WRISC Cost Share Program: B. Rice spoke to the Board about the workings of WRISCs grants, and the funding that is awarded to them. He highlighted the issues that invasive species impose and the importance of controlling them. L. Peterson then spoke that although WRISC has been able to seek and secure stable funding, that grantors are becoming less inclined to give funding to retreat properties. She informed the Board that other CISMAs have begun working on a system to offer a cost share for treatments on properties that are requiring several years of control and that others have gone for a fee for treatment, though she did not see that as the direction of WRISC. L. Peterson explained to the Board that this discussion had been talked amongst the WRISC Board for several years, and that her and the WRISC staff were putting together a workup to present to both Boards over the winter, and that it should be finalized come spring. M. Rossato wrapped up the discussion by stating that he thought waiting until the cost share plan in the spring would be a good idea.

## 6) REPORTS:

- a) Finance Committee Report:



- a. Approval of Treasurer's Report: The Board reviewed the financial documents presented. S. Pope stated that all the financials were in order but that the District did not seem to be doing as well as the month prior. A. Butterfield stated that the District was coming up on reporting and that they would be asking for reimbursements soon, and that the funds were low due to having to pay deposits for the Spring Tree Sale. She also informed the Board that more income will be coming in now that the tree sales had gone up on the website. A. Butterfield also explained to the board that the credit card reconciliation and closeout did not match what was on the balance sheet due to activity on the credit card after the reconciliation. K. Lehmann moved to place the Treasurer's Report on file. M. Rossato supported. Motion carried.
- b. Approval of Bills: Upon review of the bills, K. Lehmann moved to accept the Approval of Bills. S. Blanz supported. Motion carried.

b) Administrative Report:

- a. Grants Update: A. Butterfield gave an update on the current grants. A. Butterfield, again, gave notice that the District would begin their reporting shortly after the first of the year. She also informed the Board that WRISC was currently working on asking for extensions for both MEF CCC and their EPA grant. She wrapped up the update stating that a request for an advance with the MISGP IS16-1005 grant had been made and a follow up email had been sent to the grantors.
- b. Sales/Projects: Spring Tree Sale & Calendar Sales: A. Butterfield notified the Board that the tree sale had been made to go live online and that the paper order forms were set to be delivered to the District on the 21<sup>st</sup> and sent out on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December. A. Butterfield stated that the sales have been going well and that they had received a larger number of orders in the first couple days then they had in years past. A. Butterfield concluded the update by again letting the Board know that they were currently paying their deposits with the nurseries.

c) Partner Reports:

- a. FAP: None; A. Butterfield informed the Board that A. Walker was currently seeking medical treatment for her son and that was why she was absent from the Board Meeting. The Board reviewed the physical update that had been sent by A. Walker.
- b. WRISC: L. Peterson updated the Board that her and the WRISC staff were currently working on off season data entry management and submitting them. She also informed the Board that they were completing the workplans to be in place during her maternity leave and that she will present these workplans at the January 2021 Board Meeting. She concluded her update by stating that, currently, the WRISC staff were busy conducting the HWA surveys.
- c. MDARD: B. Rice thanked R. Guth for her guidance on how best to proceed with the elections of new Board members. R. Guth informed the Board of a new Bill that had passed through the Senate and the House and was now on the governor's desk that would allow Board Meetings to continue virtually until March of 2021. R. Guth also notified the Board that state employees were under a lock-down that requires her to give an hours' notice for any in-person

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appointment that is 2 hours long and a two (2) week notice for any in-person appointments that were over 2 hours long. She wrapped her update by speaking on the current ongoing of the virtual MACD Conference.

d. NRCS: None

7) MEETING REPORTS: None

8) RESOURCE ISSUES: None

9) BOARD PRIVILEGE: B. Rice spoke that he is looking forward to personnel evaluations at the end of the year and thanked A. Butterfield for getting the proper forms out. He also spoke that he is comfortable with appointing M. Rossato for another year to the Board, at which time he would then be voted onto the Board.

10) ADJOURN: Next meeting January 21, 2021 @ 5pm. M. Rossato moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:05pm. S. Pope supported. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

*Minutes compiled and submitted by A. Butterfield.*

