

NORTHERN OZAUKEE FARM DRAINAGE BOARD MINUTES

Special Meeting -- Monday, June 19, 2023

The special meeting of the Northern Ozaukee Farm Drainage Board was called to order at 10:04 a.m., on the 19th day of June, 2023, by Chairman Daniel Teunissen. Present were Commissioners Daniel Teunissen, Dan Birenbaum and David Mueller, Attorney for the District, Michael P. Herbrand and District Record Retention Clerk, Cindy Oskey. Guests in attendance were Sandi Tretow, Ozaukee County Treasurer, Brian Gesch, Gwendy Gesch, Debbie Poull, Don Feyereisen, Roger Prinsen, Kevin Jacoby and Norman DeRuyter. Notice of the meeting was found to have been properly published in the Ozaukee Press and the Lakeshore Weekly, for one week prior to the meeting date.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Prior meeting minutes were read by Attorney Michael P. Herbrand with one correction to be made to Brian Gesch's name. Motion by David Mueller, second by Dan Birenbaum to approve the minutes with the correction. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mike Herbrand presented the Treasurer's report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. There was a motion by David Mueller, second by Dan Birenbaum to approve the Treasurer's report. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting was opened for public comment.

Roger Prinsen expressed his concern about the method of the assessment by parcel rather than the benefit or use value. He did not think it was fair because it is the same per parcel. He also considered the assessment a tax and did not believe the district could assess taxes without representation. Chair Dan Teunissen explained the different methods of assessment per the state statutes for the Drainage districts. Roger Prinsen also brought to attention the difficulty he was having with combining his parcels within Sheboygan County due to the lack of information Sheboygan County has about the parcels included in the district. Chair Dan Teunissen explained the Board recently received a map from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection agency (DATCP) with property descriptions so records can be updated.

Discussions we brought up on the cost of future assessments and for how many years would there be assessments. It was explained by the board the plan was for a 5 year clean up. The cleanup would include a 20-foot clearance on each side of which farmers can still farm. There is a possibility for a 40-foot clearance which the board can apply for. The bid would include the option of having the property owner keeping any wood. The plan would include a maintenance program and in particular the peat moss problem between Hwy K and Jay Road. It was noted the entire ditch has different conditions depending on surrounding terrain.

Norman DeRuyter expressed concerns about flooding on his property. Chair Dan Teunissen explained the work start on the North end of the district to alleviate some of the flooding and washouts on County D in Sheboygan County. The streambank could be seeded to improve water quality.

Brian Gesch wanted clarification on the 20-foot vs 40-foot clearance and defining the right away as the center of the ditch or the bank. Chair Dan Teunissen explained the clearance is measured from the high bank. He also explained the board can apply under the state statutes for a 40-foot clearance. He did not know how long the process for an application could take and he said it would depend on the area being worked on whether they would consider a 40-foot clearance. The plans would be discussed with the property owners involved.

The Board and public talked about the effectiveness of the work and who it helps. It was indicated that it originally helped with the agriculture in the area and now includes the Village of Belgium with their stormwater drainage which ends up in the ditch. Dan Birenbaum explained the water coming from the village is clean water from the village treatment plant.

Debbie Poull expressed the need for educating the public and Chair Teunissen explained the website will be providing this information. Gwendy Gesch and Kevin Jacoby also expressed concern about the manner of assessment and the costs. It was reiterated that the website will be helpful in answering these and many other questions landowners might have.

Don Feyereisen expressed concern that a landowner is spraying the ditch to keep down the grass. David Mueller commented that grass is needed for the ditch. It was agreed that one of the board members would address the spraying problem.

Chair Dan Teunissen closed the public comments.

Chair Dan Teunissen and Attorney Michael Herbrand will work on the letter requesting bids for the work to be done. This will be discussed and approved at the next meeting.

Chair Dan Teunissen presented a view of the draft of the website that is being developed ozaukee-farm-drainage.com will be the addresses when it is completed. He explained the website will include the projects being work on, a frequently asked question section, previous meeting minutes, history and pictures.

Attorney Michael Herbrand presented the summary of the collection of the 2022 assessment and a list of those assessments that had not been collected as of June 15, 2023 which totaled \$10,190.80 without interest. There was a motion by David Mueller, second by Dan Birenbaum to certify the unpaid assessments to the Ozaukee County Treasurer for placement on the tax rolls. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Chair Teunissen presented the expense of \$3,600 to pay for the website development along with the bill from the Ozaukee County Treasurer for the processing and mailing of the May 5, 2023 assessment. Motion by Dan Birenbaum, second by David Mueller to approve the payments. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Board discussed the next meeting date to discuss bids. There was consensus to hold the next meeting on July 24, 2023 at 10 am.

Motion by David Mueller, second by Dan Birenbaum to adjourn. Motion passed by unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 11:09 am.

Respectfully submitted,

David Mueller, Secretary

APPROVED:

Daniel Teunissen, Chair