



Van Buren Conservation District

Minutes of November 9, 2022 Regular Board Meeting

Minutes Prepared by: Emilly Hickmott, Deputy Administrator

Petersen called the rescheduled November 9, 2022 business meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Roll Call of Board Directors:

- Chairperson, Bill VanTassel – present
- Vice-chairperson, Jan Petersen – present
- Treasurer, Carl Druskovich – absent, excused
- Secretary, Paulette Rybarski – present
- Member, Ron Klein – present

Others Present:

- Kim Sinclair, Administrator
- Emilly Hickmott, Deputy Administrator

Approval of Agenda: Hickmott requested the addition of “Health Insurance Renewal” to New Business and “Midnight Farms, LLC Parcel Tax Id. No. 80-10-005-010-00” to PA 116 / Right to Farm/ Farmland Preservation. Motion by Rybarski, 2nd by Klein to accept the November 9, 2022 rescheduled board meeting agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Minutes: Motion by Petersen, 2nd by VanTassel to accept the October 26, 2022 regular board meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None.

Treasurer’s Report:

- Financial statements for October 2022 were presented. Motion by Petersen, 2nd by Rybarski to approve the October 2022 financial statements as presented. Motion carried.
- The bills of November 2022 were presented. Motion by Rybarski, 2nd by Klein to approve the payment of the bills of November 2022 as presented. Motion carried.
- Payroll & Paid Time Off Accumulation Report for October 2022 was presented. Motion by Petersen, 2nd by Rybarski to approve payment of payroll & paid time off accumulation report for October 2022 as presented. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- **USDA Leasing Opportunity:** Sinclair reported that Rural Development has packed their office and is moving many items to a Grand Rapids service center. The District has received no direction regarding the Hartford opportunity with Van Buren County. The USDA is working on finding temporary office space.
- **Red Arrow Property Driveway and Storage:** Sinclair shared that a request was received to harvest the Sudan grass on the Red Arrow property. The request was denied in the interest of improving soil quality. VanTassel reported that he spoke with the architect, and he, Chris Nelson, is interested in meeting with us. VanTassel requested that Mr. Nelson be invited to the December 14, 2022 board meeting.
- **VBCD Foundation:** Sinclair reported that no action has been taken.



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New Business:

- **Policy Review:**
 - **Benefits, Holidays, Leave, & Vacation 2022.01** – Hickmott the Benefits, Holidays, Leave, & Vacation 2022.01 Policy and requested that the Board review and consider taking action at the December 14, 2022 meeting.
 - **Employee Classification 2022.02** – Hickmott presented the Employee Motion by Klein, 2nd by VanTassel to approve the Employee Classification 2022.02 policy and for it to supersede all previous policy versions. Motion carried.
- **Review Draft 2023 Calendar:** Hickmott presented the second draft version of the 2023 Print Calendar. The Board consensus was that the calendar looks great. VanTassel reminded staff to consider the public's interest in text and their preference for larger text.
- **MACD Annual Dues:** Sinclair shared that the MACD annual dues are usually submitted in the amount of \$1,300.00, which is one of the higher levels of commitment. Sinclair discussed the contributions of MACD, including group liability insurance, work to obtain State funding, organization of legislative days and connections. Discussion was had; consensus was to set a platinum standard. Motion by Klein, 2nd by Petersen to pay the platinum-level dues to MACD in the amount of \$1,300.00. Motion carried.
- **Health Insurance Renewal:** Hickmott introduced the 2023 renewal health insurance costs at the same plan. Sinclair reported that some employees have partial premiums covered by grant funding. Sinclair and Hickmott requested direction from the Board so that they can prepare paperwork with the insurance representative in time for the end of the year. Discussion was had. Motion by Klein, 2nd by Rybarski to provide the Priority Health PriorityPPO 250 health insurance plan for qualifying employees, as defined by policy, with the VBCD covering 80% of participating employees' monthly premium and 20% of qualifying dependents' monthly premium. Motion carried.

PA 116 / Right to Farm/ Farmland Preservation:

- Midnight Farms, LLC – Parcel Tax Id No. 80-10-005-010-00: Motion was made by Rybarski, 2nd by Klein to approve the PA 116 request for Midnight Farms, LLC regarding Parcel Tax Id No. 80-10-005-010-00. Motion carried.

Board Director Reports:

- **Chairperson:** None. **Vice Chairperson:** Petersen expressed appreciation for the policies. **Treasurer:** None. **Secretary:** None. **Member :** None.

Van Buren Conservation District Staff Reports: All written reports are expected to be distributed virtually by November 16, 2022.

- **Deputy Administrator's Report:** written report. **Administrator's Report:** Sinclair shared that the CISMA Coordinator has been helping the Berrien Conservation District Director write a GLRI grant for a park in Benton Harbor, and she provided a written report. **Ag Conservation/Water Quality Projects Report:** written. **CISMA Report:** written. **Education & Water Quality Report:** written. **MAEAP Report:**



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written. **NACD/NRCS TA Report:** written. **Outreach Report:** written. **Produce Safety Report:** written. **Resource Recovery Report:** written.

Cooperating Agency Reports:

- **FSA Report:** None. **Land Preservation Board Report:** None. **MDARD Report:** written. **MSUE Report:** None. **NRCS:** None. **Van Buren Conservation District (VBCD) Foundation:** None.

Other Correspondence: None.

Next Board Meeting: Special Board Meeting | November 9, 2022 | 11:30 AM | VBCD Office | 1035 E Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079

Adjournment: Motion by Klein, 2nd by Petersen to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 AM. Motion carried.

APPROVED:

Signature

Date