



LEWIS & CLARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

790 Colleen Street • Helena, Montana 59601 • 449-5000 ext. 5

Regular Meeting Minutes Lambkins Restaurant September 12, 2019 9:30 am

Call to order – the meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeff Ryan at 9:30 a.m. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Stan Frasier, Jeanette Nordahl and Sarah Howe-Cobb. Also in attendance were David Martin, Tracy Wendt, Dustin Ramoie, Christian Lehnert, Spencer Stark, Fred Skierka, and Chris Evans. Kevin Stone joined the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Motion by Frasier to approve the minutes as sent, second by Howe-Cobb, motion carried.

Motion by Nordahl to approve the financials as presented and to pay all the bills, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

Correspondence

City of East Helena subdivision

Letters from BOR and ACOE about work done on Canyon Ferry without a permit.

Public Comment-No comment

Reports

NRCS – John George was present to give the NRCs report. He and Diane have been in the field a lot with contracts. They didn't see much of a slowdown this year with field season. Nancy Sweeny in Whitehall retired in August and Nate is currently on leave so John and Diane are also covering that office. The application deadline has passed and they're getting the initial planning going on new applications.

At the last board meeting the board tabled discussion of the MOU and Cooperative work agreements with NRCS. NRCS is working on getting edits made for 3rd draft. Tom Watson is not planning to do edits with individual CDs, he wants the same agreements for every office as appropriate. The MOU covers the general work agreement, the Cooperative Agreement/Statement of Work will cover shared office space etc. and will have reporting requirements associated with it.

John let the board know that he has been notified that he got the AC job in Spokane. He's not sure yet when it's going to happen, but it will 6 weeks from the time he gets his formal notice. He'll be in Oregon for elk season in October. He should be here for at least one more board meeting. He's discussed the situation with Mindy Gauthier and they will be filling his position, but it might be a while. The Whitehall DC position has been advertised though, so that's good news. He and Mindy have discussed plans for acting DCs. Dave Martin asked about staffing in the Helena FO, and John said that the office should be back to two hopefully by the first of the year, but he's not sure how that will work. Because John's position supervises Teton and Jefferson

Counties, the workload is going to be tough. Workload will likely decrease with the transition to focused conservation.

SRWG – Tracy was present to talk about the Sun River Watershed. She thanked the board for supporting the 25th anniversary events. They had about 30 people on the tour, they started and ended on time. The party at the Sun Canyon Lodge was a good event. They had 12 different groups sponsor the event, some of which had never contributed to the watershed group before. Around 40 different businesses and individuals contributed items for the auction. Tracy got to meet people Rollo has worked with over the years as well as a bunch of new people.

This week she submitted the application for a Big Sky Watershed Corps member. If successful that person will assist with the weed and water monitoring program. She is hoping that they qualify for the MWCC funding to help pay for that. They were recently awarded \$20,000 through the 223 program for the CMZ mapping project. The CD supplied a letter of support for some additional funding through the Cross Foundation to take that project all the way to the Missouri River.

The SRWG board had a meeting yesterday and approved a project on Muddy Creek that Tracy will be looking at getting started. Jeff asked about techniques they're looking at for that project. Tracy said that it's going to start with fencing the cattle off the bank and possibly some rock barbs. They're hoping to do some revegetation in the Muddy Creek "canyon" area, minimizing the use of rock in the area. Replacement of culverts and looking at long term solutions for reducing flows on Muddy Creek. Weeds will probably be a big focus for next year. Maddens and some other landowners have contacted her about weed issues. The Working Groups are both still active, with meetings planned at the end of October. They're doing a fish rescue at Fort Shaw when they shut off the water. Tracy said she is way over her mileage budget for this year already so may not be coming to CD meetings the rest of the year.

Dave Martin chimed in that 2020 is going to be really exciting for this group. He underlined that the money LCCD supported the group with this year was very well spent. He had some words of praise for Tracy on how she balanced the "boring" organizational retooling with keeping projects going. Dave asked at yesterday's meeting if they have proper representation, if they have landowner buy in. He thinks it would be good to have the 3 CDs meet and talk about working together. Evans discussed the recent communication from Katie Vivian, FWP in Choteau, about the Floweree Canal where it crosses the Sun River. This underlines the need for a collaborative meeting between the 3 CDs about permitting and other concerns. Dave also thanked Sarah for recommending that he get involved with the SRWG board and says it's been a great experience.

MRCDC – Jeff Ryan talked about the MRCDC. He said that the new coordinator is doing a good job and that the tour was a good one. They had a meeting in Helena about the Living on the Bank website and are close to finalizing that project.

WQPD/LHWG – Stan said they had a report from Jennifer. They announced that Randall Camp has left and they've hired a new person. Public Works has split into a couple of different sections now. Stan said he cornered someone about the work up at Chessman Reservoir. They did significant forestry work in the area, leaving it almost completely bare.

Jeff said that the LHWG gave a report. They didn't have the watershed festival again this year. Ryan said that in the strategic plan has a section on outreach and that it's a shame that they haven't had the Festival at Women's Park like they had before, coordinated with a Farmer's Market.

Supervisor Reports –

Ryan had a call from Bob Putsch about his stream project that he did a few years ago. Jeff

went out and took a look at the project. It has held up pretty well, and didn't encroach at all into his field. He said it was good to see that it held up so well, in light of the fact that the project on Sieben went out the previous year.

Frasier viewed a complaint on some work that was done on the forest service on Lazyman Gulch. Evans contacted Heather Degeest who recently let us know that the contractor had been back up to clean up the mess they made. He needs to go take another look at that and another potential problem in the same area.

Howe-Cobb said that GID has a bad black eye in the community by draining Willow Creek Reservoir completely without working with FWP. FWP has spent thousands stocking Willow Creek and could have helped to save the fishery. They are still dealing with people and their problems from the floods.

Martin said that since he attended the MACD Spring Board meeting, he has been tracking a lot of the communications. LCCD paid out \$5000 for a strategic plan in 2018. There was a draft which Dan McGowan was supposed to review and had a presentation set to go for the Spring Board meeting when that plan was derailed. Right now, the plan doesn't really make much sense if used as a road map for the group. They are asking for comments on that plan. SWCDMI hired a director, Stephanie Adams. She was interviewed for the MRCDC position and was offered the job, but she wanted to live and work out of Helena. Martin thinks she has potential to do a really good job if the organization can figure out where they are going.

Augusta Flood Workgroup

Evans gave a brief report on where the CD activities are for that effort. The contractor will be in the area the week of September 23 meeting with 14 landowners. There was not enough time to get to everyone who'd indicated interest. Evans has a new page on our website that has updates on what's going on with the area. Dustin Ramoie said he's convening the floodplain subcommittee group soon. Evans will remind the other groups that they need to meet soon. Sarah would like to be on the floodplain group. Evans needs to send out a reminder that the next work group meeting will be pushed to January due to the report not coming out until December. **MACD – Area Meeting and Convention –** Evans passed around the agendas for both events. We have 4 rooms reserved for the Convention and can get another if it's needed. Jeanette asked for more information and said she might be interested in going. Sarah, Jeff, Dave and Chris are currently planning to attend.

RMFWRT – Kevin Stone is the summer coordinator for the roundtable and said that they partnered with the USFS this year on fire recovery money and used that to focus on the southern portion of their project area releasing insects in the Dearborn. Other releases went on Forest Service property along the Beaver Willow road and Sun Canyon. They did some additional releases with Cinnabar foundation funds and put those across the project area, including the Sun River area. They were able to fund all of the administrative work. All of the other funding received went to insect purchases. They had hoped to get some St. John's Wort biocontrol but weren't able to get that done. He said that the Smith Creek trail out of Augusta also has ventenata. Kevin passed around a sample of the invasive grass and talked about how concerned Mark Korte is about it. Looking forward, the group is looking at a directive signed at the federal level that directed feds to work with the states to improve big game habitat. FWP has 4 priority areas, including the Continental Divide to the Rocky Mountain Front. The group is trying to figure out how to work with that program as they move forward. They've noticed that there is a trend toward habitat and big game.

L&C County – Dustin said they've been working on the outreach to the community about floodplain permitting. They had 9 violations that they've been working on. That number is likely

to grow still this year. Gravel pits have been part of Floodplain Permitting this year which has been an interesting change from the typical. The Emergency Preparedness Fair is happening on Saturday at the Fairgrounds. County planning wise, they're getting ready roll out proposals for zoning in the Helena Valley. Dustin is also planning to leave the county soon and will be working at FWP as the fishing access site coordinator. Spencer will be the contact for the Floodplain Permitting in the future.

Weed District—Christian was at the meeting to talk about Weed District happenings. He said that they had to hire an all new weed crew this year. He said they were a great group to work with, a wide range of individuals. They got over every road at least once this year except for Elk Creek Road since it was closed for so long. They had a good year with biocontrol. He didn't get any toadflax bugs this year, but everyone on the spotted knapweed list got insects. They had over 250 noncompliance calls this year so have been busy with that. Typical calls are around 150. Calls have slowed, but they are still getting them. FWP out of Great Falls contacted Christian and the county will be spraying all the FWP fishing access sites in the county starting next year.

Christian said that the Dearborn Spray day went well. The Forest Service and the Weed District were there as well as the landowners. He said they sprayed a lot of weeds. Jeff asked how many gallons of chemical the Weed District uses, Christian said that that information is compiled for a year-end report.

They did their Forest Service contracts and MDT has reached out about the County taking care of secondary roads in the future.

Christian said that they went up Beaver Creek and found St. Johns Wort on a Forest Service project.

Christian said that *ventenata* is now listed and has been found on highways 12 (MacDonald Pass), 287 (Augusta to Bowman's Corner) and 200 (outside of Lincoln). MDT has sprayed and most of the patches are small. Timing of spray is similar to cheat grass, there's a specific chemical that they're pushing for range purposes,

Old Business

Board meeting location discussion & October's meeting-Howe-Cobb said that we need to review why we're doing the meetings the way we are. Howe-Cobb would like to see June for Augusta, July for Dearborn, August for Lincoln and back to Helena for the rest of the year. Motion by Howe-Cobb, second by Frasier, motion carried. October meeting in the morning at 9:30 in the morning due to some difficulty scheduling the next Floodplain meeting. Revisit idea of purchasing tablets for board – tabled to October's meeting.

New Business

Need to print some handouts for the Soil Health event at the library-approved.
Newsletter-Evans requested newsletter articles from anyone who wanted to submit them.

310 Permit Applications

Extension request for Gene Swanson-motion by Howe-Cobb to approve a 1 year extension, second by Frasier; motion carried.

EME-01-19 Melaney

Location: Middle Fork Dearborn River

When: April 19-21, 2019

Purpose: Flood repair

Material: rocks on cut bank, 10yards of rock, with excavator, all work done from bank

Team report comments:

Decision: Motion by Howe-Cobb to approve work as completed, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

EME-02-19 Ingersoll

Location: Middle fork Dearborn River

When:

Purpose: Clean debris out of stream so it can utilize channel

Team report comments:

Decision: Motion by Howe-Cobb to approve work as completed, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

EME-06-19 Melaney

Location: Middle Fork Dearborn River

When: May

Purpose: Flood damage-needed to save irrigation project

Team report comments:

Decision: Motion by Howe-Cobb to approve work as completed, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

EME-12-19 DBX

Location: Joslin Creek

When: 7/9/19

Purpose: Flood recovery

Team report comments:

Decision: Motion by Howe-Cobb to table pending discussion with Ron Ingersoll, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

EME-14-19 Bean Family LLC

Location: Dearborn River

When: 7/24/19

Purpose: flood recover-irrigation diversion plugged

Team report comments:

Decision: Motion by Howe-Cobb to approve work as completed, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

LC-35-19 Bean Family LLC

Location: NF Dearborn River

When: Annual maintenance would take place sometime around June every year

Purpose: annual maintenance to irrigation ditch

Team report comments: remove/ disturb minimum amount to get water, annual maintenance permit should be approved.

Decision: motion by Howe-Cobb to approve with modifications and approve a 3-year annual maintenance permit to determine effectiveness, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

LC-36-19 NWE

Location: Missouri River

When: 10/1 to 12/31

Purpose: repair the boat barrier and develop new ramp and portage route at Holter Dam

Team report comments: no inspection: Strainer recommended that they utilize standard turbidity mitigation during construction and let the CD know any major modifications that the ACOE puts on the permit.

Decision: Motion by Howe-Cobb to approve with the modifications as recommended, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

LC-37-19 Wirth

Location: Little Prickly Pear Creek

When: 11/1-12/31

Purpose: maintain stream elevation above railroad culvert/headgate so as to keep irrigation water in ditch

Team Report Comments:

Decision: Motion by Howe-Cobb to table pending inspection, second by Frasier; motion carried.

LC-38-19-BBCTU

Location: Grantier Spr. Creek

When: 9/15/19-4/3/20

Purpose: improve instream riparian and spawning habitat for trout populations utilizing Grantier Spring Creek

Team Report Comments: Instream work window for westslope cutthroat trout and brown trout-No instream work from April 15 to July 15 and no instream work from November 1 to March 15; minimize machinery entering/crossing the channel as much as possible

Decision: motion by Howe-Cobb to approve with the recommended modifications, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

Other Business

Leave for Administrator-Evans updated the jury duty issue for the board and how DNRC directed to deal with leave/pay etc.

Calendar of upcoming events

September 14 (Saturday) Family Preparedness Fair-Rolling Rivers Trailer

September 16-Rolling Rivers Trailer training – Helena Field Office
September 24-MACD Area 6 meeting-Ruby Valley CD
October 10-CD meeting Helena 1 pm
October 12-Reading/Soils event at the library
November 14-CD meeting Helena 1 pm
November 18-21-Annual Convention Kalispell
December 12-CD meeting Helena 1 pm

Announcements

Next meeting – October 10, 2019 9:30 a.m. at the Helena Field Office.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

APPROVED

Presiding Officer

Date

Recorder

Date