



LEWIS & CLARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

Regular Meeting Minutes
USDA Service Center Conference Room
790 Colleen Street, Helena MT
February 13, 2020 at 1 pm

Call to order – the meeting was called to order by chairman Jeff Ryan at 1 pm. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Ron Ingersoll, Scott Blackman, Steve Granzow, John Baucus and Sarah Howe-Cobb. Also in attendance were Tracy Wendt, Autumn Christenson, Matt Barnes and Chris Evans.

Motion by Granzow to approve the minutes as sent, second by Howe-Cobbe; motion carried.
Motion by Blackman to approve the financial statement and pay the outstanding bills, second by Howe-Cobb. Motion carried.

Introductions were made.

Correspondence

Open house in Lincoln
Survey from the Montana Biological weed Control group

Public Comment-There was none

Reports

NRCS – Ryan Mar was present to make the NRCS report. He's been in the office for 3 or so weeks. Diane is coming on Fridays, but has a workload to deal with in Whitehall. Applications for the Targeted Implementation Plan that is in current action in the county. There are 6 applications and 4 of them need inventories. The Capitol 360, we have 12 applications and 5 still need inventories. There are a lot of applications. With the new Farm Bill there've been a lot of changes to rules which may contribute to the new applications. The new area-based engineer will be starting next week. He has been an intern for a couple of years. The DC position (supervisory) has closed and they did the interviews this week. Darcy or Diane's position was announced but won't close until April. Jeff asked if the DC position was wide open or just NRCS. Ryan thinks it was an internal one. If the Supervisory DC position goes to the Choteau office, then we'll be back at square one again waiting for NRCS to advertise the DC position in Lewis & Clark County.

SRWG – the group is working on defining the Channel Migration Zone project. There has been discussion about adding Elk Creek as an addendum to that project, from the confluence of Smith Creek down to the Sun River. Tracy and Chris have talked about the SRWG applying for a 223 grant to get that project underway. Tracy has also met with MARS about their services and the potential for funding for the Sun River Watershed. Tracy and Chris will work on moving forward on that project as well. Tracy is applying for a watershed management grant which would pay for her time to work on these projects to do a lot of the legwork that will be required to move

forward. As part of that application she wants to add the gauge page back onto the website similar to the Bighole watershed web site.

Their Water Management Working Group meeting is the 25th of March from 1-4 in Great Falls. She'll send the agenda to Chris to send out or have for the next board meeting. They have a board meeting the following day that everyone is welcome to attend.

MRCDC – Casey is resigning due to health issues, so they are looking for a new coordinator. The quarterly meeting is coming up with some long-range planning. Autumn interjected that she's the new Missouri River Watershed person with the Healthy Watershed Consortium. It's a new initiative to gather resource concerns and practices to improve the health of the watershed and sub-basins. She is currently attending a variety of meetings to get a feel for partnerships etc. She is working for MCC as a joint effort with NRCS and MRCDC. She said that cost share programs aren't the only thing she works with, she can also gather ideas on projects that work to just convey the information to people as they need it. She said that she thinks this is a new type of position.

WQPD/ LHWG – last meeting of the WQPD was cancelled, the next meeting is next week. Lake Helena Watershed Group has their annual meeting coming up at Montana Wild on February 20.

Weed District – written report from Christian

Supervisor Reports

Sarah gave a report about the January 29 meeting in Augusta regarding the Elk Creek issues.

Steve said that the houses are going in fast across the road from him.

John said that the Sleeping Giant Ranch sold to someone from Canada. It's under a conservation easement in its entirety.

Scott said that this is his last meeting. He said that things his way have been quiet.

Ron said that things are quiet his way too so far.

Jeff said that he went to the MWCC meeting a couple of weeks ago. They had 150 people there, directed at watershed groups primarily. There was a handful of CD people there. We are a partner in that group and he thinks it's really important that the two groups work together on a more regular basis.

Jeff was out on Beaver Creek this morning looking at the restoration project that they're looking at. The Forest Service would like to get some funds for the vegetative side of the project. Jeff will bring it to the next meeting for a board vote. Phase 1 will be happening this year, late summer, with Phase 2 starting next year.

Jeff also talked about the METG follow-up inspection that he went out on. This work is the last part where they are closing the high-water diversion and will be filling in that channel.

MACD/SWCDMI-Evans gave a quick update on the latest from them, including the potential merger project. We also received the dues notice from MACD for 2020 based on the 2019 taxable values for the county.

Motion to pay 25% of the dues, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

Elk Creek Flood Task Force-most of the report was given by Sarah Howe-Cobb in her report. The meetings on the 29th were pretty well attended with primarily the landowners who participated in the assessment at the morning session and we nearly ran out of chairs in the afternoon session. Evans sent a follow-up letter to all landowners in the watershed to let them know that we will move forward with grant/funding applications when/if we know they want to do work.

Others

Matt Barnes was here to get an idea of what's going on with the CD. M&M worked on some of the METG project that Jeff talked about.

New Business

Pull Your Share – Tracy gave a run-down on the project and how it has developed. Motion by Howe-Cobb to approve \$2000, second by Granzow; discussion about last year’s expense. Motion carried.

Blackman’s retirement – Scott is retiring after so many years of service to the Conservation District. His contributions have been many over the years and he will be deeply missed.

Motion by Blackman to appoint John Baucus in his place, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

310 Permit Applications

LC-01-20 Wirth – motion by Ingersoll to approve with FWP recommended modifications: Ensure overflow channel is maintained on river right bank and elevations allow for water to pass bridge and access road during high flows; armor the overflow area to reduce erosion during flooding; Use minimum amount of rip rap necessary to protect against erosion, in order to not reduce channel capacity and don’t exceed a 1.5:1 slope; mix rip-rap size (not all 3 foot) to ensure proper seating of rock; Reclaim disturbed areas with native seed mix. And to waive the 15-day waiting period. Second by Howe-Cobb, motion carried.

LC-02-20 Nilan Water Users – Motion by Ingersoll, second by Howe-Cobb to approve with recommended modifications, waiving the 15-day waiting period. Modifications are place riprap on downstream edges and fill in some downstream pools; no time restrictions; leave some downstream pools for fish passage. Motion carried.

LC-03-20 Nilan Water Users – After lengthy discussion motion to table by Granzow, second by Ingersoll, pending a 2nd onsite inspection with Jeff Ryan; motion carried.

Calendar of upcoming events

January-March 9 – election paperwork in-Stan, Scott and Ron

February 13-CD meeting Helena 1 pm

February 13-Energy Summit hosted by DNRC Billings

February 18-Whitehall Applicator Training

February 18-Lincoln Open House-Heart of the Rockies Initiative-Rural Development

February 20-LHWG Annual Meeting

February - Volunteer Monitoring Program by MWCC

February 29-310 surveys due to Jason Garber

March 3-4-Montana Water Summit

March 9-MACD Board Conf. Call 7:30 am

March 10-12-Western Collaborative Conservation network

March 11-13-Assoc. of Mt. Floodplain Mgrs. Conf. Kalispell

March 12-CD meeting Helena 1 pm

March 25-WMWG for the SRWG 1-4 pm Gt. Falls

March 30-31-Soil Health innovations

March 9-Supervisor Candidate forms due to County

April 13-MACD Board Conf. Call 7:30 am

April 14-Stream Restoration Committee Meeting

April 21-23-NRDP Conference-Fairmont Hot Springs

April 22-District Development, 223 and Education mini grants due

May 15-RDG grants due (DNRC)

May 15-RRGL apps due (DNRC)

June 15-17-Montana Range Days

Aug 3-6-Montana Youth Range Camp

Announcements

Next meeting – March 12, 2020, 1pm at the USDA Service Center in Helena.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.

APPROVED

Presiding Officer

Date

Recorder

Date