



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
March 12, 2020 at 1 pm

Call to order – Chairman Jeff Ryan called the meeting to order at 1 pm. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Steve Granzow and John Baucus. Jeanette Nordahl joined the board on conference call. Also in attendance were David Martin, Christian Lehnert, Connor Mertz, Autumn Coleman, Tracy Wendt, Emma Kelsick, Paula Gunderson, Ryan Mar, Katie Vivian, Sean Clancy and Chris Evans.

Introductions were made.

Motion by Granzow to approve as sent, second by Baucus; motion carried.

Motion by Granzow to approve the financial statement and pay the outstanding bills, second by Baucus; motion carried

Public Comment-there was none.

Reports

NRCS – Ryan Mar was present as were Paula Gunderson and Sean Clancy. Ryan introduced Sean who is the new area engineer covering the 3-county work unit. He'll be assisting the whole area but is permanently placed in Helena. Paula is the new Supervisory DC; she'll still be in Choteau, and the agency will be advertising for a DC in the Helena office. The Soil Con position closes in April so that position should be filled soon. There will be someone covering when Ryan moves to South Dakota. Contracting: there are 40 existing contracts that need to be laid out and certified; there are 5 apps in the TIP and 14 in the Capitol 360 project. Nate from Whitehall is coming up to assist with inventories since there are some deadlines in April. There should be more than enough applications to spend those fund pools this year. Paula said that for CSPs there are some FY 16 contracts that can be renewed.

If the office wants to put another TIP together, it needs to be completed by April for the 2021 FY. The long-range plan is nearly complete, Paula and Chris have both been working on that. Tracy said that the RMFWRT put in for a NFWF grant. If they aren't successful with that, they have all of the information together that could translate into a TIP. She can work with Paula on that project. Evans met with the MCC/Big Sky Watershed Corps folks about the possibility of having a riparian grazing workshop in the Elk Creek Watershed. That workshop could take place late July or early August. Connor and Chris will work on that together.

SRWG – Tracy was present to make her report. They have a Water Management Working Group meeting coming up on March 25th when they'll be discussing stream gauges and SNOTEL sites, funding, priorities etc. She'll also be discussing a new page for their website depicting current river conditions. The old website had a page showing reservoir heights etc. The new page would

have river condition information for recreation information etc. Their next board meeting is the 26th of March at 10 am. All the members and stakeholders will go through their list of potential projects etc. and prioritization of projects. The 2nd half of the meeting will be board administrative business.

The Cascade CD applied for a watershed management grant for work on the Sun, the Sun River Watershed Group also applied for a watershed management grant. There will be time in that grant for Tracy to do project development, for the Sun River Watershed Group to do fundraising etc.

The Pull Your Share program is now 500 students with 2 sites in Lewis & Clark County that will be pulled. The Augusta School is getting involved and will be taking care of a site at Benchmark. The SRWG is participating in the Great Falls Gives campaign. Their Big Sky Watershed Corps member, Emma, will be with them through November. Her time will be spent on Water Quality. Emma started in January and has been staying busy on projects. Water Quality monitoring, Muddy Creek landowner citizen science monitoring, and work with the Cascade CD to host a rain barrel workshop the end of August or early September are all projects that she is working on. Coca Cola is donating barrels and the River Network is also donating to help make rain barrels.

MRCDC – They had the quarterly meeting a few weeks ago in Lewistown. They worked on the annual workplan. Jeff will be involved in the naked riverbank program, which will have a connection with the Living on the Bank project. The council has hired a new coordinator (Liv Stavick) who will be working out of Sidney. Jeff thinks she will be a pretty good coordinator. She's had some experience working with the Farm Bureau. The first naked riverbank meeting is the 17th in Great Falls.

WQPD/ LHWG – there were some reports on the well monitoring in the North Hills, which indicated no decline in well water, the year after 2 record rainfalls in a row. They are looking at making a connection to the North Hills RID (behind Bob's Valley Market). There was some discussion by the county commission about the county zoning proposals. They also discussed the gravel pit in the valley. There was discussion about how the pit could impact flooding. Groundwater contamination is also a concern, as is potential reclamation issues.

Weed District – Christian said there has already been a weed complaint (tumbleweeds) this spring. There has been a lot of interest in using the no-till seeder. Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant hearings were at the beginning of March. Judith Ann Vincent had a 41,000-acre, multi-landowner (6-10) project area application in for review. Spray crew hires are beginning, with 6 of 8 from last year returning. Those crews will run May through August for the most part. John Baucus asked about the biological for houndstongue, highlighting his concerns on the economic impact on sheep ranchers when the burrs get into their wool. Christian isn't sure if it's into Pondera or Teton Counties yet.

They have some spray days scheduled and will be participating in some Ag Day events. They're looking for a Lincoln Area Weed representative.

Supervisor Reports

Jeff said that the Spokane Creek Willow wall demonstration will be coming up. They're planning the willow cutting for that project on Head lane the 18th and hope to cut a couple thousand willow for that project which will go into the cooler at the Forest Service. It is hoped that the Spokane Creek project will happen in April pending any complications. There is an engineer lined up for the no-rise analysis on Monday. Jeff attended the Montana Water Summit, around 300 people were there. A guy from Washington State gave a report on what they're doing. Several attendees requested that they be added to the Stream Restoration Committee mailing list. Jeff said that

there was pretty good Conservation District presence at the Summit.

Granzow-houses and gravel pits. On the Red Fox Crossing subdivision, a 50,000-gallon retention pond was required.

Baucus-FWP wants to put some more willow into the project on Little Prickly Pear where there was some damage after the last few years of flood damage. He said that teasel has moved in since the project, probably brought in on the equipment used on that project.

Martin-He went to the BSWC training in Bozeman which was to help set up a Rolling River Trailers training for those members in Bozeman. He requested funds for travel and lodging. (late April). While Dave was in India, Gayla appointed him to the Reorganization Committee. The group is stepping back a bit and are looking at how they can provide services to the CDs. There will be a joint MACD/SWCDMI board meeting in April sometime in Lewistown and travel to Great Falls for prep work.

MACD/SWCDMI-Dave Martin's report had some info on this. The most recent ED was let go and there was actually a process used for it this time. We have paid some of our dues, he recommends that we track our time that we devote to MACD and track those hours.

East Helena CTE-Evans said that they had a recent meeting and some planning was done for the upcoming ag day and career day in the spring. The freshman class students are really excited about it. The group is also looking at a required community needs assessment to qualify for the Perkins funding.

New Business

Grant applications-223 applications, one for the Montana Youth Range Camp, one for the Sun River Watershed Group. Motion by Baucus to approve, second by Granzow; motion carried.

Heart of the Rockies-Evans and Farris-Olsen met a while back to talk about that project and some areas where the CD might be able to support their efforts. Erin may be requesting a support letter for their projects at some point.

Beaver Creek Forest Service project on Beaver Creek on Hauser--Ryan discussed the project a bit and why the Forest Service would need RRGL funding assistance. Motion by Granzow to approve sponsorship if the group gets an application together, second by Baucus; motion carried.

310 Permit Applications

EME-01-20 Ingersoll – tabled pending inspection

LC-03-20 Nilan Water Users – Motion by Granzow, second by Baucus to approve with modifications as noted on the Team Report, limiting all of the work except the rip-rap to a one-year permit. The rip-rap can be covered under a 3-year maintenance permit. 15 day waiting period is also waived. Motion carried.

LC-04-20 Diamond Construction – motion by Granzow to approve, second by Baucus, waiving the 15-day waiting period. Motion carried.

LC-05-20 Young – motion by Granzow, second by Baucus to approve, waiving the 15-day waiting period with modifications as noted on the team report from FWP. Motion carried.

LC-06-20 Roos/Snowberry – Motion by Granzow, second by Baucus to approve, waiving the 15-day waiting period; motion carried.

Extension LC-02-19 Claassen – motion to extend for 1 year by Nordahl, second by Ryan; motion carried.

Extension LC-05-19--motion to extend for 1 year by Nordahl, second by Ryan; motion carried.

Extension LC-07-19--motion to extend for 1 year by Nordahl, second by Ryan; motion carried.

Extension LC-17-19--motion to extend for 1 year by Nordahl, second by Ryan; motion carried.

Calendar of upcoming events

- March 11-13-Assoc. of Mt. Floodplain Mgrs. Conf. Kalispell
- March 12-CD meeting Helena 1 pm
- March 14-Farmer Veteran Coalition Conference
- March 25-WMWG for the SRWG 1-4 pm Gt. Falls
- March 30-31-Soil Health innovations
- April 13-MACD Board Conf. Call 7:30 am
- 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)
- May 22-Flood Awareness Day
- June 15-17-Montana Range Days
- Aug 3-6-Montana Youth Range Camp
- Oct 14-16 MWCC Watershed Symposium-Copper King, Butte

Announcements

Next meeting – April 9, 2020, 1pm at the USDA Service Center in Helena.
Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3 pm.

APPROVED

Presiding Officer

Date

Recorder

Date