



LEWIS & CLARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

Regular Meeting Minutes Via Conference Call Due to COVID-19 Pandemic April 9, 2020 1 pm

Call to order – the meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeff Ryan. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Ron Ingersoll, Sarah Howe-Cobb, Stan Frasier (joined the meeting at 1:15) and Steve Granzow. Also in attendance were Tracy Wendt, Autumn Christenson, David Martin, Jennifer McBroom, Blake Sexton, Connor Mertz and Michaela, Ryan Mar and Chris Evans.

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

Motion by Granzow to approve the financial statement, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

Signature authority-motion by Ryan, second by Howe-Cobb to let Evans sign checks and other documents with a single signature after scanning and emailing copies of bills to Jeff Ryan, Sarah Howe-Cobb and Jeanette Nordahl; motion carried

Correspondence-none

Public Comment-none

Reports

NRCS – Evans had emailed the snowpack report for the state. Ryan Mar was present to discuss the COVID-19 situation. Only one person can be in the office at a time, so Sean and Ryan have been switching off. No customers are allowed inside the building. Appointments have to be made for field work and other business through the end of April. The USDA is trying to maximize teleworking. FSA has both Nina and Kathy in the office at times. Ryan said they are still ranking applications, and he has cost estimates on every application. Ryan said there are 16 applications for about ½ a million dollars in cost share. Ryan’s last day in the office is Friday. Jason Saari will be in the office to cover a 120-day detail starting on Monday. Granzow asked Ryan where he’s moving, and Ryan said he reports to South Dakota in late April.

SRWG – Tracy Wendt was on the call to make the SRWG report. She is working from home as usual and is working on getting funding in line for the upcoming monitoring season. Emma is working on the rain barrel event that’s planned for August. Tracy is working on the Pull your Share program which is a school program so obviously may not happen depending on what happens with school closures. The 223 grant results haven’t been announced yet. Tracy discussed the upcoming Muddy Creek project. They’re hoping to use that project funding as match for any RCPP proposals. The money will allow them to look at past assessments etc. for Muddy Creek and recommended projects and will help fund any further data collection necessary. The group would then use that work to apply for the next step in funding to pursue funding on projects.

MRCDC – Evans sent out an email to the board with the MRCDC report. Jeff Ryan said that part of the strategic planning is working on the naked river bank project.

WQPD/ LHWG –Jennifer McBroom was on the call to discuss that they didn’t have their

monthly meeting in February. The main reason that she's on the call is to talk to the board about a project on Grizzly Gulch. The project planning is now complete, but now an application needs to be written to pay for the implementation. Jennifer talked about the plans for the area. Motion by Frasier to write a support letter, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

Lake Helena Watershed Group-The new chair for the group would like to come talk to the board at our May meeting about what's new with the group.

Jennifer said that the Tryan project that was done in the winter ended up using frozen sod mats. Because of that, some of them didn't lay right so there was some erosion behind some of the areas. Tomorrow Allen McNeal and Streamworks will be doing a small section of repairs on the area to fix that section.

Weed District – no report

Supervisor Reports

Jeff said that materials have been ordered for the Spokane Creek Project. They went out with the laser level and did some survey work but still need some transects for the floodplain permit. The project will be delayed to late fall at this point. Jeff said that the stream project that was done on Little Prickly Pear Creek was largely damaged in 2018. Jeff and his grandson cut a bunch of willows and they're planning to install willow Monday with sprigging and some bundled willows.

Sarah Howe-Cobb— They are half-way through calving and she's trying to balance the work at the Health Department with calving.

Dave Martin— Dave has been soliciting to have an outside review done on our website. He has a couple of people who have indicated interest, one offered some free work, one he's worked with before and so he sent out a general description of what we're looking for. So far, we're looking at about \$300 to do the review. They mentioned that the board needs to really know what we have to offer the public and also that there are metrics/analytical reporting features to review. Dave asked if the board would approve up to \$500 for a review. Motion by Ryan, second by Howe-Cobb to approve up to \$500 for the review; motion carried.

Dave said the final report for the MACD Reorganization Committee should be ready for the Spring Board meeting in June. It currently looks like the organizations will merge under the banner of MACD. Dave said that at one of the last meetings there was concern that people wouldn't buy into the change and they thought it would be best to push the effort into 2021. The consensus ended up being that sooner would most likely be better. Dave just wanted to make sure that the board is okay with what he's doing with the committee.

MACD/SWCDMI- Evans updated the board on the MACD Education Committee that she sat in on at the Convention. She volunteered to work with that committee doing minutes and helping out otherwise. There was a meeting yesterday via conference call that indicated good progress.

Dave mentioned that the financial transparency of the MACD/SWCDMI has improved with financials being posted on the website.

Elk Creek Flood Task Force— Connor Mertz gave an update on our activities for planning a riparian grazing workshop. Tuesday July 21 is the tentative date for the session. There will be a morning session at the youth center with lunch and then a field session. Dr. Clayton Marlowe from MSU is the hopeful main speaker. Autumn said that she wanted to give a figurative high-five on the project that Connor and Chris are working on.

East Helena CTE-This group continues to meet regularly, far more often than required. Karl Christians is chair and Evans is secretary for another year. At present the main focus of the group is to complete a community needs assessment to be eligible for the Perkins grant in the fall.

Healthy Watershed Consortium-Autumn said that they are working on putting together a quarterly report for their members. They’re working on the Naked Riverbanks project. They are working on a communications plan as well. She’s looking for tips on that project. They are keeping in touch with NRCS programs and hope to assist with doing outreach to get information on those programs out to landowners.

Old Business

Jeff talked about the Spokane Creek Project in his report above.

New Business

Blake Sexton was on the call to talk about the Pollinator Grant Application that PPLT would like to get for their Ten Mile Park area. Jeff Ryan said he’d like to see a reference to the Conservation District on the signage if possible. Motion by Frasier to support the grant, second by Granzow; motion carried.

Helena Area Rolling River Trailer-Evans detailed the situation with the RRT committee and the fact that DNRC is not interested in sponsoring the trailer. The check-out for it is done through MACD currently.. Evans asked the Board if they would be interested in sponsoring the trailer with the scheduling/leasing done through MACD and Evans and some of the board would assist with managing the maintenance of the trailer. Winter storage would still be at DNRC. Motion by Ryan to offer to sponsor, second by Frasier; motion carried.

310 Permit Applications

EME-01-20 Ingersoll – tabled pending inspection

LC-07-20 Land Escapes – Jeff Ryan discussed the application and went on the site inspection.

Motion by Ryan to approve with modifications of incorporating vegetation and to waive the 15-day waiting period, second by Granzow; motion carried.

LC-08-20 Northwestern Energy – motion by Frasier to approve waiving the 15-day waiting period, second by Ryan; motion carried.

Other Business

Administrator Appraisal – evaluation completed by the board prior to the meeting. Motion by Ryan to give a 4% raise retroactive to the beginning of the year, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

Hiring plans – on hold pending the end of the virus issues.

Announcements

Next meeting – May 14, 2020, 1pm at the USDA Service Center in Helena, or via conference call if the building is still closed.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:27 pm.

APPROVED

Presiding Officer

Date

Recorder

Date