



# 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 June 11, 2020 1 pm

**Call to order**—the meeting was called to order by chairman Jeff Ryan at 1 pm. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Jeanette Nordahl, Steve Granzow, Sarah Howe-Cobb and John Baucus. Stan Frasier joined the meeting at 2 pm. Also in attendance were David Martin, Karl Christians, Emma Kelsick, Lindsay Volpe, Tracy Wendt, Connor Mertz, Rick Van Dyken and Chris Evans.

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

**Correspondence**-there was none.

**Public Comment**-there was none

### Reports

**NRCS**—Jason Saari was unable to make today's meeting. He's is busy out getting signatures from landowners. Jason was successful getting the Soil Conservationist job at the Field Office. The status of the District Conservationist position is still unknown.

**SRWG**—CMZ map public meeting will be June 23 at 6:30 pm in the park at Sun River. The Weed Whacker Rodeo is July 11 as planned. The CD got a sprayer donated from Murdoch's for that event. Emma let the board know that they are doing a rain barrel day. They're asking participants for a \$40 donation. The RRT guide first draft is nearly finished. She'll have that draft available for anyone to have a look at. Emma would like to meet up with Dave Martin and/or Chris Evans to discuss the Helena Rolling River trailer. Evans has photos to send to Emma of the guts of the trailer and Dave has a lot of photos.

**MRCDC**—Evans sent out the report in the emailed packet for the meeting. Christians said they're meeting on Friday at 11 via conference call. Liv has been working with Dick Iverson. The ACOE wants to do test flows where they vary the cfs to benefit the pallid sturgeon. The challenge is that as the flows rise, the irrigation pump sites may sustain some damage or become inoperable, then when they drop, the sites could be inoperable and be expensive to get back up and running. Liv and Iverson are working on getting ACOE to postpone the activity since it was planned for the heat of the irrigation season. Martin asked if the NRCS funding has specific deliverables and Christians said yes. They're collaborating with the Districts, Local Work Groups and the Milk River Watershed.

**WQPD**—Ryan chaired the last meeting. It was by conference call and was short.

**LHWG**— no report

**Weed District**— no report

### Supervisor Reports

Ryan has been working on joint resolution for one of the local legislators to carry to the session next year, urging FEMA to work with the committee on the streamlining efforts. Christians

supplied a previous resolution that was effective that we can use as a template. Senator Ellis will likely carry that resolution to the session. Christians in his role as Associate Supervisor and on his own time, and Evans are working on the rough draft of that resolution to have ready for the next SRC meeting next week. They are planning to get out and finish up the survey work on the Spokane Creek project. Martin asked about the resolution, and how long this effort is going to drag on. Ryan says he's not sure at this point.

Lincoln area-the river is fluctuating with snow melt and precipitation.

Baucus-He said things have been quiet. The range is drier than typical and the feed on the range isn't as productive as normal. It seems that a lot of the storms are going around the Sieben area. Otherwise, things are pretty calm. Ryan asked if the work that has been done most recently on Little Prickly Pear Creek is holding. John hasn't been down that way recently but will take a look. Christians-update from Karl Christians on the St. Mary Diversion. Drop structure 5 failed in the middle of May. BOR signed/amended an agreement to allow them to take the lead on the contracting and oversight for drop structure 5 and 2. Preliminary numbers are about \$8 million. The system is in pretty bad shape. Estimates in 2011 were \$153 million to fix it, and today's numbers are over \$200 million. The legislature passed a bill a few sessions ago for \$10 million in bonding. Water will shut off June 22. There are two reservoirs that are full, but they'll only provide about 1 irrigation cycle. The Milk River Watershed Alliance webpage has more information on the situation.

Martin said that he attended some MACD events, but since Rick is on, he said he will defer to Rick for reports on those.

**MACD/SWCDMI** – Rick Van Dyken was on the call to report on the Spring Board Meeting. They interviewed for a new executive director and made a selection pending a face to face meeting. The bylaws were reviewed and a committee has been put together to combine bylaws for the two organizations to be merged. Those bylaws will be presented at the convention in Bozeman this year. After some discussion at the meeting they voted to offer a lobbying proposal to Jeff Tiberi for the next legislative session. They'd like to have Tiberi mentor the new ED through this session. Shannon Stober from Verve Exchange facilitated discussion and work on the strategic plan, and there is a committee in place to finalize it and present it at the convention. Martin said that he sat in on yesterday's discussion and they will have more information at the Area Meetings as well as the convention. Martin said that the bottom line was the question about whether the organizations are meeting their mission. He said that measures should be taken in a year to see if the reorganization is meeting the need of CDs across the state. Martin further commented that they doubled back and revisited the work plan. He said that he hopes that the end results are that all of MACD/SWCDM's activities and committees etc. are building CDs. Martin asked how working with Shannon Stober went, and Van Dyken said that he felt that things went really well and that she fit well with the board. Ryan asked Van Dyken if he's on the legislative work committee and he said that he wasn't. That committee is looking for more volunteers and if anyone from Lewis & Clark is interested, they should contact MACD. Ryan said he's not sure he wants to be on the committee but said he'll be available to testify.

**Elk Creek Flood Task Force** – Evans gave a quick report on postponing the workshop. Wendy Weaver at MARS is interested in MARS being a program funder in the area for projects on the ground. They may have credits available next year. Outreach has been one of their problems, and they're happy to reach out and talk to CDs about their organization.

**East Helena CTE** – Evans and Christians gave a brief report on the East Helena effort. The group will be meeting again soon and have been working on a community needs assessment. Martin asked about plans on going back to classes this fall. Lindsay Volpe was on the call about the FFA

and 4H Jackpot that they're planning. They are still planning to do the Jackpot and since it was last minute, she's scrambling to find sponsors. She asked if the board would be interested in sponsoring the event. Christians said that the Lewis & Clark County Farm Bureau has approved helping out. Nordahl made a motion we sponsor \$1000, second by Granzow, motion carried. The event is this weekend at the Fairgrounds.

**Healthy Watershed Consortium** – Ranching for Rivers is still accepting project applications. It offers financial cost share assistance to improve the infrastructure for riparian grazing areas.

### **Old Business**

Permissive mill levy hearing-Evans updated the board that the PML hearing would be June 26 at 1 pm via Zoom conferencing. She has already alerted the county that we may be increasing the permissive mill levy.

Forest Service Collaborative – Frasier said that he forwarded an article relating to that. The collaboratives in his opinion, are a way for the Forest Service to by-pass the public comment. He doesn't trust them and would prefer to not have anything to do with them. Martin chimed in that forestry is a big part of what our county and wanted to know if the CD itself has resources for landowners. Evans said that other than outreach and providing direction to either NRCS, the Tri-County group or DNRC for technical assistance, we really don't. Christians contacted Steve Hedstrom about the work he's doing with NACD. There was discussion about how we get people the resources they need with their forestry concerns. Evans said that there's a significant amount of information out there on forestry concerns, including NRCS and DNRC, as well as NACD. Baucus interjected that he sees that the CD really gets involved in the stream permitting part of the logging projects. SMZ's, etc. would be beneficial in helping landowners out with. Martin said that he'd like to see how NRCS helped the Baucus projects along with their logger, Doug Mote. Ryan said that he is familiar with the work that the Sieben Ranch has done along the interstate. He said it was a really good operation and he was really impressed.

### **New Business**

Postponement of events – MYRC and the Riparian Grazing workshop have both been postponed to next year.

Website-Evans detailed out the website review that Laura at Meld Media did for us and detailed some of the changes that have been made already and those that are planned. It was definitely a worth-while endeavor.

### **310 Permit Applications**

EME-01-20 Ingersoll-remains tabled pending inspection

EME-02-20 Schuff – this didn't come in soon enough to be on the agenda.

CP-01-20 Gelsleichter-motion by Nordahl to consider the situation a violation, but more of an accident than a violation. Recommendations from the team are what the board took into account. Second by Granzow, motion carried.

LC-10-20 Longson-motion to approve with recommendations, contact the floodplain department about working on the other side of the bank, second by Frasier, motion carried.

LC-11-20 Robinett-motion by Baucus approve the first two items, but deny the last part, with communication that we need a final plan on that section, second by Frasier. Motion carried.

LC-12-20 Pieloch-after an hour and a half drive to the site and multiple gates locked behind them, Baucus said that the stream was tiny by the time they finally got to the project site. They

want to put in 3-foot culverts, 6 different crossings. Motion by Baucus to approve as modified, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

LC-13-20 Stump – This one came in too late to be on this agenda. Tabled til July.

**Other Business**

DOA financial report

Motion to adjourn 3:08 pm.

**Announcements**

**Next meeting** – Dearborn Community Center, July 9, 2020 at 8:30 am.

**APPROVED**

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Presiding Officer

Date

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Recorder

Date