



# 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 September 10, 2020 1pm

**Call to order**—Chairman Jeff Ryan called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Steve Granzow, Jeanette Nordahl, Sarah Howe-Cobb, Stan Frasier and Ron Ingersoll; also in attendance were David Martin, Emma Kelsick, Karl Christians, Rebecka Ayre, Jennifer McBroom, Rebecca Boslough, Autumn Christenson, Adam Strainer, Elissa Chott, Tyler Phelps and Kevin Stone.

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

Motion by Frasier to approve the financials, and pay the outstanding bills, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

### Correspondence

Thank you note from Lindsay Volpe and the 4-H Council

WWC Engineering-West side subdivision

WWC Engineering-HVID request letter of support—Evans had forwarded this to the WQPD to ask their opinion of the proposed project and potential effects on the wells in the area. This particular project is losing about 75% of the water from the ditch. WQPD would like to know the schedule on the piping so that they could do some monitoring to see what the effects might be. There's potential to do some education to the landowners on the potential effects of the project. Evans asked if the board would like to do a letter of support. Frasier and Granzow both indicated that we should, adding that we should be sure that landowners are notified about potential effects and doing some monitoring. Evans and McBroom can work on some articles about these kinds of projects and how they can affect wells, wetlands etc.

### Public Comment-none

### Reports

**NRCS**—Becky Ayre was on to give the NRCS report. The office is down to the last 2 contracts for the Capitol 360. The CSP deadline is just around the corner and Becky has a meeting set up for the next round of TIPs for EQIP. Autumn Christenson said that she'd be happy to help out with outreach for upcoming TIPs.

**SRWG**—Emma Kelsick was on the call to discuss Sun River information. Kelsick said that the Muddy Creek master project is coming up in the fall. The User Guide came under review by the RRT committee. She'll have the final draft done for them by the end of the month. She'll be meeting with Dave Martin and Marc Shane for some final details.

**MRCDC**—Stavick provided a written report for the packet. Christians said there's nothing more that he can add. Ryan said that in the report, she mentioned the Naked Riverbank project and ongoing landowner projects. Ryan asked if PPLT had gotten back with Autumn Christenson

about the Sevenmile Creek fire on their property. Autumn said that they are meeting after this board meeting call.

**WQPD**—McBroom said their last 2 meetings had been cancelled, they'd planned a couple of tours. They are doing a lot with the current zoning effort by the county. James Swierc provided a lengthy document for the planners and is whittling that down to a page or two for public release. They had stopped all their residential water level measurements due to the virus and plan to start those back up very soon. They are looking for a new public board member for the WQPD.

**LHWG**-McBroom said that their activities have also been cut back. They applied for the MWCC capacity building funding and got a little bit, even though demand for those funds were quite high. Ryan asked if Valerie Stacey was still going to the fluvial geomorphology training. The training was cancelled this year, she's planning to go next year.

**Weed District**—no report.

### **Supervisor Reports**

**Ryan**-Ryan said that there was a patch of willow out on the Sevenmile Creek burn that they'd planned to harvest for upcoming projects. The willow, unfortunately, burned. It'll probably survive, but won't likely be usable for the Spokane Creek Project. Christians told Ryan and Christenson a friend of his had commented about the fact that there was so much vegetation on PPLT's property that burned up. Evans said that PPLT has indicated interest in doing some rotational grazing. Frasier is of the opinion that it doesn't need to be grazed or have the vegetation removed. Ryan said that it's really an incredible site for demonstrations given its proximity to town. The stream vegetation is vulnerable and would need to be protected from grazing, but if there were fenced areas that would provide for appropriate grazing, it could be a really great project.

**Howe-Cobb**-She said she's pretty sure the fire off of Benchmark is out and so it's blue sky and no smoke for now.

**Frasier**-there was a fire up above Rimini that started in a logging unit but they got it out.

**MACD/SWCDMI**—Rebecca Boslough was on the call to introduce herself. She said that she hopes that we are applying for some of the Covid funding that is available to the CDs.

**Elk Creek Flood Task Force**—Grant for CMZ was funded with the 223 funding. Wendt and some of the 3 CDs are doing a tour of the areas that are indicative of the resource concerns, since there are some new people at NRCS.

**East Helena CTE**—Next meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup>. We may be meeting at the school and touring the new building. The opening of the school was good, around 250 students in the freshman and sophomore classes.

**Healthy Watershed Consortium**—Autumn Christenson gave a brief report. Ranching for Rivers had a meeting with the core partners this week, about potentially extending the program. Autumn shared that the Naked Riverbanks campaign is to educate river bank landowners to be better stewards. She wanted to throw out that if Lewis & Clark would like to adapt the program to our stretch of the Missouri, she thinks it has some great potential. Evans said that it makes sense to adapt it to our county. Jeff Ryan said that we haven't really inventoried our section of the river, but it certainly could be done. She said that we need to just reach out if we need anything from her.

### **Old Business**

Hiring status—Evans shared that the CTA funded position will be interviewed for next week by NRCS and Evans. From the applicant pool (and those that came late) Evans will narrow down

the selection of those who are interested in the CD’s job and will start the process to hire the Resource Tech position.

**New Business**

Elissa Chott was present to talk about their non-lethal Beaver Conflict Resolution project. The Clark Fork Coalition, Defenders of Wildlife, and the National Wildlife Federation are cooperating on an effort to increase tolerance for beaver by landowners. While many landowners don’t want to live with beavers, many landowners are fine with them as long as they aren’t causing flooding etc. They have a cost share fund set up to assist landowners. They have 3 projects planned for September. Ryan said that he’s a bit familiar with these types of projects and went out on a demonstration on a tributary or Upper Ten Mile, but can’t remember who sponsored the project. McBroom said that Amy Chadwick came as part of project that the WQPD was part of. Evans asked if Elissa would be able to provide some information for the CD to put on the website about this type of project, and in the newsletter.

**310 Permit Applications**

PPLT LC-44-19- Extension Request--Their 3<sup>rd</sup> phase stream project should get moving in October. Motion to extend for a year by Granzow, second by Frasier; motion carried.

EME-01-20 Ingersoll-inspection pending.

LC-20-20 Spring Creek LO--Ryan and Strainer went out on the site inspection. The project proposal was to remove a bridge and replace it with an arched concrete culvert about a mile upstream from the junction with Skelly Gulch. The site also has a ford that has been used a lot over the years. The bridge is too narrow for some vehicles so they would like to replace the bridge with a 60” culvert which would also fill the existing ford site. Ryan said there is considerable history in the area, with a large subdivision in the late 1990’s. With today’s subdivision requirements, the subdivision would likely never have been approved as it is today. It’s a single escape for fire concerns. The removal of a bridge to put in a culvert is not a good solution. The fill alone will create a dam across the riparian area. There is another culvert that Adam Strainer mentioned, probably installed in 2011, that he thinks blew out a few years later. Motion by Granzow to deny the application and work with the landowners to find funding to put in a bridge, second by Frasier; motion carried unanimously.

LC-21-20 Stockton-pending inspection

LC-22-20 Wirth-pending inspection

CP-03-20/CP-01-18 Meyers--Motion by Frasier to consider it a violation, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

**Next meeting** – October 8, 2020 1 pm via Zoom

Motion to adjourn by Granzow 2:48 pm.

**APPROVED**

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Presiding Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Recorder \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_