



LEWIS & CLARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

REGULAR MEETING
Via Zoom Conferencing
November 12, 2020 1 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by chairman Jeff Ryan at 1pm. In attendance were Supervisors Jeff Ryan, Steve Granzow, Stan Frasier, Jeanette Nordahl, Sarah Howe-Cobb and Ron Ingersoll. Also in attendance were Associate Supervisors David Martin, Chris Carparelli, Karl Christians. Others present were Becky Ayre, Tracy Wendt, Andrew Kretschmer, Connor Mertz and Chris Evans.

Motion by Frasier to approve the October minutes as sent. Jeanette's comment: second by Nordahl ; motion carried.

Motion by Nordahl to approve the financial statement as presented and to pay the outstanding bills, second by Frasier; motion carried.

Correspondence

MACD RRT Lease-Send to Jeff

Public Comment-there was none.

Reports

NRCS-Becky Ayre was present to make the NRCS report. She found out that Andrew's computer should be in the office soon. They are starting their CSP workload. Diane in Whitehall is applying for a renewal so the office is taking over the renewal workload too. They are starting to get some of the contracts that were obligated in the past month and will begin certifying soon.

SRWG-Tracy Wendt was on the call and made a report on the Sun River Watershed activities. The Water Management Work Group met and part of that was a formation of a small group to discuss gages on the Elk Creek system. The group identified a couple of locations for potential gages. DNRC, the CD, Alan Rollo and SRWG met and Tracy followed up with Arin at NOAA on some thoughts. The group plans to find funding to put the gages in and keep them operating. Her board will be looking for some new members. The CMZ for Elk Creek is underway. The public presentation of that information is going to be tricky with the rise in Covid cases. Some Muddy Creek projects have wrapped up. Data collection was done by a person for almost 20 years, Emma Kelsick did it this year. Tracy is hoping that Connor Mertz could do that for the SRWG in the summer. Connor and Tracy have a call coming up to determine what and how much work they'll be looking to contract with Lewis and Clark for his time at a rate/hour that should cover wages and other payroll costs. They're planning an update

to their Watershed Restoration Plan and a website update with a River Conditions page. Christians asked, in regard to the gages, if they were there previously and the floods took them out or what. Tracy answered yes, but sites were unstable. We also need to purchase equipment to replace those that were taken out and O&M will also be an ongoing cost. Christians asked, on that flood, can we attribute the flood event to the fires in the headwaters. Evans asked if he meant recent fires or older fires. The project funding only covers flooding due to more recent fires, like that on Alice Creek where Green Creek and others have been flooding. So, the Augusta area doesn't fall into that funding.

MRCDC-Tuesday was the quarterly meeting for the MRCDC. It was partially virtual with some participation in person in Winnet. LZ spoke at length about her position and others at DNRC not being filled. Ryan asked Christians what the status of that is. Apparently Bostrom is not planning to fill a number of positions due to Coal Tax Revenues being less than ideal. So it looks like positions that come open will remain unfilled. It sounds like CDB will move under Autumn Coleman's overview. Related to this, Dave Martin read the Legislative Committee's minutes and said that CDs seem to run so much on what DNRC has for them (Admin Grant, 223 Grants etc.). Dave is wondering if one of the suggestions to MACD is to have them track that so that we can compare from Session to Session how that funding is going. Going into the session with vacant positions, Ryan says, they're likely to completely lose them. Ryan asked if there's a possibility of tapping into some of the legalized marijuana funding. The other thing that Jeff wanted to mention, was the Joint Resolution from the Stream Restoration Committee. The MRCDC has indicated that they'll support it. There was some apparent confusion on the part of MACD that the resolution was being presented to have MACD carry, but Jeff got that cleared up.

WQPD-Virtual meeting, Jeff Ryan said that they discussed the water monitoring from the past season and plans for next summer. The Covid situation has pulled a lot of Valerie Stacey's county time to work on Covid.

LHWG-They have a section of highway for trash pickup. Evans has a zoom meeting scheduled with the new head of that group to see where the CD and the watershed group can collaborate.

Weed District-No report

Healthy Watershed Consortium-Connor Mertz the details of their report. They've been working with PPLT on a Ranching for Rivers application, but PPLT's focus has been on the weeds from the fire. Autumn has been working with a TIP in the Belt Creek area in Cascade CD. A person who is friends with that landowner lives in Lincoln and is interested in a TIP like that. Jeanette Nordahl asked who the landowner in Lincoln is, she would be interested in following up on that. Andrew and Connor will forward that information to Jeanette.

MACD/SWCDMI-Dave Martin asked if anyone is listening in on the Friday listening sessions. No one has been yet. Zach Brown from the legislature is talking about the future of water in Montana at the MACD Convention. They'll have a presentation on coal tax by Senator Elect Greg Hertz

Supervisor Reports

Jeff Ryan-Confluence Consulting is out working on Sevenmile Creek on the PPLT project. Karl and Jeff met with Andrew and Connor on the specifics of the solar powered pump.

Steve Granzow-No report from Steve, but he said there's someone out on Prickly Pear that is using a solar system to pump water to livestock.

Nordahl reported that Paul Roos in Lincoln recently passed away.

Christians said that they've ordered the parts for the Solar Pumping trailer and will be putting it together soon. All purchases should be made before the end of the year. He will be doing a zoom meeting with someone from APHIS on grasshoppers for the upcoming season. They're hoping to hear interest from landowners on controlling grasshoppers. APHIS has a cost share program for a specific chemical that affects hoppers when they're very small. It doesn't affect other creatures. APHIS needs requests for funding soon since they don't have a budget in place yet. They'll contract directly with the landowners.

Staff Reports

Andrew gave a quick report on his activities in the past month. He's been working on the Elk Creek area, stream gages and potential TIPs. He's hoping to start some outreach in the area and would like to do a meeting with landowners to do outreach and assess interest. He went on a tour with HVID recently with NRCS and they are looking for some funding on their upcoming project. He has been working with Autumn on a potential TIP on Weed Control in the Lincoln area. He attended the quarterly STAC meeting, and specifically joined in on the Forestry Subcommittee. The board indicated that they want him to participate in that if he has the time. Sarah asked about the photo contest. It really didn't take off like we had expected it to. Christians asked if there was a theme, Martin said maybe it will take a few rounds before we get a lot of interest. Becky recommended letting everyone know when the next round is up and they can share. Becky gave some follow-up for the tour with HVID. She said that they should have some information from the Area and State offices on how a TIP would look, as far as contracting directly with the Irrigation District or with individual landowners.

Connor gave a quick report about his activities the past month. Connor has been finishing up his BSWC term and has been working very part time with the CD through tomorrow. One of the bigger things he did recently was a review of the 310-permit database system. He'll be assisting with getting the backlog of permits entered. He and Andrew also went out on a 310 inspection on Ron Ingersoll's with John Baucus and Jason Mullen, as well as some willow cutting on Two Dot and Beaver Creek. The office folks have been doing some brainstorming on potential for workshops and also some online content for the CD. Starting next week, he'll be focusing on CD stuff. Ryan asked about the turnout for the Beaver Creek willow harvest. Mertz said that there was a good turnout and there were some folks who attended who are interested in collaborating with the CD on some kids' education events.

Evans-There have been multiple meetings recently that she has done minutes for, including the Stream Restoration Committee, the MACD Education Committee and the East Helena Career Technical Education Advisory Committee. Much of her time the past month has been covering orientation for Andrew and Connor and planning. We have upgraded the Internet service to the office. She has also put together the COVID expenses through the end of October for submission to Lewis and Clark County, hoping to get reimbursement for that. In addition, she was subpoenaed for a deposition on the Joslin Creek complaints and emergencies between the Diamond Bar X and Kevin McConnell. That deposition happens on November 17th. Spokane Creek landowner finally has his Army Corps of Engineer Permit. Next step for that is to get the floodplain permit. Karl added the info about the planning for the ag center for the EHHS, and the ASARCO. Support for the resolution from MRCDC and MACD and a commitment from Senator Ellis to carry.

Old Business

Planning for 2021-Evans had previously shared the draft Annual Plan with the board. Kretschmer had taken the initiative to re-format the old plan and we have been making changes to it to transform it into a long-range plan. Evans asked the board how they want to review it. The decision was to have a meeting on Zoom from 10-12 prior to the regular meeting. Evans will have the draft budget ready then as well. Jeanette has some further notes on the Long-Range Plan.

New Business

Cost Share Program for 2021-We have had an application or 2 come in. The board would like to extend the deadline for a few weeks to see if we get more. Evans asked who all would like to review the applications. David Martin, Jeanette Nordahl and Jeff Ryan indicated interest.

310 Permit Applications

EME-01-20 Ingersoll-the team that went out recommended that the work should be approved Frasier, Granzow; motion carried.

LC-21-20 Stockton--Remains tabled pending more information from applicant.

LC-23-20 DeBuff-Motion by Frasier to approve with modifications, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

LC-26-20 Ingersoll-Mertz said that he was at the site inspection. The water was cutting into the bank and the applicant wants to put some willow clumps and rock into this site similar to what he did before near the site. The recommendation of the team was to approve with modifications. Motion by Frasier, second by Nordahl to approve as modified. Motion carried. Ron Ingersoll abstained from the vote.

CP-03-20 Meyers (CP-01-18)-this issue remains on the County Attorney Offices docket.

Revisit Skierka LC-40-19-Follow up inspection has been requested.

Evans asked the board about the idea of sending a "project completion" form out with each permit which landowners would need to sign and return when their 310 projects

are finished. Pictures will be requested. The board would like to implement that beginning January 1.

**Please note that some of these applications may not be acted upon due to needing inspections or other information.

Other Business

Adjournment at 2:48 pm.

Calendar of upcoming events

November 4-Upper Columbia Conservation Comm. fall mtg

Nov 12 Board meeting-Helena

November 12-13 Employee Organization Meeting

Nov 17-18 MACD Convention-held virtually

Nov 18 Montana AIS Summit

Dec 2 Montana Invasive Spec. Council. Mtg-virtual

Dec 10-Board meeting Helena

Jan 4-1st day of the 67th Montana Legislative Session

Jan 14-Board Meeting-Helena

Announcements

Next meeting – December 10, 2020 1pm, held virtually

APPROVED

Presiding Officer

Date

Recorder

Date