



# Lewis and Clark Conservation District

790 Colleen Street, Helena MT 59601 406.389.3895 <https://lewisandclarkcd.org>

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 11, 2023

1 pm

USDA Service Center, 790 Colleen Street, Helena MT  
and via Zoom Conferencing

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by chairman Jeff Ryan at 1 pm. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Karl Christians, Jeanette Nordahl, Stan Frasier, John Baucus, Andrew Kretschmer, Chris Hindoien, Becky Ayre, Tracy Wendt, Christian Lehnert, and Chris Evans.

Rick Van Dyken attended on Zoom.

Introductions were made.

Minutes-motion by Ryan to approve minutes as sent, second by Baucus, motion carried.

Financial Statement and Outstanding bills-motion by Nordahl to approve the financial statement and to pay the bills, second by Frasier; motion carried.

Supervisor Absences-Sarah Howe-Cobb wasn't present but called after the meeting. She had the wrong meeting location and time written down. Skyler Van Dyken called and was busy with cattle issues. Skyler was excused.

### Correspondence

Evans shared the correspondence

### Public Comment

There was none.

### Reports

**NRCS**-Becky Ayre reported that for EQIP, the office has 15 apps pre-approved, with 11 forestry and 4 community ag. By the end of July, they should all be contracts. For CSP we have 1 pre-approved forestry application. There will be a few more that come through by September. All 3 TIPs were considered "investment ready". Andrew Kretschmer was selected as the DC for the Helena Field Office. The new pathways student starts the end of May for a few months. He'll be staying in Bozeman and will be commuting to Helena with an NRCS vehicle, due to housing issues. The office got an email last week about the "People's Garden Program". The gardens can be used for education and work with partners with the produce to back into the community. Evans and Ayre will work together on what the requirements are for that program. Partners and/or volunteers will be a big part of that program. Karl Christians asked whether the office had many applications from the Augusta area. Andrew said that they had



applications but most didn't meet the AGI qualifications. Tracy Wendt said that she and Paula had talked and had some ideas on TIP ideas. Karl Christians said that there was a partner meeting a last month and he asked the room who understood the USDA programs. Most couldn't answer the question. He asked Tom Watson for a training on the programs, and was referred to the local office. He asked if the FO could provide some training to the board on programs. Tracy Wendt has some ideas on workshops to provide education on all the different programs.

Andrew said that at the Tri County Firesafe work group meeting he found out that the NRCS is contributing to fly the entire state for Lidar data. The State Library will be doing the processing. Ryan asked what the contour interval will be and if it would work for the floodplain modeling. Andrew will check into and get back to Jeff.

Karl thanked Andrew, Becky and Jason for coming out to the Ag Day with Farm Bureau on Tuesday.

**DNRC**-Report in packet

**SRWG**-Tracy was in the room to talk about the SRWG. The Predict the Peak fundraiser is ongoing, but they had a hitch in the process because a lot of people think that the peak has already passed. They have some good prizes. The contest is \$25/guess. She would like feedback on the contest. Upcoming events: June 29<sup>th</sup> Clearwater Credit Union is sponsoring an event at the Voyager's Stadium for a ball game. Tickets are available online ahead of time. This is their 3<sup>rd</sup> year doing the bbq and it's a fun time. They had their water management working group and board meetings, notes to come. Next Tuesday there's a meeting in Augusta on the Sun River Bridge replacement from 3:30 to 5:30. The last LCCD meeting there was discussion about the fish screen, and they contributed \$2000 of the \$5000 that they were short. They have a Big Sky Watershed Corps fellow this year for the summer. She starts the 25<sup>th</sup> of May. She'll be looking for volunteers to help with the monitoring. Muddy Creek's reclamation grant is signed, HB 7 went through so the DNRC money will be available after July 1. Having the reclamation money means that GID can start their part of the project. Also, outside the area, they did a spent ammo and trash cleanup at Freezeout Lake. They had 25 people come out to help, some from as far away as Hamilton. If the board has ideas about cleanups in the county please let her know. She's been approached by a number of different companies who want to get their employees out on clean up events. Tracy asked if LCCD was going to do a Rain Barrel Workshop this year. Evans said not this year, but Resilient Helena might put one on. Their next board meeting is July 20<sup>th</sup>, not in conjunction with a work group meeting. July 8<sup>th</sup> is the Weed Whacker Rodeo and they'll be looking for the back pack sprayer donation. If we can have it by the June board meeting, she'll pick it up.

Tracy said her pollinator garden is doing really well. She planted the first year that Lewis and Clark did the program and the plants are out-competing the weeds this year.

Jeff Ryan asked if the legislative stuff was a problem to get this year, Tracy said that it really wasn't.

**MRCDC**-Report in packet. Karl Christians said they're getting ready for the River Rendezvous to look at salt cedar issues (June 23<sup>rd</sup>, followed by the CMR Working Group meeting). Test flow issues have been pretty quiet. John Chase turned over the upper reach responsibility to Jeff Ryan



**WQPD**- last meeting was pretty much devoted to the strategic plan. The Conservation Center wasn't on the draft plan. Kathy Moore has indicated a strong interest in collaborating on the Conservation Center. There may be some boundary changes to the WQPD with population changes to the county.

**LHWG**-no report.

**MACD**-Rick Van Dyken was on zoom. He thanked the Lewis and Clark CD for all the help they've provided, for the Employee Organization as well as the legislative session. He recommended that we check the dues invoice to be sure it matches what we actually received. He thanked the CD for assistance in developing the strategic plan, believes that things are going really well on the board right now. With HB 321 passing, that will really be an assist to districts. The MEPA bill also passed the session. He thinks that the Education Work Group should look at the insurance costs for the Rolling Rivers Trailers and Rick will take that concern to the MACD board. Ryan thanked Rick for being on. Karl Christians gave kudos to the MACD board and staff for all the work that they did at the session this year. Spring board meeting is coming up June 6-8<sup>th</sup>.

Motion by Ryan to pay to calculated dues with the subtraction of the time that Evans put in on helping out in operations in 2022, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

**Weed District**-Christian Lehnert said they've been pretty busy with the new public works director (Jenny Chambers). He said it's been going well. They've been working through the procurement process and have been able to purchase a hydro seeder. Ryan asked about whether the public could use that. Christian said that the Weed District is going to be using that, since it's such a high cost. They've had some changes in the county, and Christian has taken over doing procurement on the mosquito effort too. They're one person short of getting a full complement of people. Christian didn't make it to Ag Day for the East Helena students but some of his people did. He said he has been spending time at the government days in Augusta and Lincoln. There's not a lot of weeds likely to be sprayed in BLM and the Forest Service, since there's only 1 person doing it for each agency. The Weed District has 2 crews already out spraying county roads. If the CD supervisors notice weeds on county roads, please let him know. May 18<sup>th</sup> they'll be participating in the Pull Your Share effort. The County is now part of the Southwest area for the Montana Weed Control Association. Christian is still planning to present at our September 21<sup>st</sup> workshop. The county does have a weed cost share program, matching up to \$250. The county website is dying, and they're hoping for a new website in July. Noncompliance has already started for the year.

### **Supervisor Reports**

Jeff Ryan said they finished the Jewett Lake Helena project at 300 feet. (total about 1500 over the years). Black Sandy soil lift is completed as well. They have some bare soil that they want to have hydro seeded if possible. Ryan Blake has indicated interest in doing a project but we're not sure if he's going to complete it. Ryan would like to do some kind of an award for Tim Olds. His project has held up pretty well against the ice ramping. Andrew came out in the afternoon on the Jewett project about the time everyone was exhausted, and Jeff Ryan thanked him for his help.

Karl Christians said he and Adam Strainer went out on Bill Northey's property last week to look at a problem site that is probably going to have a permit application come in. Karl said he's pretty sure that he's been out on that site before. The landowner



would like to make it a gentle slope like a beach. They weren't crazy about that idea, until they visited the next person who had that sort of site and had almost no ice damage. The idea is to get Northey in touch with a consultant to have a look at the project.

A lot of alfalfa was winter killed this year due to icing issues.

Jeanette Nordahl-Ponderosa Snow Warriors are getting out of the weed spraying business, due to not enough volunteers.

Stan Frasier-Today at 5 pm, there's a board training by MSU sponsored by Lewis and Clark County that he recommends. He didn't sign up but he's going anyway.

John Baucus-Snowing, not a lot of grass, almost complete alfalfa kill of the mature alfalfa. Dry springs are running, good springs are great, every drainage has water, they've feeding hay.

**Staff Reports**-Evans provided a written report.

### **Old Business**

Update on Liability Insurance-Chris Hindoen was present to talk about the new liability insurance policy for the Conservation District. He went through details of the policy with the board. June 8<sup>th</sup> is our next meeting and the board can make a decision at that point. Policy could be done for the July 1 deadline with the payment due on August 1.

Update on Fish Screen Project funding-They were able to get all of the funding they were short by going to the various partners, including the Missouri River Flyfishers, and the Lake Helena Watershed Group/WQPD.

### **New Business**

Evans will set the Permissive Mill Levy Hearing, probably July sometime.

### **310 Permit Applications**

CP-01-23 Bostrom-No decision, still researching

LC-04-23 TU/Prickly Pear Fish Screen-motion by Ryan to approve, second by Christians, motion carried.

LC-05-23 Jurgens-not a project, recommendations stand.

LC-06-23 Shadel-recommendations were to complete work following high water, preferably fall, incorporate dormant willow cuttings, 500-1000, incorporate Patrick's comments; motion to approve with recommendations and Uthe's comments by Nordahl, second by Stan Frasier; motion carried.

LC-07-23 Johnson-not a project

Renewal of Geise Project-motion by Frasier to extend another year, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

### **Other Business**

Evans' raise-motion to confirm raise for 6% retroactive to January 1. Second by Baucus, motion carried.

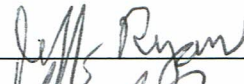
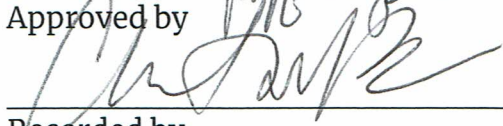
CD Self Audit-put off until June meeting

### **Parking Lot**

Updates on 3 Bar X Conservation Center  
Augusta FFA program donation potential

**Adjournment at 3:25 pm**

**Next meeting**—June 8, 2023 9:30 am, at the Augusta Community Center, to be followed by a 1-hour Local Work Group meeting.

Approved by		6/8/23
		Date
Recorded by		6/8/23
		Date