



Lewis and Clark Conservation District

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 11, 2024

USDA Svc. Ctr. Conf Room, 790 Colleen Street, Helena MT
1 pm and via Zoom Conferencing

Call to Order—The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair, Karl Christians at 1 pm. In attendance were Karl Christians, John Baucus, *Sarah Howe-Cobb, Stan Frasier, Jeanette Nordahl, and Skyler Van Dyken, Jeff Ryan*. Also in attendance were Denise Donnelly, *Tracy Wendt, Andrew Kretschmer, Becky Ayre, Dallas Diehl, Joe Kremer-Herman and Chris Evans*. (Italics denote attendance on Zoom). *Mary Hendrix* joined at 1:20

Introductions—Introductions were made.

Election of Officers for 2024

Motion by Karl Christians to keep the current officers, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

Minutes—Motion by Nordahl to approve the minutes as sent, second by Frasier; motion carried.

Financial Statement & Outstanding Bills—Motion by Nordahl to approve the financial statement as presented and to pay all the outstanding bills, second by Ryan; motion carried.

Supervisor Absences—There were no absences.

Correspondence

East Helena FFA Chapter dinner invitation--Karl Christians said that he's thinking about sponsoring a table for the dinner. Evans said if anyone else want to go, to let her know and she'll get them registered. Motion by Nordahl to do a silent auction item for the dinner, second by Karl with a limit of \$50; motion carried. Christians gave a bit of background on the FFA chapter and the ag ed programs.

Public Comment-There was none.

Reports

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NRCS—Andrew Kretschmer said that they have a good number of FY 2024 applications. The migratory big game initiative information is getting clearer and it will be tied into the TIPs. Andrew has extra copies of the bulletin for that program. Becky Ayre said that the Whitehall office is not currently staffed, so she is covering that office 2-3 days per week. That office has a lot of forestry EQIP applications. Becky said that she has a line on a number of folks who can help with the workload there, aside from the Helena Field Office. Becky has been involved in interviews for filling a rangeland management position, location uncertain, possibly Whitehall. DCs are vacant in Whitehall and Choteau. At the end of January, the Helena office will be taking forward a new TIP and one for the Choteau area.

Becky had the MOU and the Civil Rights partnership information to review with the board. Chris Evans and Becky have been working to get our MOU with NRCS updated, since Andrew converted from the CD to NRCS in 2021. We are still waiting to get that update signed. Becky reviewed Titles 6 and 7 regarding discrimination not being allowed internally or externally. Program outreach is to be done in collaboration with the CD, so that Local Work Group information is posted as required by NRCS. She reviewed all the posters that they're required to have posted in the NRCS Field Office.

DNRC—Mary Hendrix attended the meeting via zoom with the DNRC report. She reminded the district that Supervisor elections open today and close March 11 and that Districts are on the General Election calendar. Mileage reimbursement is up 1.5 cents for 2024, to 67 cents per mile. Reminder that Districts should provide minutes to DNRC as well as the Clerk and Recorder's office. Mary gave an overview of the grant application cycles that are or will be open. They will be opening the planning, pollinator and projects grant cycle and that will close March 15th. They're doing a webinar with Local Government Services January 18th, talking about audits.

SRWG—Tracy Wendt said that it's been mostly planning/budget stuff for 2024 that they've been working on. Winter River Fest is coming up, and they have an April 18th meeting that will be pretty important for people to attend. Tracy will be attending district meetings mostly virtually to keep budget concerns in mind.

MRCDC—Karl Christians said that it was quiet over the holidays but the CMR Community Working Group attendance has tapered off a bit and they are working to re-engage landowners or dissolve the group. MRCDC will be having a meeting in a couple of weeks to plan for the Missouri River Rendezvous for 2024. Dick Iverson attended the MRRIC meeting in Omaha; Karl said it's good to be a part of that group to voice concerns over the Fort Peck Test Flows. Dallas Diehl is also on the MRCDC and mentioned that they are figuring out that the sturgeon use diversions and by-passes. It sounds like the reality is showing that the sturgeon aren't as affected by obstructions as they'd initially assumed.

WQPD—Jeff Ryan said that there wasn't a meeting after the last CD meeting, next meeting is January 23rd.

LHWG—Joe Kremer-Herman said that this group also has not had their meeting yet. They're planning to do a rain barrel workshop and are interested in the CD assisting.

Helena CORE—Joe said that most of the organizations don't have much in the way of education programs going on at the moment.

MACD—Karl Christians is the new Montana representative to the National Association. He's been working on the idea of a forestry committee at the state level. He attended the 1st quarter Northern Plains Meeting. The NACD meeting is in San Diego in February. Evans will email out the MMIA insurance stuff and poll the board on whether they want to participate in the Insurance program or not.

Supervisor Reports

John Baucus-Dry and cold in his area with not a lot of activity going on.

Karl Christians-Karl brought up the proposed Natural Asset companies. The SEC is moving forward. The comment period ends the 18th. These companies can come in and claim ownership of the air, and water quality with the ultimate goal of controlling those lands.

Karl is working with the Young Farmers and Ranchers program with the Farm Bureau.

Jeff Ryan-Jeff and Joe met with the Hardy's Pond landowners on Threemile Creek. The dam is large enough to fall under the state's hazardous dam program. There's a report of deficiencies that they need to address. The CD will be working with the landowners and collaborating with FWP and their Future Fisheries program. Joe said that he's been talking to some of his contacts. MCC may be interested in doing some work out there as a training project. PPLT may be interested in transplanting some of the shrubs to the Sevenmile Project. He's also been looking at project grants from DNRC.

Jeanette Nordahl-Dry and cold in Lincoln. They are starting to get some snow. But Jeanette is still in Arizona.

Stan Frasier-Stan said that he's currently not aware of much going on in his area. He's in Arizona still.

Sarah Howe-Cobb-Sarah said that it's cold with not much snow and the cows are in the mountains. They're hoping to get snow with this current storm.

Skyler Van Dyken-Snow and wind in his area.

Staff Reports

Chris Evans had a written report for the board.

Joe Kremer-Herman is emailing folks about the wake boat signs and he's working with those folks. Stemple Pass Road bridge-Cost of the most ambitious Confluence bid is over \$20,000, and DNRC says that's about 10 times what they typically run. The Winters project is at least partially completed. Motion by Christians to table this technical review to come back to at another meeting, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

Old Business

Update on 310 records-Joe has committed to spending one day per week scanning files, going backward. We'll plan to keep the hard copy files for around 8 years before doing a disposal of the hard copy files that have been scanned.

Conservation Center-Evans, Kremer-Herman, Ryan and Nordahl met with Beth Barry and Prickly Pear Land Trust yesterday and had a pretty productive meeting. Travis at PPLT indicated a willingness to provide at least some assistance/advice, amount depending on his board's approval, in getting the conservation servitude started, along with advice about a user agreement. Evans will provide him with the CD's "wish list" for the property, and Beth Barry will provide him with the landowner wishes.

New Business

Threemile Creek Grant App-there was some discussion about this grant proposal, and the fact that we really don't know much of anything about costs or extent of this project yet. Evans is unwilling to put an application together at the last minute so if we don't have comprehensive information together before the February meeting, this application will be postponed until the fall cycle of applications.

Education Grant app(s)-The CD has a pretty ambitious program focusing on education and outreach for 2024. The Pollinator Initiative, Wake Boat Erosion Sign project, 4th Grade Ag Day for East Helena, and the Rain Barrel Workshop that we are working with the Lake Helena Watershed Group. We will likely have to do 2 grant applications. Motion by Christians to approve applying for the 2 education grants, second by Nordahl; Evans will beef up the budgets and add in CD in-kind; motion carried.

CDA Grant App-This application is to get the \$3500 from DNRC for MACD dues. Motion by Baucus, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

310 Permit Applications

CP-01-24 A. Schneiderhan – Joe will schedule a follow up inspection on LC-21-23 and deal with complaint.

CP-02-24 J. Schneiderhan – Joe will arrange a site visit on this one.


Parking Lot

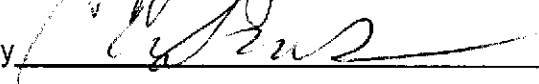
Stipends/Worker's Comp question-Waiting on better information on this issue.

Announcements -

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Next meeting—February 8, 2024 at 1 pm, USDA Service Center, 790 Colleen Street, Helena MT.

Approved by  Date 2/8/24

Recorded by  Date 2/8/2024