



Lewis and Clark Conservation District

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 8, 2024-9:30 am

Lambkin's Restaurant Meeting Room
460 Main St. Lincoln, Montana

Call to Order—the meeting was called to order at 9:32 by chair Jeff Ryan. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Jeanette Nordahl, Stan Frasier, John Baucus, and Karl Christians. Also in attendance were Tracy Wendt, Andrew Kretschmer, Joe Kremer-Herman and Chris Evans. Sarah Howe-Cobb joined the meeting at 10:29 am.

Introductions were made.

Minutes—motion by Ryan to approve minutes as sent, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

Financial Statement—motion by Nordahl to accept the financial report as presented and pay all the bills, second by Ryan; motion carried.

Correspondence—there was none.

Public Comment—There was none.

Reports

NRCS—Becky Ayre/Andrew -NRCS is working on a number of different TIP proposals, and doing inventory and gathering preliminary data for those.

DNRC—Written report is in the packet.

SRWG—Tracy Wendt provided a written report for the board. Of real concern is the potential discontinuation of the USGS stream gauge at Simms. There is concern about loss of the gauges (more than just this one) and how that would affect drought monitoring, hoot owl restrictions, flood warning etc. Tracy will work on getting a list of all of the at-risk gauges and will share that with those interested. SRWG had a number of events since the Board last met. Bashin' Trash and the ball park event. She has funding for the next 3 years for Bashin' Trash. There will be more effort put in, earlier, on the more southern groups who might be interested in assisting with the cleanup. The Watershed Tour is coming up and there are only 8 registrations left with MWCC. The water management working group is coming up in October. They've been awarded \$700,000 for the next 3 years that Tracy is waiting on becoming effective. Tracy has drafted a new budget and will be taking that to the board with a request to hire for next year.

MRCDC—Karl Christians said that DNRC has changed requirements for reporting, which he is trying to help work through. MRCDC had some luck with the Fort Peck test flows; there were landowners starting to run dry. Karl had met with the DNRC director and someone from the

Governor's office to request some changes. The test flows ended up ending because no sturgeons spawned, which was the point of the test flow project. The council is going to keep some pressure on them since the plan is for the Corps to do 3-5 tests. The Missouri River Rendezvous is coming up the 22nd. The plan is to have the willow stinger at that event. The CMR Community Working Group is focusing on range monitoring. The group takes a lot of time, but has seemed to be beneficial to agency and nonprofit groups, so they may pause the work for that group for the time being.

WQPD—Jeff Ryan attended a zoom meeting with them. He hasn't attended the field trips that the group has put on recently. They put off officer elections for the time being. The City of Helena has groundwater reservations that they acquired years ago. They've finally drilled some wells to see what kind of water they have. Sounds like the overall total will be about 2000 gpm is all. Typically, they've drilled 500-600 feet in depth. The City did acquire some rights or land from Burnhams and it's about 450 gpm.

LHWG—Watershed Festival is next Saturday (17th). Joe asked if Karl wanted to haul the solar pump. Karl said that's fine if he wants to get it.

Helena CORE—Joe said that they're in the midst of the Summer Walk Series. They are getting a lot of signups, but people will often sign up and not actually show up for the event. In September, the CORE groups are going to get together and do the "haunted tour" in Helena.

MACD—Eric Rannestad left MACD to go to graduate school, so they are down a person. Their BSWC member is covering for the time being and is pretty good at his job. He has recently completed a couple of videos for LCCD, one on the Beaver Creek Project and one on our Pollinator Initiative.

Supervisor Reports

Jeff Ryan—Little Prickly Pear Creek has a new water commissioner; Jeff's son Bob is doing the work.

Karl Christians—Not much is going on in his area. He had a question from someone about algae blooms on Lake Helena correlating to when the Irrigation District cleans their ditches. John said that down his direction they have to shut down irrigating for a few days.

John Baucus—John said he's looking forward to seeing how the new ditch rider does. Hot and dry. For the first time he can remember, they had to shut down some pivots due to so many people watering in the valley. Little Prickly Pear is really low. The ranch got started on their TIP, slow start due to dry conditions.

Stan Frasier—a cell tower was taken down out by his place. The Fire Department has a fire truck that they are looking to get rid of. It's an International, about 2.5 tons with about a 500-gallon tank. It would be suitable for a wildland fire truck.

Sarah Howe-Cobb—Houndstongue bug is in Augusta, so Mike is really happy. Sarah has someone potentially interested in the Dearborn supervisor position.

Jeanette Nordahl—Sounds like the Lincoln Springs fire is done; they're mopping up and washing down trucks in the gravel pit. Karl asked about dozer lines and re-seeding. He said he talked to the DNRC director and there wasn't much of an answer. She has been talking to a number of people about the coming open supervisor position in Lincoln.

Staff Reports

Chris submitted a written report.

Joe said there've been no new 310 applications since the special meeting in July. He'll be in Lincoln this weekend with the Rolling Rivers Trailer, GardenWerks Thursday, and the LHW Festival on the 17th. Bashin' Trash didn't get any volunteers in our stretch of cleanup. Tracy said that next year they'll have meetings with the team captains. Joe said that Helena CORE also has an email list that could get the information out to more people in our local area.

Quarterly Report-Evans discussed the quarterly report that was sent out to the board. There were a lot of website statistics and social media statistics that could probably be distilled for easier interpretation.

Old Business-there was no old business to review.

New Business

Consent Agenda-the board discussed the usefulness of a Consent Agenda. Consensus was that since the initial part of our meeting is so brief already, supervisors would like to opt out of that part, at least for now.

Governance Calendar-Consensus from those at the meeting was that this will be a really useful tool for moving forward. There are some things to solidify, specifically whether the board wants to elect a "secretary" position and also whether they want to form any committees. Currently, the Personnel committee is pretty much the Board Chair. We don't have a finance committee—which may become more valuable if we decide to build our own building. We don't have any other committees, so that will be up to the board as we move forward.

Local Work Group Meetings-Chris Evans hosted 2 meetings, one in Canyon Creek and one in Wolf Creek. We had one person from DEQ (other than Evans and the local NRCS folks) and we didn't have any visitors at the Wolf Creek meeting. Water quality efforts were brought up by the DEQ person who attended, and there was discussion about some other TIPS options.

Approval of Pollinator Grant Application-Evans is working on gathering total expected costs for the 2025 Pollinator Initiative and asked the board for approval. Motion to approve by Ryan, second by Frasier; motion carried.

Horse Gulch Fire-Other fires? -Evans and Kremer-Herman attended the BAER team meeting about the Horse Creek Fire. Historically, the office has over-promised help to landowners and Evans doesn't want to do that, especially given that it could be a high fire year. Evans has revamped the website a bit and added a resource page that we used to have on our old site about fire preparedness and recovery following fires, preparing for flooding. It provides direction to landowners about agencies that can help with fire preparedness programs, as well as after effects of fires.

310 Permit Applications

CP-04-24 Trettin & Wirth-Joe did reach Trettin and will be doing an onsite with the LO permission. Joe will focus on the shoreline of the Missouri.

Possible violation on Wolf Creek update-Joe will send John a photo to see if he's seeing what John

is seeing. He saw what might be a dam but it might be road access.
Stickney Creek Washout-Joe talked to the head of the LO association. It sounds like they've fixed the washout without a permit, thinking "that the ACOE permit covered everything".

Other Business-there was no other business.

The meeting adjourned at 11:27 am.

Announcements

Next meeting—September 12, 2024 at 1pm, USDA Service Center, Helena MT

Approved by Jeff Ryan Date 9/12/24
Recorded by [Signature] Date 9/11/2024