



Lewis and Clark Conservation District

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2025 1 pm

USDA Svc. Ctr. Conf Room, 790 Colleen Street, Helena MT
And via Zoom Conferencing

Call to Order-the meeting was called to order by chair Jeff Ryan at 1 pm. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Karl Christians, *Stan Frasier*, *Sarah Howe-Cobb*. Also in attendance were Andrew Kretschmer, Becky Ayre, Kasydi Lucas, Tom Walsh, Madison Colyer, Joe Kremer-Herman and Chris Evans. Elena Frederick joined the meeting at 1:45. She is the applicant for becoming an associate supervisor.

Introductions were made.

Governance Calendar - the board reviewed the Governance Calendars for March and April.

Minutes-motion by Jeff Ryan to approve the minutes as sent, second by Christians; motion carried.

Financial Statement-motion by Ryan to approve the financial statement and pay the outstanding bills, second by Christians; motion carried.

Supervisor absences-Jeanette and John had previously noted that they wouldn't make this meeting.

Correspondence-Evans passed the correspondence.

Public Comment-No comment.

Reports

NRCS-Andrew and Becky gave the NRCS report. Becky said that a judge ordered immediate reinstatement of the fired probationary employees for a number of agencies, USDA included. So allegedly the NRCS employees that were fired should be reinstated. Recent news that the Missoula USDA building is slated for closure with termination of the lease. The list that Becky saw for closures had an earliest date of June. Karl Christians said that he thinks that it would behoove districts to advertise the benefits of housing districts to federal level, emphasizing the good partnership between NRCS and Conservation Districts. Evans will try to find the NACD template letter and write up a letter to provide to our legislators (state and federal) along with our annual report. The CR is up Friday at midnight. The house passed it, but the senate has not yet voted on it. The agencies had to get Reductions in Force plans together to be in by today. For funds obligations, they're mostly frozen still. The IRA funding is frozen and may or may not move forward. Secretary Rollins is still perusing the budget. The area presentations were made for TIPS. Sheep Mountain, Phase 4 Of Wolf Creek and the Grizzly Bear Mitigations were recommended to move forward. The other 2 were tabled for the time being due to funding uncertainty. Montana AERO had called last week about Soil Health Week and wanted to do an event. Andrew

recommended that they reach out to the CD for funding assistance. Evans said that she hasn't heard anything from them. Andrew signed up for the APHIS thing for the Avian Flu situation, so he may get detailed somewhere at some point for that. Christians asked about activities for that. Andrew said biodesign structural audits to prevent transmission, the other might be wildlife related for assessments. Former Helena DC and Missoula Area AC Mindy Gauthier retired. The state engineer also retired. Becky will be on leave in Japan for the next two weeks.

DNRC-P3 grant cycle closes on the 15th, they have no applications. The CDA grant applications are due May 31. Mark Bostrom is working on an amendment for SB 77. Rangelands in the Rotunda is March 25th. Evans asked if the Flathead CD was planning to appeal the Ambler vs. Flathead CD decision. Kasydi thought so, but wasn't sure.

SRWG-Madison gave a report, and there was a written report included in the packet.

MRCDC-written report from Molly in the packet. They are working with a representative in the Sidney area to address the Fox Hills aquifer in Eastern Montana. They are working on the Missouri River Rendezvous for sometime in August.

WQPD-Jeff Ryan said he attended the last meeting via Zoom. Worby MacNamee was invited (he's the county floodplain administrator). Jeff asked him if they could willow sprig in floodplains. His answer was no, not without a permit, unless it's done by hand. They are following the exempt well bill, and they'll be doing a tour of the Ten Mile plant on the 25th at 4 pm. Jeff said that he's talked to Jennifer McBroom about the absolute need for willow storage for the Grizzly Gulch project.

LHWG & Helena CORE-the LHWG had their annual meeting and CORE had their meet up at the same facility at the same time. CORE everyone is getting ready for the Summer Walk series. Joe's event will be July 8th out at Lake Helena.

MACD-They've been busy with the legislature.

Supervisor Reports-

Jeff Ryan-he said they're celebrating their 50th anniversary this weekend.

Karl Christians-everyone out his way is calving and feeding. Most of the snow went off, but soaked in. Lots of geese.

Stan Frasier-he's starting to harvest oranges.

Sarah Howe-Cobb-Fires in the Augusta area and the wind is blowing hard. It's great weather for calving. The grizzly bears are out and roaming.

Staff Reports

Evans-written report in the packet. About the proposed realtor workshop-Karl said that we should do something regarding 310s, streams, LOTB as a resource, weed management, Montana fence law, roaming dogs/stray dogs and get continuing education credits. Evans will check into the CECs and will figure out speakers/time. Christians said an October time frame would be best. Try for the Missouri (Room in the back is free and they'll advertise the event). Madison said that they are trying to do a realtor workshop too, probably in the Augusta area. Exempt wells might be a good one for the workshop. One of the things on her to-do list is to apply for the administrative grant for the 310 funds and funds to offset MACD dues.

Kremer-Herman-Big Elk Divide group-Joe attended the last meeting and said it was interesting. Rolling Rivers trailer kicks off on April 19th. The trailer is currently getting a new cover courtesy of a grant from the MACD. Joe asked about the trailer going out of the county, and if the trailer goes to Old Salt, would they need to pay for it? The Big Sky Person at Broadwater will assist with

presentations.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Associate Supervisor-Elaina Frederick would like to volunteer as an associate supervisor. She is very involved with the community, especially kids and their parents. Motion by Christians to appoint Elaina as an Associate Supervisor, second by Ryan; motion carried.

Planning Board-Evans has requested a potential date for someone from the CD to join the Planning Board, but has heard nothing so far.

Wake Boat signs-waiting on the final design of the sign. Karl said that Skeffington’s neighbor called him about the 310 law. He also talked about the wake boat project with that person.

310 Permit Applications

LC-03-24 Alamia-the applicant is drawing up plans for an open ended arch culvert amendment. Tabled

LC-01-25 Walsh Joe gave a report on the proposal and had gone out to take some photos of the proposed project. The proposal is to put a gabion “blanket” at a 45 degree angle over the existing gabions with additional gabions on the concrete to support the “blanket”. Discussion regarding potential other alternatives. Tom Walsh (applicant) said that the gabion blanket was recommended by the gabion manufacturers. Christians asked how the gabion is keyed in at the toe. Walsh said that there will be a trench that the blanket bottom sits in. The gabions on site are in good condition, Joe said that there isn’t much corrosion on the wire themselves. Motion by Ryan to approve with the new information and to follow up with the landowner to monitor effectiveness every year for a few years waiving the 15 day waiting period, second by Christians; motion carried.

LC-03-25 Trettin-Mike Wirth submitted an application to armor the bottom of the water gap. Last year he did seed the site. Pending a site visit. Tabled.

LC-04-25 Skeffington-Pending site visit, Tabled.

LC-05-25 Lottman-Dock application on Canyon Ferry. Material would be floated in via a barge. It will be held in place with cabled in concrete blocks. Tabled pending clarification of where the concrete blocks will be (in water or not). Need to determine how it will be anchored to the shore and bottom of the reservoir.

Other Business

Montana Forest Products story-Jim Simpson has been part of this project and they want to tell the story about this, with the goal of improving forest management, which would likely lead to more timber harvests. Christians would like the CD to donate some money to assist with the story project. Stan Frasier spoke up and said that forests don’t need to be managed. Karl disagreed. Sarah Howe-Cobb said that she’s in the middle of the issue. They saw good logging done in the 80’s and 90’s and then after that some logging that was really done wrong. She said she’s not sure which way to vote on this issue. Motion by Ryan to approve donation of \$100 to the organizations, second by Christians; motion failed.

Announcements

Regular Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2025

The next meeting will be April 10, 2025 at 1 pm and will either be in the same location, or will be in the CM Russell Room at DNRC. Adjournment at 3:21 pm motion to adjourn by Ryan.

Approved by  Date 4/10/25
Recorded by  Date 4/10/2025