

Petroleum County Conservation District

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Local Common Sense Conservation

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Jay King – *Chairman*, **Brenda Brady**, *Vice-Chairman & MSCA*, **Laura Kiehl** – *Treasurer & MRCDC*, **Ralph Corbett** – *Urban Supervisor*, **Rodney Rowton** – *Rural Supervisor*, **Butch Arthur** – *Urban Supervisor*, **Nathan Descheemaeker** – *Supervisor*, **Diane Ahlgren** – *Associate Supervisor, MWC & MSGOT*

April 27, 2023

Call to order: Chairman Jay King called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:01pm. Those present were Jay King, Brenda Brady, Rodney Rowton, Ralph Corbett, Laura Kiehl, Nate Descheemaeker & Diane Ahlgren. Others in attendance were Butch Arthur, Urban Supervisor Elect; Kalin Hoge; Brent Smith, CEMIST; Katie Lund, PCCD Fiscal Manager; and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator. Veronica Grigaltchik, DNRC; Cody Reim, MSU Extension; Steve Wanderaas, CEMIST Co-Chair; Allison Martin, MWC Coordinator; and Chris Hindoen, Rocky Mtn. Insurance, attended virtually.

Approval of Minutes: Ralph Corbett moved to approve the March 30, 2023 regular meeting minutes; Brenda Brady seconded. Motion passed.

Guest/Public Comment: None.

Partner Reports:

MRCDC: Laura Kiehl discussed the last MRCDC Executive Committee meeting. There was an Annual Operating Plan meeting for Fort Peck operations; the tribe attended as well and voiced their concerns. The MRCDC is working on their annual budget and the River Rendezvous/CMR CWG event is underway for June 21/22 in Jordan.

MWC: Allison Martin, new MWC Coordinator, introduced herself. She is getting a grasp on all the projects, grants, etc. for the job. Went to Helena for the Montana Watershed Coordination Council annual meeting with Bill Milton, Laura Nowlin and Diane Ahlgren. Ralph Corbett moved to accept Laura Nowlin's letter of resignation as the MWC Coordinator; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

MSGOT: Trish Smith mentioned that the range monitoring with MSGOT has been moved to May 30th & 31st.

MSU Extension: Cody Reim gave an update on the applicators class and gardening workshop next week.

DNRC: Veronica Grigaltchik stated their fiscal year end is coming up and reimbursement requests for grants need to be sent to them asap this month. The Education Grant is closing May 1st but CDs can still apply after May 1st for fall events. They extended the Administration grant deadline till the end of May. The District Development grant for Loyd Bantz is ending soon and she suggested including Loyd in the Administration grant as an employee. She suggested to send in the No-Till agreement for legal review. There is a Meet and greet May 23rd in Glendive and might be another one June 28th in Lewistown.

NRCS: Trish gave the NRCS update that Reba Ahlgren emailed. Currently have 2 Forestry (timber thinning) TIP contracts pre-approved and 1 Sage Grouse Initiative contract pre-approved. We are working on putting together all of the contract documents and getting them obligated soon. Emily Webster, Summer Intern started in the Lewistown Office this week.

Pheasants Forever: No report.

Winnett ACES: Brenda Brady stated that Winnett ACES is fiscally sponsoring the Sweet Pea Daycare so they can have the non-profit benefits. Kelby will be the Director. In 6 months, they will have a review to see if ACES will continue or they will become their own 501c3 group. ACES Conservation Committee met April 5th and approved a number of projects. CEC/55 Building will be having summer jam sessions the 1st Saturday of every month starting June 3rd. Kevin and Lindsey Flint organizing the jam sessions.

CEMIST: Brent Smith stated that the CEMIST Quarterly meeting was on April 19th; partners updates and 20 partners attended. The EHS Public Meeting in Stanford April 25th: 45 attendees and MISC will be developing an EHS Webinar soon CEMIST Monthly Check in meeting yesterday: Update: Laura Nowlin is stepping down as chair. Steve T. and Steve W. are co-chairs now. CEMIST will be supporting the MRCDC River Rendezvous with Weed Books for swag. CEMIST website update: Trish has the basics/skeleton completed and the group will go forward. To date there have been 11 mussel fouled boats stopped coming into the state. Wibaux has had a couple. Upcoming meetings/events: AIS Monitoring class Miles City, June (focus on CD Admin), Feral Pig High line tour is pushed to the fall, Woody Invasive Working Group (May 11th) in Billings (Trish, Brent, Steve T are attending) Is there board interest in the PCCD BOD visiting the flowing wells watercraft inspection station this summer? Shows support for our neighbor CD and the staff plus its educational.

BLM: Trish gave the BLM update that Katie Decker emailed. Two main points are the Proposed Public Land Rule and the Crooked Creek Unit F prescribed burn. They are still learning about this proposed rule and have many questions, so will try and disseminate information as learn more. Crooked Creek Unit F Prescribed Burn (3,800 acres) – If conditions warrant Northcentral Montana District (NCMD) Fire Management is looking to implement the 3,800-acre Crooked Creek Unit F prescribed fire. Objectives are to reduce ladder fuels and conifer density. Crews will be out starting next week to prep for possible implementation sometime in May. BLM has been coordinating with private landowners, grazing permittees, Chain Buttes Cooperative State Grazing District and County Commissioners. All feedback received at this time has been supportive of implementing the prescribed burn.

Supervisor Reports:

Brenda Brady: No report.

Laura Kiehl: Try to get trees transplanted this year at the rodeo grounds. Found grasshoppers while fencing. Saw a great Egret bird.

Ralph Corbett: No report.

Jay King: Asked Kalin if he would be interested in a PCCD Associate Board position. HB295 was passed through legislation.

Diane Ahlgren: Went to Helena for the Montana Watershed Coordination Council annual meeting with Bill Milton, Laura Nowlin and Allison Martin. Laura Nowlin received an award and Bill presented. Diane will try and go to the MSGOT range monitoring the end of May.

Rodney Rowton: No report.

Nate Descheemaeker: BLM has issued a proposal of the implementation regulations for land use planning. Added a whole new set of regulations and it is not good news. Grazing revision happening right now that the department of Interior is developing. Comments are due June 20th. The Grass Commission signed an MOU and are cooperating with the NW states. Jay asked if Nate had done his Oath of Office yet and Nate said he will go to the courthouse to get it done.

Old Business:

- A. **Urban Supervisor Appointment (Butch Arthur):** The consensus of the board was to accept the Town of Winnett's appointment of Butch Arthur to the PCCD Board.
- B. **CD Insurance:** Chris Hindoen, Rocky Mountain Insurance, went over different insurance plan options for the Petroleum County Conservation District. Ralph Corbett moved to insure the No-Till Drill with our insurance if Katie finds out it is not insured; Brenda Brady seconded. Motion Passed.
- C. **Fire Mitigation Program:** Trish will be attending the Fire Mitigation meeting May 11th in Roundup after the YRCDC Meeting (Woody Invasive Working Group/CEMIST discussion) in Billings.
- D. **Irrigators Grant:** Laura Kiehl stated that Hertha Lund is looking into the irrigators forming an LLC first before they go forward. Jay King explained that this grant and its projects to Butch and Kalin. Trish will ask Munnions how things are going.
- E. **CEMIST – Program Manager raise:** Steve Wanderaas, CEMIST Co-Chair, recommended (from hire letter) a \$24 raise for the CEMIST Program Manager, Brent Smith, retroactive from three months of his date of hire. Brenda Brady moved to approve the CEMIST Executive Committee's recommendation to

increase Brent's pay to \$24/hr. in the timeline recommended; Ralph Corbett seconded. Rodney Rowton abstained. Motion passed.

- F. **Technical Assistant Position Planning:** Katie Lund discussed the current grant for Loyd Bantz's time and that travel can be rolled over to his time. Ralph Corbett moved to give Loyd Bantz a raise to \$22 per hour starting May 1st; Brenda Brady seconded. Motion passed. There was also discussion about the CD applying for another NACD grant in September.
- G. **Administrative Grant:** Katie Lund went over the administrative grant budget. There was discussion about future workshop needs. Rodney Rowton moved to give Laura Nowlin a \$5000 net bonus, approximately \$5500 gross; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed. There was discussion about adding Loyd's wage into the administrative grant and if approved, can use the NACD grant funds elsewhere. Insurance was discussed, and a \$500 stipend was added to the draft budget to help employees get their own insurance. Ralph Corbett moved to approve the administrative budget; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed. Laura Kiehl moved to approve the application for the administrative grant request in the amount of \$78,407; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

New Business:

- A. **310 Updates:** Ralph Corbett moved to approve the Ahlgren/Hobbs 310 application; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed. Laura Kiehl moved to approve the Nowlin 310 permit; Rodney Rowton seconded. Brenda abstained. Motion passed. Ralph moved to approve the Solf 310 application upon the receipt of additional documents needed; Brenda seconded. Motion passed. The board signed the project board decision signature page for the Browning 310 permit since they received the Garfield Board decision signature page.
- B. **No-Till Drill Rental Agreement Paperwork:** There was discussion on putting together a new format for the No-Till Drill rental agreement paperwork. The Garfield County CD's rental agreement was used as a template. Trish typed up the new updated rental agreement for the 750 Series John Deere No-Till Drill during the meeting and the board approved it to be used for now. A committee was set up to update the No-Till drill rental agreement further once the spring renters had finished using it. The committee consists of Jay King, Rodney Rowton, Butch Arthur and Trish Smith.
- C. **Consider new CD website:** Tabled until the next board meeting.
- D. **Legislative Letter to Representatives/Senators:** It was decided that it is not an issue at this point until we hear something new with the legislative session regarding the HB321.

Administrative:

A. Grant Updates: The Board looked over the updated Grant Summary sheet.

B. District Updates: The Board went over the administrator monthly update sheet.

1. Annual Kid's Day/RR Trailer – Trish stated that the event would be at the PCCC July 19th and would have the Rolling Rivers trailer and other educational tables/stations with BLM, NRCS, ACES, and CEMIST. There was discussion on the travel costs to pick up and return the Rolling Rivers trailer in Sidney and was decided to wait and see if drop off arrangements from other CDs using it can be made – or getting another CD to meet ½ way to save on costs.

2. Poster Contest: Decided to skip the poster contest this year due to timing being due June 15th and the school unable to participate.

3. Area 1 Meeting: Trish discussed that we need to decide if we want to add a CD field trip, training or entertainment to the MACD Area 1 agenda. Will have more discussion later.

4. Schedule employee annual review: Trish will email the board options for scheduling her annual review meeting.

Trish asked about attending the May 11th Billings Woody Invasive Working Group/CEMIST/YRCDC meeting before heading to the Fire Mitigation meeting in Roundup. There were no issues.

Financial:

A. Petroleum CD: Ralph Corbett moved to pay PCCD unpaid bills; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed. Katie discussed the Agassiz order issue with Garfield County not having a credit card, so the PCCD was billed. Discussed needing to stop a check payment that was lost in the mail, and resend a check to Karin Boyd with Geomorphology.

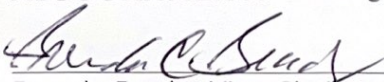
B. Missouri River CD Council: Ralph Corbett moved to pay MRCDC unpaid bills; Brenda Brady Seconded. Motion passed.


Correspondence: Folder of recent correspondence was brought for board to look over.

Announcements:

A. Next Board meeting: Thursday, May 25, 2023, PCCD Office

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 8:56pm.


Brenda Brady, Vice-Chairman
Administrator


Trish J. Smith, District