

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

November 30, 2023

Call to order: Vice-Chair Brenda Brady called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:03pm. Those present were Brenda Brady, Jay King (Virtual), Ralph Corbett, Rodney Rowton, Butch Arthur, and Laura Kiehl. Others in attendance were Allison Martin, MWC Coordinator (Virtual); Autumn Coleman, DNRC (Virtual); Lindsay Volpe, DNRC (Virtual); Laura Nowlin, Winnett ACES Operations Coordinator; Veronica Grigaltchik, DNRC CD Specialist; Katie Lund, PCCD Fiscal Manager; Brent Smith, CEMIST; and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator.

Approval of Minutes: Ralph Corbett moved to approve the October 25, 2023 regular board meeting minutes as corrected; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

Guest/Public Comment: None.

Partner Reports:

MRCDC: Laura Kiehl discussed the MRCDC Quarterly Meeting that took place during MACD Convention. They discussed two support letters; USFWS Proposed rule changes for their wildlife refuges and USFWS proposed Missouri Headwaters Conservation Area Comment letters. Everyone discussed what they would like to get done in their CD area that MRCDC could help with. Voted on the next River Rendezvous area; will be in the Broadwater County area. December 19th will be the next Executive Committee meeting.

MWC: Allison stated they got their DEQ restoration planning grant signed; working on that this Winter. Last MWC meeting was in October. Mark Ockey from DEQ discussed Wetland Hydrology and their Watershed Restoration plans. The Floodplain Encroachment Grant is expiring the end of December so finalizing projects. Will be getting the final report from Pioneer Tech soon. Next MWC meeting is December 12 in Roundup.

MSGOT: Katie stated that she visited with Therese Hartman with MSGOT. She is trying to finalize contracts and will get to us to review. There have been land owner changes. Katie went over the Audit excel sheet. She would like to do one payment per fiscal year to avoid going over the \$750K threshold that would trigger an audit.

MSU Extension: No Report.

DNRC: Veronica discussed her report in the meeting packet. Katie already emailed Veronica the Wage and Benefits Survey. Veronica stated that there has been a 25-35% turnover of Administrators across the state and that makes it hard to do business. Additional funding coming down will help address that. The 321 Trust is still accumulating, but the current carryover will cover the 2nd round of CDA. The Accountability Assessment paperwork (similar to an Audit) will need to go with the 2nd round of CDA reporting. Relaunched the 10-min trainings for Supervisors. Suggest doing the trainings during board meetings. Brenda stated to add the Election/Recruitment 10-minute training to the agenda for the December meeting.

NRCS: Trish read Mike Lucas's update. The NRCS is currently busy evaluating and planning on new applications. Mike plans to submit a Work unit wide forestry TIP for Petroleum, Fergus and Judith Basin Counties. Practices would include Precommercial thinning, Brush Management and Woody Residue Treatment to address fuel hazards, forest health and improved forage production. If this proposal is approved, there would potentially be a signup during the month of October 2024.

Pheasants Forever: No Report.

Winnett ACES: Laura Nowlin discussed the ACES planning grant that the CD sponsored; DNRC awarded the grant. The MOU between ACES and the CD needs to be signed so Veronica can finalize the grant agreement. Have until Sept 30, 2025 to spend the money. Veronica has the final agreement almost finalized and she will go over it later. ACES will pay the contractors and will bill the CD. The next Winnett ACES Board meeting will be December 6th at 6pm.

CEMIST: Brent stated that the Grain Growers Convention was in Great Falls this week. Stockgrowers Convention in Billings is next week. The Heath Snail Meeting will be in Lewistown December 12th. The feral pig highline tour will be sometime in March 2024.

BLM: No Report.

Supervisor Reports:

Brenda Brady: Discussed the meeting session put on by Dan Clark (MSU Extension) at MACD. Discussed the meeting rules document. Need to make sure to not have a quorum when discussing matters in person or via email. This includes attending events/other meetings together. Veronica stated that as long as they do not have a quorum when attending meeting to discuss matters, we do not need to post the meeting.

Laura Kiehl: The Irrigation district, FCA, NRCS and few CD board members met to discuss getting a grant to replace modernized Petrolia Irrigation District infostructure. There were a lot of questions and information. Will have more meetings in the next few weeks. At MACD Convention the Butte School of Mines, DEQ, Laura Nowlin and Reba Ahlgren all discussed the School of Mines and that they do a project every few years. Projects have been for salinity control, etc. They said that the Irrigation District could be its next project and would like the CD to be a partner in this project. They would like to continue Salinity Control Projects from where it was left off 10 years ago.

Ralph Corbett: No report.

Jay King: The PCCD Resolution passed unanimously at the MACD Convention. The next step is working with state and local governments and getting out a template to CDs. Jay discussed the meeting session put on by Dan Clark. We need a board quorum to have a vote pass and if someone abstains or votes no, that takes away from the quorum.

Rodney Rowton: No report.

Nate Descheemaeker: No report.

Butch Arthur: No report.

Old Business:

A. **MSGOT Lease Contracts:** Discussed prior under MSGOT Partner updates.

B. **McDonald Irrigation:** Katie asked Autumn Coleman and Lindsay Volpe (with DNRC) to discuss the planning grant application process. McDonald Creek needs the headgates and diversions repaired. Working with WWC. Started the process but have questions on the application side. Lindsay stated that they will open up the cycle next week; through Submittable. It will be open through April; first review within 6 weeks of the application submission. Application comes through the CD and will go through the ranking process in January, and then they will award soon after. The effective date will be after it is awarded. The max award amount for the planning grant depends on the type of work being done. Autumn stated that the awarded money goes to the CD, then we have a contractual agreement with who is doing the work, and the CD pays the contractor. They need measurable results and to show how we are managing resources better.

New Business:

A. **310 Updates**

1. Rowton – Ralph Corbett moved to approve the Rowton 310 permit; Butch Arthur seconded. Rodney Rowton abstained. Motion passed.
2. Beatty – Ralph Corbett moved to approve both of the Beatty 310 permits; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

B. **DNRC Conservation Districts Accountability Assessment:** Discussed prior in the DNRC Partner update.

C. **MOU with ACES:** Laura Kiehl moved to approve the MOU with ACES; Ralph Corbett seconded. Rodney Rowton abstained. Motion passed.

Administrative:

Brenda discussed offering Brandi & Gage Iverson travel reimbursement for the Young Ag Couples Conference in January. Brenda Brady moved to pay for mileage to Brandi & Gage Iverson for the Young Ag Couples Conference; Ralph Corbett Seconded. Motion passed.

1. **MCDEO Outreach & Education Team Member** – Trish stated that she will be joining the MCDEO December meetings to gather more information on the committees to get a better understanding of the time involved before committing to anything. Tabled until the next meeting.

A. Grant & District Updates:

Financial:

Katie discussed the Grant Summary Sheet. Ralph Corbett moved to have Trish send out Christmas cards to partners; Jay King seconded. Motion passed.

Brenda Brady moved for Trish to put together a new free version of the PCCD website, and pursue funding to upgrade the CD and MWC websites; Ralph Corbett seconded. Motion passed.

1. Petroleum CD: Ralph Corbett moved to pay the PCCD unpaid bills; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

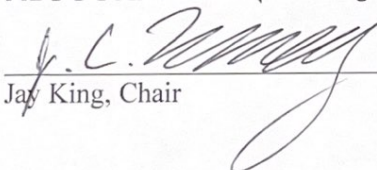
2. Missouri River CD Council: Ralph Corbett moved to pay the MRCDC unpaid bills; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed.

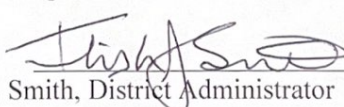
Correspondence: The board looked through the correspondence folder; nothing of importance.

Announcements: Laura Kiehl moved to change the PCCD December board meeting to December 20th at 3pm; Ralph Corbett seconded. Motion passed.

A. Next Board meeting: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3pm, PCCD Office.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:22pm.


Jay King, Chair


Trish J. Smith, District Administrator