

**Minnehaha Conservation District
March 11, 2024, Monthly Meeting
District Tree Shed
Board Meeting at 7:30 am**

Heber called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Supervisors present: Rick Bonander, Gordon Heber, Jim Pfeifer, and Allen Severtson (arrived at 7:40 a.m.)

Supervisors absent: Travis Entenman

Advisors present: None

Advisors absent: Carl Eliason, Kathleen Mackeprang, and Brian Top

Others present: John Parker, Mike Langner, Denise Fletcher, Alina Krone-Hedman, Damon Brown, Casey Wenzlaff, Barry Berg, and Jen Bleyenber

Agenda: MSP to approve (with the addition of new business item #3 - SD Wildlife Federation Conservation Camp) by Pfeifer and Bonander. All ayes.

Minutes of February 12th meeting: MSP to approve by Bonander and Pfeifer. All ayes.

Treasurer's report: Reviewed at meeting. MSP to approve by Pfeifer and Bonander. All ayes.

Bills: Reviewed at meeting. MSP to approve and pay bills by Pfeifer and Severtson. All ayes.

NRCS activity report by Casey Wenzlaff:

WETLANDS: 27 certified wetland determination requests in process (11 FSA-569 [potential violation] and 16 new requests).

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): General sign-ups opened, as well as continuous CRP. 4 offers to plan for trees.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSTWP): 4 applications to process.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): State ranking deadline was March 8th.

Participated in Women in Science on March 6th. Will help with Sioux Empire Water Festival March 11-12.

Big Sioux River Project Report by Barry Berg:

SRAM & RAM: Working with producers and DANR on buffers. Planning to survey sites this week.

EQIP/RCPP: New sign-up ends on May 5th.

OTHER RELATED ITEMS: Attended Pheasant Fest in early March; doing Broken Arrows Podcast on March 11th.

UPCOMING: Amber's last day is March 13th. Q1 BSRP Steering Committee Meeting will be held on March 19th in Dell Rapids. MSP to approve and sign check to East Dakota Water Development District for 4th quarter wages, benefits, etc. in the amount of \$43,734.10 by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

Urban Educator Report by Alina Krone-Hedman:

OUTREACH: Attended Pheasant Fest on March 1 -3; handed out information and took pollinator kit sign-ups. Will assist with Sioux Empire Water Festival on March 12-13 at University of Sioux Falls.

CITY PARTNERSHIP: Prairie and Pollinator Program – Currently distributing. Added link to website for plant identification. Community Garden and Education Demonstration Area – Continuing work to prepare for Spring; ordered high tunnel; Damon Brown working on raised beds and other items.

NRCS PARTNERSHIP: Waiting on application to open to apply for next cycle of the Urban Conservation Demonstration & Awareness Project.

OTHER: Resilient Food System Infrastructure Program application submitted March 10th for cooler expansion, wash station, generator, etc. Looking into other grants – 319 mini grants and Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production. Asked by SDSPA (South Dakota Specialty Producers Association) to host pollinator webinar – scheduled for April 11th.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes - None

Update from Supervisors: Heber mentioned that the Pheasant Fest was well attended. He went on trip to Washington DC on March 4th as a representative of the Eastern SD Soil & Water Research Farm. They had 11 appointments to meet with representatives and constituents. He presented a handout that they had given out at the meetings about the history of the research farm and research that is occurring. The Research Farm Annual Meeting will be held in Brookings on March 20th, starting with a noon meal. Heber also attended the Hefty Cattleman’s meeting a couple of weeks ago.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Service Report (bio-solids, tree planting, grass planting, Gevik Site, Water Festival)

Bio-solids: Received the 2024 contract back from the city of Sioux Falls. Trees: Over 50 acres are planned. Grass: 400 acres planned. Gevik Site: Working on ideas for the site. Meeting with the Soil Health Coalition on March 14th. Water Festival: Working at the event March 11-13. 2500 4th graders attending.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Grant Application Approval – Upgrade to Tree Cooler and Facilities

Application was sent in on March 10th requesting 2 additional coolers that would sit next to the current cooler, plus a wash station and repairs to the current building. Recipients should be announced by the end of May. MSP to approve grant application by Pfeifer and Severtson. All ayes.

2. Prepay Trees for Discount of 2%

MSP to prepay the tree bill for the Big Sioux Nursery for a 2% discount by Severtson and Pfeifer. All ayes.

3. South Dakota Wildlife Federation Youth Conservation Camp

The camp will be held June 2-8 at Camp Bob Marshall in the Black Hills for students who have completed 8th grade through 11th grade. Cost to sponsor camper is \$450, which includes round trip transportation to and from the camp. MSP to sponsor 2 campers by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

Executive Session (if needed) – Not needed.

CONSERVATION PLAN SIGNING

Heber signed conservation agreements presented by NRCS.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

MSP to adjourn at 8:52 a.m. by Bonander and Pfeifer. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: April 8th, 2024, at 3:00 pm – USDA Service Center

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, Recording Secretary