

**Minnehaha Conservation District
May 13, 2019 Monthly Meeting
USDA Service Center
Board meeting 3:00 pm**

Pfeifer called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Supervisors present: Gordon Heber, Jim Pfeifer, Jennifer Schmidtbauer and Bob Woerman

Supervisors absent: None

Advisors present: Dana Loseke

Advisors absent: Jim Jackson

Others present: John Parker, Denise Fletcher, Mary Lou Lacey, Brian Top, Brian Alderson, Drew DeGroot, and Jack Majeres

Agenda: MSP to approve by Heber and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

Minutes of April 8th meeting: MSP to approve by Heber and Woerman. All ayes.

Minutes of April 24th meeting: MSP to approve by Heber and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

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

Bills: Reviewed at meeting. Approved to pay. MSP to approve by Woerman and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

NRCS activity report by Mary Lou Lacey:

WETLANDS: We currently have 4 certified wetland determination requests in progress.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): No news

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP): We have 12 applications and 2 renewals to work on.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): 1 animal waste and 3 general EQIP (soil health) applications have been offered contracts. If additional funds are received, a few other high ranking applications could become funded.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM (ACEP): A request to graze an existing easement due to flooding and overuse was denied. Easement team will work with producer to improve conditions on the site.

USDA Chief Lohr toured North and South Dakota and met with various groups. FSA and NRCS had a joint teleconference regarding USDA Disaster Assistance due to Winter Storm Ulmer. Details are not yet known.

Big Sioux River – RCPP Report by Brian Top: Surveying of 6 SRAM and 5 RAM sites is occurring. 14 Ag. Waste Management Systems (AWMS) were completed in Segment 3 of Big Sioux River Watershed Project. 2 or 3 AWMS's in planning process.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes

Jack Majeres, Area Director, talked about State Legislature bills from last session that deal with conservation districts, as well as the NOLO (Non-Operating Land Owners) project. Minnehaha, Lake, Moody and Brookings County would work together. Grant funds could possibly pay for part of the salary for an employee that would contact NOLOs and generate education and new ideas.

Update from Supervisors: Schmidtbauer spoke to the Downtown Rotary Group about ideas for a "Quality of Big Sioux River" project that they could fund.

OLD BUSINESS

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

Bio-solids: On hold. 60 acres have been applied this spring. Trees: 35 acres planned. Most bareroot orders have been picked up. Grass: 900 – 1000 acres to plant. Gevik Site: in good condition.

2. Equipment: All is working well.

3. Gevik Opportunity – Research & Study for the Future (Mike Heisler)

Parker and Top met with Les Miller and Carter Johnson with the Eco Sun Group. They want to establish a cooperative with the District to share research, ideas, services, educational outreach, and grant co-writing. Soil Health Coalition is interested in research and the Game, Fish & Parks Dept. is interested in the site. The Board needs to make a plan for the site. De Groot will check on the property deed and any legal restrictions on the property. August Board meeting will be held at the Gevik Site.

4. Grant Application for Pollinator/Rain Garden Project (Multi-County)

This grant was awarded to the 8 county group (Minnehaha, Minor, Kingsbury, Hanson, McCook, Union, Clay and Aurora). \$12,250 in grant funds and \$13,100 in local funds. Looking for 1 site to be a demonstration area.

5. Area Meeting – June 17th in Hartford

This meeting will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Pizza Ranch meeting room in Hartford. Let Parker know if you plan to attend.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Future Economic/Educational Outreach Ideas for the District

Supervisors presented ideas. Woerman: Urban conservation services, Ash tree replacement promotion, Approach contractors and towns about services offered, weed spraying. Schmidtbauer: Spot spraying, Grants & Partnership with NRCS and City, Adjust pricing on services, Gevik site options, Expand into urban services. Pfeifer: Investigate heavier tractor set-up to run an over seeder, 6 ft. drill, etc. Heber: Investigate pricing of services (possibly a sliding scale for volume). Parker: Offer larger (4 – 6') trees for sale. MSP to add spraying services by Woerman and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

2. Friends of the Big Sioux Membership

MSP to pay River Sponsor (business) membership for 2019 by Schmidtbauer and Heber. All ayes.

3. Recognition of Service

Discussion about recognizing years of Services for 3 past board members: Tom Wolles – 20 years, Jeff Oyen – 20 years, Ron Johnson – 22 years. Schmidtbauer and Parker will investigate options and cost.

4. Board and Advisory Interest

Discussion about people who have expressed interest in the Board positions. Parker will check with the State's Attorney about the appointment procedure.

CONSERVATION PLAN APPROVAL

2019- 5A and 5B

MSP to sign agreements by Schmidtbauer and Woerman. Aye: Pfeifer, Schmidtbauer and Woerman. Abstain: Heber.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Correspondence

MSP to adjourn at 5:59 p.m. by Schmidtbauer and Woerman. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, June 10th, 2019 at 3:00 pm – USDA Service Center

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, District Office Assistant