

Minnehaha Conservation District
April 13th, 2026, Monthly Meeting
USDA Service Center
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm

Heber called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

Supervisors present: Rick Bonander, Gordon Heber, Jim Pfeifer, and Allen Severtson

Supervisors absent: Travis Entenman

Advisors present: Kathleen Mackeprang, Brian Top

Advisors absent: None

Others present: John Parker, Mike Langner, Denise Fletcher, Dan Wehmeyer, Deron Ruesch, Michelle Burke, and Jay Gilbertson

Agenda: MSP to approve by Severtson and Pfeifer. All ayes.

Minutes of March 9th meeting: MSP to approve by Pfeifer and Severtson. All ayes.

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

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

NRCS activity report by Dan Wehmeyer:

COMPLIANCE: Currently working on easement monitoring for Moody and Minnehaha counties and certified wetland determinations.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): Received approvals for SU 65/66. May 1 is the deadline for the 2nd batch of continuous CRP.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSTwP): Working on planning/rankings.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): Working on rankings/preapprovals.

MISCELLANEOUS: Ruesch commended Sioux Falls office staff for their work. The agency is requesting more funds for CSP and EQIP. He attended a career fair in Tri-Valley for 170 students. He will attend the FFA Convention during their Career Carnival this month.

Big Sioux River Project Report by Barry Berg: None

Urban Educator Report by Alina Krone-Hedman (sent in advance):

OUTREACH: Branch Out! Earth and Arbor Day Festival - April 24 from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at the Mary Jo Wegner Arboretum. Planning to do bookmark making activity, hand out NACD Stewardship Week materials, tree planting tips, other information. **Party for the Planet** – April 25 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at Sertoma Park. Planning small activities and handing out pollinator information.

CITY PARTNERSHIP: Prairie and Pollinator Program – sales have started for Spring. Evaluating other demonstration areas.

GRANTS/FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS: NACD Technical Assistance Grant – still waiting to hear on funding status of next grant cycle. Continuing to make plans for outreach and training for the current grant cycle.

OTHER: Dewey C. Gevik Outdoor Learning Area – Continuing to work on site improvements. Held multiple meetings with the Soil Health Coalition. Reviewed and received input on kiosk. Hoping to get more finalized (signs, kiosk information pages) by the end of the week. **Conversations & Conservation** – Next event planned for Thursday, May 14 at 5:30 p.m. at Fernson Brewery. All those affiliated and who work in conservation are welcome.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes – Discussion about various wind erosion happening around the area and what could be done. **Parker** mentioned that he will run an announcement in the paper around May 1st about the Board Election coming up this year.

Update from Supervisors – Bonander is running for County Commissioner in the June primary election. There are 3 positions open with 6 candidates. **Heber** traveled to Washington D.C. and met with 8 legislative aides (for legislators who are on the appropriations committee) to lobby for the \$3.7 million budget for the research farm/lab in Brookings. Their biggest meeting was with the USDA.

OLD BUSINESS

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

Bio-solids: Deep soil sampling being completed. **Trees:** 48-50 acres to plant this year. 20 acres planned for 2027 already. **Grass:** 600 acres to be drilled on the 30' and 15' drills. 350 acres for the district to plant on the 12' drill. 20-25 acres for the 6' drill. 4 overseeding jobs completed with 2 more potential jobs. **Gevik Site:** Kiosk is going up this week.

2. Water Festival – March 2-4

2450 students attended over 2 days. 105 volunteers and presenters each day. 32 solicitations for donations were returned by 23 companies totaling \$31,250.00. There were expenses of \$26,563.57, providing a net profit of \$4,686.43. Next year's Water Festival will be held March 1 – 3.

3. Bookkeeping Services

Parker presented a proposal for bookkeeping that would cost an estimated average of \$995.00/month. No checks would be printed. MSP to accept the proposal for bookkeeping services by Bonander and Pfeifer. All eyes.

4. Potential Land Sale

Parker discussed a meeting on March 24th he attended with Severtson about a possible land sale. An appraisal will be done. Several options were discussed.

5. Locally Lead Training March 24th

Ruesch, Wehmeyer and Parker attended this training in Huron. SDACD would like Conservation Districts to take the lead in these meetings. It is an effort to make an annual plan for what areas to focus on, look at what partners are available, what are the resource concerns and priorities for the county.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Big Sioux River Project Staffing

Gilbertson announced that Barry Berg is resigning effective April 24th. Tanner Clausen (currently with DANR) will be coming back to lead the project. May 11th will be his first day.

Executive Session (if needed) - None

CONSERVATION PLAN SIGNING

Heber signed conservation agreements presented by NRCS.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

MSP to adjourn at 4:29 p.m. by Severtson and Bonander. All eyes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: May 11th, 2026, at 3:00 pm – USDA Service Center

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, Recording Secretary