

**Minnehaha Conservation District  
August 14th, 2023, Monthly Meeting  
USDA Service Center  
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm**

Heber called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

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

**Supervisors absent:** None

**Advisors present:** None

**Advisors absent:** Brian Alderson, Carl Eliason, Susan Kruse, Kelly Lyons, Mark McGee, and Jennifer Schmidtbauer

**Others present:** John Parker, Denise Fletcher, Alina Krone-Hedman, Dan Wehmeyer, and Amber Lively

**Agenda:** MSP to approve with one addition, new business item #6 (Soil Health School), by Entenman and Pfeifer. All ayes.

**Minutes of July 10th meeting:** MSP to approve by Pfeifer and Bonander. All ayes.

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

**Bills:** Reviewed at meeting. MSP to approve and pay by Severtson and Entenman. All ayes.

**NRCS activity report by Dan Wehmeyer:**

**WETLANDS:** 37 certified wetland determination requests in process.

**CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP):** Completing continuous and general CRP offers. 13 total offers.

**CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSTWP):** Certifying and paying for practices. Taking applications for 2024. \$18 million statewide funding for 2024.

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP):** Certifying and paying for practices. Taking applications for 2024. \$31 million statewide funding for 2024.

**BIG SIOUX RIVER PROJECT RCPP:** Certifying and paying for practices. About \$867,000 remaining in last year of project.

Wehmeyer discussed using e-signature on conservation plans. The board agreed to the chairman signing plans via e-signature.

**Big Sioux River Project Report by Barry Berg and Amber Lively:**

**SRAM & RAM:** Several producers showing interest in enrollment for 2024.

**EQIP/RCPP:** RCPP batching deadline is October 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Other Related Items:** Awaiting invoices for 2 completed alternative water facilities for grazing; 3 alternative water facilities still being planned. Berg attended FRRCC (Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities) Federal Advisory Committee in Denver, CO from July 10-14. Attended Family Park Public Input meeting on July 17<sup>th</sup>. Appeared at Sioux Empire Fair Ag Appreciation Day on August 9<sup>th</sup>.

Upcoming events: Riverfest on August 19<sup>th</sup> and SRAM Grazing Lands Field Day, “This is our Water” meeting on August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

MSP to approve checks totaling \$228, 141.14 and to approve and sign voucher #16 by Severtson and Entenman. All ayes.

#### **Urban Educator Report by Alina Krone-Hedman:**

**Outreach:** Possible classroom/afterschool outreach opportunities; Pollinator Day – September 2<sup>nd</sup> at Good Earth State Park.

**City Partnership:** Prairie and Pollinator Program – continued outreach for possible small release for dormant seeding; Evaluation started for improvements/additions. Community Garden and Education Demonstration Area - Water meter being installed; Updated maps and plans being created for Spring of 2024; Supplies list being created and ordered. Possible additional opportunities for partnership in discussion.

**NRCS Partnership:** Discussion started about grant application regarding next phase of Urban Conservation Demonstration & Awareness Project; Looking into elements/practices to be demonstrated at education area.

**Other:** Attended Urban Agriculture Field Day at Cherry Rock and IronFox Farms on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Looking into possible assistance opportunities – assistance for fruit trees/orchard establishment and assistance in lesson plan development and teaching. Upcoming conferences: 2023 SDACD Fall Convention in Aberdeen from September 17-19<sup>th</sup>. Eastern South Dakota Water Conference in Brookings on October 11<sup>th</sup>. SD Local Food Conference in Sioux Falls from November 17-18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Public Comment Time – 15 minutes**

Parker presented pictures of a customer’s native grass project.

**Update from Supervisors** – Heber discussed the nomination of candidates for the State Conservation Commission. There are 2 openings on an 8–9-member board. They are appointed by the Governor and Conservation Districts can make nominations. No nominees were suggested.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

- 1. Service Report (bio-solids, tree planting, grass planting, Gevik Site, woody encroachment trn.)**  
**Bio-solids:** Our deep soil sample person is unable to operate currently. We are trying to make the rods needed to do the task. The City is considering changes to their bio-solids operation for the future. **Trees:** We are working on tree renovation plans. The survival count is underway, as well as growing left over trees in pots, with irrigation. **Grass:** Working on some planting jobs, alfalfa, food plots, etc. **Gevik Site:** 3 days of work completed last month, mowing, trimming, and spraying. The site is included in the Soil Health Coalition grant for educational purposes. **Woody Encroachment Trn.:** Parker and Langner attended training in Mitchell in July, learning about methods to control encroachment, including burning, cutting, and chemicals.
- 2. Research Farm Open House – July 11<sup>th</sup>, Brookings, SD**  
Parker, Langner and Bonander attended, and Heber presented. A focus group met afterwards to discuss future activities.
- 3. Officers and Directors Liability Coverage**  
This coverage is included in our current Property Insurance policy under General Liability, with a \$3 million limit per occurrence.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Certificates of Deposit and Checking Account**

\$50,000 was used to purchase three Certificates of Deposit. Our checking account is interest bearing (0.20%) when the balance is over \$50,000. Parker proposed placing more funds into C.D.'s every month. MSP to authorize Parker, District Manager, to purchase a \$10,000 C.D. for 6 months by Severtson and Pfeifer. All ayes.

### **2. Pheasant Fest – March 1-3, 2024, at Denny Sanford Premiere Center**

30,000 people are expected to attend. Heber suggested that the District's booth should emphasize habitat building work that the District performs. Parker mentioned that the SDACDE (South Dakota Association of Conservation District Employees) and other districts will help pay for and staff the booth. Discussion about other possible partnerships and raffle prizes or activities to offer.

### **3. Update Newsletter**

10,500 newsletters are mailed out each year. In 2023, the cost was \$5,300 total and about 203 customers ordered trees. Discussion held about continuing newsletters and/or alternative marketing methods. The consensus of the board was to continue the newsletter for another year and possibly add some new marketing methods as well.

### **4. Fall Convention – September 17-19, 2023, in Aberdeen (Agenda Attached)**

Heber encouraged everyone to attend. Parker, Langner, Krone-Hedman, and Heber plan to attend. Parker asked others to let him know by September 5<sup>th</sup> if they want to attend and need a room.

### **5. Advisors and Board Members Expectations (Guidelines from Supervisor's Manual)**

Board advisors have not been attending meetings this year. The board decided to clear the advisor list for the new year and ask advisors if they wish to continue, with the expectation that members attend at least 1 meeting or event during the year.

### **6. Soil Health School**

This event will be held from August 28-30<sup>th</sup> near Garretson, SD. Board members can stop in at the event free of charge, as the Conservation District is a member and sponsor. The fee to sponsor an attendee is \$150/person. MSP to sponsor 1 person to the school by Entenman and Heber. All Ayes.

**Executive Session (if needed)** - None

## **CONSERVATION PLAN SIGNING**

Board approved signing conservation plans. Heber signed conservation agreements presented by NRCS.

## **OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

MSP to adjourn at 5:08 p.m. by Entenman and Pfeifer. All ayes.

**NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, September 11th, 2023, at 3:00 pm – USDA Service Center**

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, Recording Secretary