

Minnehaha Conservation District
April 8th, 2024, Monthly Meeting
USDA Service Center
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm

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

Supervisors present: Rick Bonander, Travis Entenman, and Allen Severtson

Supervisors absent: Gordon Heber and Jim Pfeifer

Advisors present: Kathleen Mackeprang and Brian Top

Advisors absent: Carl Eliason

Others present: John Parker, Denise Fletcher, Alina Krone-Hedman, Damon Brown, Casey Wenzlaff, Barry Berg, Kathleen Mackeprang, and Brian Top

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

Minutes of March 11th meeting: MSP to approve by Severtson and Bonander. All ayes.

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

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

NRCS activity report by Casey Wenzlaff:

WETLANDS: 6-month lead time for certified wetland determination requests.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): Currently have 24.7 mil acres enrolled for sign up 61; farm bill cap is 27 mil acres. Deadline is July 31 for an October start date. General sign up was from March 4th to March 29th. No offers in Minnehaha County.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSTWP): Approx. \$1.6 million for Big Sioux RU. 3 applications received. Ranking deadline is April 12th.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): Approx. \$1.6 million for Big Sioux RU. Starting to preapprove/approve/obligate applications. \$50,000 for CIS – Obligated all our CIS funds (1 high tunnel, 2 cover crops).

BIG SIOUX RIVER PROJECT RCPP: Second batching date is May 3rd.

Conservation plans to sign for RCPP and CRP.

Big Sioux River Project Report by Barry Berg:

SRAM & RAM: Working with DANR on several SRAM/RBI buffers.

MSP to approve and sign the RAM portion of a RAM/RBI contract package on 24.24 acres of West Pipestone Creek by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

Urban Educator Report by Alina Krone-Hedman:

OUTREACH: Assisted with Sioux Empire Water Festival on March 12-13 at USF, with approx. 2,300 students from 45 schools attending. Will host a SDSPA pollinator webinar on April 11 through Facebook Live, discussing native plants and pollinators. Will have a table at Good Earth Day during week leading up to April 20th clean up event. Will table and present pollinator information at Queen Bee Day on May 18th at Remedy Brewing Company.

CITY PARTNERSHIP: Prairie and Pollinator Program – sold out of initial 50 kits this year. Continue to sell while waiting for supplies for 50 more. Community Garden and Education Demonstration Area – continued work on ordering components. Damon Brown is taking the lead on planning for introducing the space to the community.

NRCS PARTNERSHIP: Application for next cycle of Urban Conservation Demonstration & Awareness Project is due April 29. MSP to apply for Conservation Collaborative Cooperative Agreement by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

OTHER: Resilient Food System Infrastructure Program Application – waiting to hear which projects will be awarded funds. MSP to apply for NWF (National Wildlife Federation) mini grants by Severtson and Bonander. All ayes. Discussed possible Rain Garden Pilot Project, possible tree planting projects and donation requests. Big Sioux River Clean-up event on April 20 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes – per Krone-Hedman – there is a Sioux Falls Sustainability meeting on April 19th and a national trapper’s event on July 25 – 27. Per Berg – He and Amber Lively recorded an Unbroken Arrows podcast during the Pheasant Fest in March.

Update from Supervisors – Bonander mentioned that he will speak to the Minnehaha County Township Supervisors on April 8 about why the state SB201 was a bad idea. It takes away local control of the land for the carbon pipeline; signatures are being collected to place the issue on the ballot.

OLD BUSINESS

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

Bio-solids: On hold until the ground gets caught up. Trees: 51 acres planned. Sites are getting flagged and tilled. Grass: 600 acres to do on the 15’ drill and 30’ drill. 400 acres to do on the 12’ drill. Discussion about the age and wear on drills and the potential need to trade or purchase new drills in the future. No action taken. Gevik Site: Applying for a grant for signage. Marked out an area for the pollinator site. Obtaining free culverts to use on the site. Water Festival: Assisted with 2-day event at USF with 2,317 students, 105 teachers from 45 schools. Received \$31,500 in donations, with expenses of \$27,264.55.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Long Term Management of Wetland Mitigation Sites

Farm Bureau owns the easement for Wetland Mitigation sites and needs a party to handle management (monitoring and repair work) of the sites around the state, working together with various conservation districts. MSP for mitigation management with the Farm Bureau by Severtson and Bonander. All ayes.

Executive Session (if needed) - None

CONSERVATION PLAN SIGNING

Entenman signed conservation agreements presented by NRCS and FSA.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

MSP to adjourn at 4:31 p.m. by Severtson and Bonander. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: May 13th, 2024, at 3:00 pm – USDA Service Center

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, Recording Secretary