

**Minnehaha Conservation District
January 19th, 2023, Monthly Meeting
USDA Service Center and Zoom
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm**

Entenman called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

Supervisors present: Travis Entenman, Gordon Heber, Susan Kruse, and Jennifer Schmidtbauer (joined at 3:50 p.m.)

Supervisors absent: Jim Pfeifer

Advisors present: Rick Bonander

Advisors absent: Brian Alderson, Carl Eliason, Kelly Lyons, Mark McGee, and Allen Severtson

Others present: John Parker, Denise Fletcher, Mike Langner, Alina Krone-Hedman, Dan Wehmeyer, Deron Ruesch, Barry Berg, and Brian Top

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

Minutes of December 12th meeting: MSP to approve by Heber and Kruse. All ayes.

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

Bills: Reviewed at meeting. MSP to approve and pay by Heber and Kruse. All ayes.

NRCS activity report by Dan Wehmeyer:

WETLANDS: 26 certified wetland determination requests in progress

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): Upcoming CREP signup with 25,000-acre enrollment goal. Must be open to public hunting, 40 acres minimum. Increased rental rates/incentive rates.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSTwP): Working through 4 applications

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): Working through 25 applications; additional Inflation Reduction Act monies coming in January; additional monies coming in future fiscal years

BIG SIOUX RIVER PROJECT RCPP: 9 applications; 2 grazing and 7 cover crops

Big Sioux River Project Report by Barry Berg: Working on one RAM in Lincoln County and trees for SRAM in Lincoln County. Discussion about SRAM and RAM payment increase is occurring. One Ag. Waste System finishing up in Minnehaha County; one Ag. Waste System in Brookings County planned for RCPP. Orientation and first full meeting held for FRRCC (Farm Ranch and Rural Communities Committee). Berg is on this committee that is focusing on Water Quality, Food Waste & Pesticides, heavily weighted on climate change. Preliminary planning for the producer SRAM and "This is our Water" meeting to be held on August 23, 2023. MSP to approve Voucher 13 for reimbursement of funds (\$83,890.72 total) by Heber and Kruse. All ayes. MSP to approve 3 checks to be written by Heber and Kruse. All ayes.

Urban Educator Report by Alina Krone-Hedman: Current: Working on Conservation District newsletter (to be released the week of 1/22.) **Upcoming Events:** Will have an information table and discussion at the Soil Health Conference 1/24 and 1/25. Will have an information table at the Project Food Forest on 1/28. Assisting with event facilitation and education stations at the Sioux Empire Water Festival on 3/07 and 3/08. **City Partnership:** Continue planning work on kits for the Native Prairie Restoration project (to be released in April) and the Community Garden and Education Demonstration Area (plan to utilize Education Site in late Spring/early Summer). **NRCS Partnership:** Waiting to hear about the application process for CCG Grant and CIS Proposals. **Other:** Urban Agriculture Coalition – new plan for outreach and structure established; upcoming work on workshops, website, and land mapping. Continue work on the Dewey C. Gevik Outdoor learning Center. Looking into additional handout development and digital outreach.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes - None

Update from Supervisors – Heber spoke about the Eastern South Dakota Soil and Water Research Farm focus group meeting that he attended in Brookings on January 11th. Crop rotation was mentioned in the discussion. Heber will make a presentation about the history of the research farm at the annual meeting on March 15th. He will also be making a trip to Washington D.C. this spring to lobby congress.

OLD BUSINESS

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

Bio-solids: Waiting for the contract to come back from the City of Sioux Falls. **Trees:** Langner is busy meeting with tree customers. 30-35 acres planned so far. Some species are hard to get.

Grass: 50 acres of CRP planned recently. **Gevik Site:** There will be a meeting on 1/31 with collaborators about using the site for education activities. Bonander mentioned that there is a lot of discussion at the legislature about carbon sequestering. The court date about the issue is set for 9/23.

2. Election Update

Absentee voting is occurring now through 2/13 on the 3rd floor of the courthouse for the two positions (with three candidates). 2/14 will be the election date (with polling also at the courthouse).

3. 2023 Budget

Parker referred to the previous budget handouts. MSP to approve budget by Heber and Kruse. All Ayes.

4. Soil Health Conference – January 24-25, 2023

This will be held in Sioux Falls at the Ramkota Hotel. Parker, Langner, Krone-Hedman, Entenman, and NRCS personnel plan to attend. Let Parker know if interested.

5. Water Festival – March 6-8, 2023

This will be held at the University of Sioux Falls campus. This is the 30th year of the festival, planning for 2200 plus students from 45 schools, with 102 teachers. 697 students are registered for the virtual Quiz Bowl. Volunteers are needed.

6. Employee Evaluations – January 2023

Handouts have been sent to board members and potential board members. This will be considered by the board at a separate meeting.

7. Vehicle Information

Parker has been gathering information about trucks available from dealerships. There is a short supply.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Minnehaha County Commission Liaison – Jen Bleyenberg

Bleyenberg could not attend this meeting but will plan to come next month.

2. 2023 SDACD Membership Investment

MSP to pay the \$1,000.00 annual membership investment by Heber and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

3. Eastern South Dakota Soil and Water Research Farm Director Election

MSP to nominate Heber as the representative from our district by Entenman and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

Executive Session (if needed) - None

CONSERVATION PLAN SIGNING - None

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Parker presented information about the Tree Renovation Grant award and the Pollinator Habitat Grant award.

MSP to adjourn at 4:43 p.m. by Kruse and Heber. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, February 13th, 2023, at 3:00 pm – Conservation District Shed

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, Recording Secretary