

**Minnehaha Conservation District  
April 17th, 2023, Monthly Meeting  
USDA Service Center and via Zoom  
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm**

Heber called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

**Supervisors present:** Rick Bonander, Travis Entenman (left at 4:30 p.m.), Gordon Heber, and Allen Severtson

**Supervisors absent:** Jim Pfeifer

**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, Casey Wenzlaff, Barry Berg, Jay Gilbertson, Jen Bleyenbergh, Amber Lively, and McKenzie Blaine

**Agenda:** MSP to approve by Severtson and Entenman. All ayes.

**Minutes of March 13th meeting:** MSP to approve by Entenman and Severtson. All ayes.

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

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

**NRCS activity report by Casey Wenzlaff:**

**WETLANDS:** 33 certified wetland determination requests in progress.

**CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP):** General signup closed in March; 10 renewal applications received; New Grasslands signup is open.

**CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSTWP):** No report

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP-CIS):** 2 High Tunnels and 5 Cover Crop contracts obligated.

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP-RCPP):** 5 applications working on pre-approval and obligation.

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP-IRA):** 4 Cover Crop/Grazing applications received.

**ACT Now Funds** – Rolling sign-up and pre-approval dates; Focus on Shelterbelt Renovation.

1 -2 small summer outreach meetings will be planned.

***BIG SIOUX RIVER PROJECT RCPP:***

**SRAM & RAM:** Changes to SRAM payment structure approved by DANR; 3 SRAM projects and 1 RAM project waiting for survey this spring. **EQUIP/RCPP:** 1 Ag Waste System finished in Minnehaha County; 1 Ag Waste System in Brookings County deferred. **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH:** Created “Big Sioux River Water Hero” board game for use in classroom and festival activities; Started new social media education/outreach campaign – general project and program knowledge; Website revamp underway. **OTHER:** Working with several producers for alternative water facilities for grazing; Preliminary planning for the SRAM and “This is Our Water” meeting on August 23; Mailed 55 Save the Date letters to producers. MSP to approve and sign Ag. Waste System contract and cost share contract by Severtson and Entenman. All ayes. MSP to approve and write checks totaling \$97,212.96 (Ag. Waste System) by Entenman and Bonander. All ayes. MSP to approve and write check for \$423.14 for tent rental deposit by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

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

**OUTREACH:** Upcoming Events – April 22 (Earth Day) Present at multiple locations with information on Prairie and Pollinator Program; May 20 (Queen Bee Day) – Tabling at Remedy Brewing Company, presenting information on pollinators, native plantings etc. **CITY PARTNERSHIP:** Prairie and Pollinator Program – pilot program with kits to plant 100 square foot garden, 50 kits available for \$15 plus tax through MCD starting May 1. Community Garden and Education Demonstration Area – Updated layout and scope of work for 2023 (diagram of area was shown). **NRCS PARTNERSHIP:** Letter and report drafted for extension request. **OTHER:** Soil Health Work – Developing materials on no-till gardening, backyard cover crops, at home composting, raised beds, and low tunnels; hope to have a Soil Health Event in the fall at the demonstration site; Container Garden workshops – looking into partnerships for make and take events; Possible travel to Missouri Urban Agriculture Center event in June.

**Public Comment Time – 15 minutes - None**

**Update from Supervisors** – Heber had two recommendations for other supervisors – complete the Supervisor Modules (through State site) and attend area meetings. Bonander mentioned 2 upcoming meetings dealing with ordinances about the carbon pipelines – Lincoln County Planning & Zoning meeting on 4-17-23 and Minnehaha Planning & Zoning Meeting on 4-24-23 at 7:00 p.m. Entenman mentioned that the Friends of the Big Sioux River has clean up day events scheduled on 4-22-23 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Entenman and Parker also attended a workshop last week at the Izaak Walton League about Farm Bill priorities and how to promote conservation agenda.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- 1. Service Report (bio-solids, tree planting, grass planting, Gevik Site, Seasonal Workers, etc.)**  
Bio-solids: 600 acres of soil sampling is underway. Trees: 35 acres planned. Grass: 450-500 acres planned plus 800 acres for the 15’ and 30’ drills. Gevik Site: Cleaning and trash pick-up are underway. Seasonal Workers: Gene, Denny, Al, and Brian are working, plus a couple students. We could still use some more help for tree planting and fabric work.
- 2. Research Farm Annual Meeting – March 15, 2023**  
Heber attended and presented power point reports at the annual meeting. He handed out minutes from that meeting.

**3. South Dakota Wildlife Federation Youth Conservation Camp**

MSP to pay for two student's camp fees by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes. Camp applications are due with the fees by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Vermillion-Big Sioux Area Meeting – June 14, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. (Golf Course in Howard)**

This meeting is for conservation districts from the Big Sioux and Vermillion areas plus the director of SDACD and state employees from the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources. A legislative update is provided.

**2. Property Insurance Review**

Parker presented a report of the property insurance coverage held by the district, as well as pictures of all the equipment owned. He recommends increasing coverage for the east and middle conservation sheds. He will send out more information to board members.

**3. Director's Compensation**

Heber presented some information on state regulations about supervisor compensation, showing that supervisors can be paid for meetings and mileage. Our district voted a few years ago to forego the pay. MSP to pay \$75/meeting and \$150 for a full day meeting plus mileage by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes. This will be paid as an independent contractor with state rate for mileage.

**4. Water Festival Wrap-Up Meeting**

The meeting was held on April 11<sup>th</sup>. \$28,400 was donated this year, with \$34,338.48 in expenses. 2,318 students from 105 classes with 34 teachers attended. Next year's festival will be held on March 12-13, 2024.

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

**CONSERVATION PLAN SIGNING**

District approved signing of conservation plans. Chairman Heber will sign various plans for NRCS and the Big Sioux River Project.

**OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

MSP to adjourn at 5:13 p.m. by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

**NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, May 8th, 2023, at 3:00 pm – USDA Service Center**

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, Recording Secretary