

MINUTES TO THE FEBRUARY 11, 2019
CASCADE CONSERVATION DISTRICT REGULAR MEETING
USDA Service Center

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wortman called the meeting to order at 12:31PM. A quorum was present.

Supervisors: Gayla Wortman, Elliot Merja, Scott Brown, Marc Shane, John Chase

Associate Supervisors: Kathie Lahti

Staff: Tenlee Atchison, Emma Link

Guests: Tracy Wendt (SRWG), Bailey Rapp (NRCS), Anna Ehnes (Cascade Planning), Caitlin Avery (Senator Tester's Office)

Shane moved to excuse Stevie Neuman and Pete Heryford from the February 11th regular meeting of the Cascade Conservation District. Merja seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

MINUTES

Chase moved to approve the January 14, 2019 minutes with corrections. Shane seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Corrected minutes show corrections/additions in red.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Shane moved to approve unpaid bills and authorize payment for the total of \$9,230.57. Chase seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Shane moved to approve the monthly Treasurer's report as submitted. Chase seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Shane moved to approve the monthly petty cash report as submitted. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Shane moved to transfer the remaining balance of obligated cost share appropriations for FY19 into the cost share savings account. Chase seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PARTNER'S REPORT

NRCS

Bailey Rapp, District Conservationist reported the following:

- Staff is currently working on 2019 EQIP applications. These include three ag waste programs, two irrigation projects, nine grazing plans, and a hoop-house.

- A “Local Work Group” meeting will need to be scheduled to discuss the 2019 priorities. Currently the NRCS Field Office is in a transition period as next year the Targeted Implementation Plan(TIP)/Focused Conservation approach will be initiated per the State Conservationist. CCD will assist with TIP planning.
- All NRCS Field Offices throughout Montana are required to complete a Long-Range Plan. District assistance is requested.
- The Great Falls NRCS Area and Field Offices will be sharing an assistant through Ultima Services Corporation. An Ultima is a contracted position. This individual will perform clerical and administrative support duties and will be starting March 4th, 2019.
- If another government shutdown were to occur the NRCS Field Office would remain open, pending changing circumstances.

SRWG

Tracy Wendt, Sun River Watershed Group Coordinator reported the following:

- Wendt has been working on a project prioritization matrix as well as a 20-year strategic plan for the SRWG.
- Dan Wilkins, GFHS science teacher, is promoting an annual weed pull. He has asked SRWG to partner again this year. A budget has been outlined and SRWG will request funding from Conservation District(s) as well as other possible funding sources.
- Wendt is working on securing consistent funding for USGS stream gauges.
- There will be a planning meeting on February 21st, 2019 in Fairfield, MT to plan Sun River Watershed Group’s 25th Anniversary Event.

DISTRICT REPORT

Supervisors:

Wortman reported:

- She will help present at the Girls in STEM Event on Friday February 15th at CMR Highschool.
- District Offices will be closed Monday February 18th, 2019 in observance of Presidents Day.
- The Electric City FFA is hosting their 6th Annual Boots & Bow Ties Celebration Dinner on Friday February 22nd, 2019 at the Elks Lodge.
- Supervisor Wortman will attend the Regional Conversation Partnership Program (RCPP) Working Group meeting as well as the Montana Experience Meeting on February 26th, 2019.

Brown reported:

- A meeting with Sun River Watershed Group (SRWG) Coordinator Tracy Wendt took place regarding salinity areas along the Sun River.
- A Water Task Force meeting led by the Central Montana Resource Council (CMRC) has been scheduled. Brown will encourage CMRC to craft a resolution to submit to Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) supporting mandatory baseline water testing prior to oil and gas development.

Shane reported:

- He will present to the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Delta Chapter on February 28th, 2019 regarding Cascade Conservation District's (CCD) impact throughout the community and Ag Days. Link will co-present.
- The next State Technical Committee Meeting will be held February 28, 2019, at the Hampton Inn, 2301 14h Street, SW, Great Falls, MT, 8 a.m. to noon.

Chase reported:

- A project or plan to address "Naked River Banks", i.e., the lack of vegetation along riverbanks of the Missouri River. The project or plan would educate stakeholders regarding practices that maintain a healthy river bank and associated riparian area. The project or plan would be specifically focused towards private landowners. The board discussed outreach events, projects and plans to address "Naked River Banks".
- A North Bank meeting was held on January 23rd, 2019. The FEMA Pre-disaster Mitigation Grant has been submitted to the state. The City of Great Falls received grant funds from the Missouri-Madison River Fund Trust Grant from Northwestern Energy to help with matching funds. An extension on that grant will be required.
- A Community Conversation's meeting was held regarding the Upper Missouri River Natural Heritage Area on January 30th, 2019. Accessibility to view landmarks was discussed, like Crooked Falls Natural Area. The District will supply the Upper Missouri River Heritage Area Planning Corporation Board of Directors with historical data regarding Crooked Falls Natural Area.
- Supervisor Chase attended the Board Leadership Training on February 5th, 2019.

Merja reported:

- Cascade County Planning Board is currently making changes to their zoning regulations

Administrator: Atchison reported the following to CCD:

- Legislative Update:
 - Discussion has taken place during this legislative session involving funding and other important matters for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). A presentation was made to the Natural Resources Committee on January 14th. There was a Natural Resource Committee hearing regarding AIS funding on February 4th. Atchison has given district input to presenters to help in the legislative process.
 - There is a Montana Invasive Species Council Rotunda Event March 1st, 2019 in Helena, CCD will have a table at this event.
- The Area III District Administrator's will meet on February 28th at 9AM.
- Health Insurance options for state conservation district employees and supervisors continues to move forward.
- Statewide Administrator Training (SWAT) is scheduled for June 3-6, 2019 at the Arrowpeak Lodge in Highwood, MT. This training is open to Supervisors as well as Partner Agency's.

- Atchison drafted a sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) with Cascade County for approval. Alleged violation language was discussed. The board will review and approve later.
- The RCPP Working Group had a meeting January 14th, 2019. Jim Stone of the Blackfoot Challenge presented. Community Outreach Meetings are being set up throughout the respective counties involved, to gauge interest and help with prioritization.
- Atchison discussed plans and ideas for the 2019 River Campaign.
- Atchison is moving to a different location in the office and will need new office furniture/workstation.

Wortman moved to approve the purchase of new office furniture/workstation for Atchison. Merja seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- Atchison gave an update regarding the current status of a separate CCD Office Building.
- Due to a government shutdown, if the NRCS ends up closing, CCD will operate out of Suite 100, which is in the basement of the First Interstate Bank building where the Cascade Conservation District currently resides.
- Atchison will attend the Chamber Ag Committee meeting on February 14, 2019.

Administrative Assistant: Link reported the following to CCD:

- The Girls in STEM Event will take place on Friday 15th from 8AM to 2:15PM at CMR Highschool. Supervisor Wortman and Link will present to 800 area 8th graders regarding their personal story as a woman in a STEM career as well as what the Cascade Conservation District does.
- Electric City FFA's 6th Annual Boots & Bow Ties Celebration Dinner will take place on Friday February 22nd, 2019 with a social at 5:30PM and followed by a dinner at 6:30PM. There are several sponsorship options available.

Wortman moved to purchase a Gold Sponsorship in the amount of \$500 for the Electric City FFA Boots & Bow Ties Celebration Dinner. Shane seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- An amendment has been proposed to 75-7-112 Part (5)(b)/HB 383, to change the appeal timeframe for arbitration from 15 to 60 days if a 310 applicant has not signed an arbitration agreement. MACD needs district input on this proposed amendment as MACD does not have a resolution speaking to these matters. MACD will give testimony based on district response. CCD discussed this amendment and crafted their input.
- Link and Atchison will defend the 223 Ag Days Grant on March 6th, 2019 to the Resource Conservation Advisory Council via phone.
- Newsletter deadline is March 15th, 2019. Supervisors due to submit are Scott Brown and Stevie Neuman.

AG DAYS

Ag Days will take place on Thursday May 9th & Friday May 10th, 2019 at Montana ExpoPark, specifically in the Trades & Industries, Atrium, and Fine Arts buildings. This year's event will have 9 stations. The possibility of certain presenters utilizing wireless mics was discussed to combat noise.

310 BUSSINESS

The board viewed the online 310 database. This database contains current and historically submitted 310 permits and violations for all counties throughout the state. Basic information such as dates, photos, and other pertinent information is included in this database as well.

CA-42-18 – JEFF IVERS

Waiting on a technical review per December 2018 CCD Board Meeting.

MISSOURI RIVER

OTHER BUSSINESS

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 PM