

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wortman called the meeting to order at 12:32PM. A quorum was present.

Supervisors: Gayla Wortman, Pete Heryford, Scott Brown, Marc Shane, John Chase, Stevie Neuman

Associate Supervisors: Kathie Lahti, Jim Larson

Staff: Tenlee Atchison, Emma Link

Guests: Tracy Wendt (SRWG), Bailey Rapp (NRCS)

Neuman moved to excuse Elliot Merja from the March 11th regular meeting of the Cascade Conservation District. Shane seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

MINUTES

Neuman moved to approve the February 11, 2019 minutes as submitted. Heryford seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Shane moved to approve unpaid bills and authorize payment for the total of \$11,377.49. Chase seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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

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

DISTRICT REPORT

Supervisors:

Wortman reported:

- She attended and presented at the Girls in STEM day on February 15, 2019.
- She attended the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Working Group Meeting held on March 4, 2019.
- Wortman has been working with NRCS Area Office staff and Cascade Conservation District (CCD) staff regarding "The Montana Experience".

Heryford reported:

- He is working with the NRCS District Conservationist Bailey Rapp and CCD to plant cover crops this summer on his land.

Brown reported:

- He attended the State Technical Committee Meeting held on February 28, 2019.
- There is a parcel of state land along Fox Farm Road, here-after referred to as the Fox Farm Tract. The DNRC plans to potentially lease a portion of this parcel and sell a portion of this parcel. There has been local effort to discourage any development of the Fox Farm Tract and acquire an in-perpetuity easement. CCD will craft a letter to the DNRC in support of discouragement of development and in placing an easement on the Fox Farm Tract.

Chase moved to write a letter to the DNRC to discourage the development of the Fox Farm Tract and acquire an in-perpetuity easement. Shane seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Shane reported:

- He attended the State Technical Committee Meeting held on February 28, 2019. Montana Focused Conservation was discussed in depth, specifically how it will be structured and carried out. Forest In Focus 2.0 was also discussed at length.
- He attended to the Long-Range Planning Webinar on March, 7 2019.
- He presented to the Delta Chapter of Alpha Mu State, MT on February 28, 2019
- Shane brought the following issue to CCD attention:
 - The City of Great Falls is storing snow northeast of town off Highway 87. Due to the topography in that area and an already breached retention pond, when the snow melts and surface runoff ensues, adjacent local land could be adversely affected.

Shane moved to notify potentially impacted landowners and relevant stakeholders regarding snow-runoff from the aforementioned area via letter. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chase reported:

- He attended the State Technical Committee Meeting held on February 28, 2019.
- He attended the Bringing U to You – 2019 Great Falls Lecture Series, “What’s for Dinner? Rethinking the Dinner Table”. This lecture was about edible insects. Chase has ordered edible insect products for CCD to try at a future board meeting.
- He attended the RCPP Working Group Meeting held on March 4, 2019.

Administrator: Atchison reported the following to CCD:

- RCPP
 - Atchison is working with SRWG Coordinator Tracy Wendt to set up community meetings.
- The United States Geological Survey (USGS) stream gauge price is increasing, this is referencing the two stream gauges jointly funded through the USGS, CCD, and SRWG on the Sun River.

- There have been several incidents reported over the past year which anti-government 1st amendment activists (groups or lone individuals) visit and self-audit government office buildings (Federal, State, City, County) with the intent of video recording the government office and employees. The Farm Production and Conservation Agency (FPAC) created a Situational Awareness Field Guide for employee's with instructions in how to deal with these potential situations.
- The DEQ will hold several public meetings to share the results and plans for the Smith River Algae Study. Dates are as follows:
 - Helena – March 11, 2019
 - White Sulphur Springs – March 12, 2019
- Leave was requested.

Wortman moved to approve leave for Atchison for the dates of March 25th – April 2nd, 2019. Shane seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Assistant: Link reported the following to CCD:

- She attended and presented at the Girls in STEM day on February 15, 2019
- She presented to the Delta Chapter of Alpha Mu State, MT on February 28, 2019
- CCD and NRCS District Conservationist Bailey Rapp are working on facilitating cover crop adoption in Cascade County. CCD was awarded a grant through DNRC in 2016 to assist with these endeavors. This grant expires at the end of 2019 and CCD is exploring its options to spend out the remaining funds.
- Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM) is asking for a \$25 donation for the ongoing operation of the Bridger Plant Materials Center that the Montana Conservation Districts (MACD) owns jointly with the Wyoming Conservation Districts and currently lease to the NRCS.

Wortman moved to pay the Bridger Plant Materials Center donation request of \$25. Shane seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- CCD received an invoice from MACD for 2019 MACD dues based upon the 2018 tax year. The board discussed the amount of dues it will pay MACD in depth.

Chase moved to pay MACD \$2,000 in dues. Neuman seconded. The following discussion took place:

CCD will make an effort to attend MACD association events and pay partial dues. The payment of \$2,000 in dues as referenced above includes the following admonition; CCD wants MACD to know that although progress has been made, transparency issues exist that MACD needs to address.

Wortman moved to pay MACD \$2,000 in dues and address MACD via letter regarding the following issues: MACD has made progress but still needs to address some transparency issues. Motion carried unanimously.

PARTNER'S REPORT

SRWG

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

- SRWG has requested a partner contribution from CCD.
- In 2019 SRWG is focusing on strengthening their organizational foundation and partnerships.
- SRWG is currently working on a 10-year Strategic Plan, including in this is a project prioritization matrix that will help guide future project work.
- SRWG looks forward to building a strong base, then getting some projects going on-the-ground.
- The SRWG 25th Anniversary Event will be held on August 24, 2019 at Sun Canyon Lodge.

NRCS

Bailey Rapp, NRCS District Conservationist reported the following:

- He has a meeting with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) March 12, 2019 regarding the effects of local mining in the Sand Coulee area.
- Rapp shared the current draft of his Long Range Plan for Cascade County, CCD will provide guidance and input as Rapp continues to write his Long Range Plan.
- NRCS is changing the way EQIP funds will be distributed throughout the State. Funds will be distributed through the Montana Focused Conservation approach. NRCS offices will identify resource concerns through a Local Work Group, resource concerns will be addressed in a Long Range Plan, and Targeted Implementation Plans will be submitted to the State for funding. If identified resource concerns cross county lines, it will be important to mention that as well as how the involved counties plan to address the concern, in the Long Range Plan.
- NRCS is building partnerships with local agencies, specifically with the Forest Service, SRWG, Missouri River Conservation District Council (MRCDC), and others as they arise.
- Rapp shared a resource ranking worksheet with CCD. Supervisors have been instructed to complete this worksheet to help Rapp with the Cascade County Long Range Plan.

Cascade County

Jim Larson (County Commissioner)

- Larson discussed the possibility of changing the Cascade Conservation District boundary.
- Cascade County and CCD are working on a Memorandum of Understand (MOA). Alleged violation language is still being discussed.
- CCD may be contacted about the Belt Water Treatment Plant.
- The Planning Division is working on new rules, when the floodplain regulations are discussed, CCD will be invited to comment.
- Jim Larson was made aware of the potential surface run-off/erosion issues NE of town off Highway 87.

LOCAL WORK GROUP (NRCS)

- A Local Work Group meeting will be set up and specific agencies will be invited. This Local Work Group will identify resource concerns to help the NRCS develop a Long Range Plan for Cascade County.

WORK PLAN UPDATES/CALENDAR REVIEW/ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 12, 2019	The Montana Experience Meeting
March 21, 2019	Area III District Administrator Meeting
April 1, 2019	Pre Ag Days & Budget Meeting
April 8, 2019	Personnel Appraisals and Board Meeting
April 10, 2019	Rolling River's Trailer Training

OTHER BUSSINESS

Atchison gave an update on The Montana Experience.

- Vision is to building understanding and empathy towards the agricultural community and its people by developing a lasting relationship between the ag community and its urban neighbors.

Meeting adjourned at 4:02PM