

MORTON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES OF MEETING

8:00 a.m. Thursday, April 9th, 2020

8:00 a.m. CDT – by Teleconference

I. **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Aaron Steckler at 8:00 a.m. Via Teleconference

II. **ROLL CALL** – Received by teleconference

Aaron Rocky George Steve Richard Duane
Ryan Chet Valerie

Guest: Renae Gress

III. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Minutes for February meeting that were tabled at last meeting were sent out for board to review.

Rocky made a motion, second by George to approve the February minutes that were sent out by email.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

March minutes- Richard made a motion, second by George to alternative wording for the scholarship winner minutes and correct spelling error on intern minutes.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

Richard made a motion, second by Rocky to approve the March minutes with updates and corrections.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

IV. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasures report was emailed out to board members for review.

Rocky made a motion, second by Richard to approve the District and 319 Financial reports as submitted by Valerie Frohlich.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

V. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. State Farm – Rod Skytland – Said he would like to wait to review plan when we are back to having face to face meetings.
- b. Northern Great Plains Joint Venture – Will reschedule
- c. Achievement Winner – Discussion about who should be nominated. The county is divided into 3 sections, SE-NE-W. This year we are looking to the west for a candidate. Candidates can be a producer with or without a contract. It was suggested to visit with past winners and ask them if they would have suggestions. Richard will visit with Opp and Wanner's to see if they have suggestions. Valerie will send out all past achievement winners to the board. Chet will talk to other office personnel to see if they have any suggestions. Rocky mentioned that convention may not take place this year.

Aaron suggested next year to advertise in newsletter and website & Facebook to ask for suggestions for an achievement winner.

Richard made a motion, second by Rocky to vote on an achievement winner at the May meeting, with Valerie sending out past winners, and Chet will send out producer list of candidates for the board to review.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

VI. REVIEW WORK PLAN/CALENDAR

- a. Nothing to report.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Vehicle Decals – discussion was had on where the logo should be placed on the vehicle. Ideas of the door and the back window were mentioned. It was also suggested to put the logo on drill, manure spreader, trailer, and tractor.

Valerie will call around to get pricing and bring it to the next meeting.

- b. Hand plant pick up – Social distancing: Board suggested get safety products, such as gloves, masks, and disinfecting wipes.

It was suggested to add to the post cards that we will do curb side pickup and we will bring to their vehicle, so they should stay in their cars. A question was also raised on payment, which is usually done at time of pick up by check or cash, as we are not equipped to do credit card.

Richard made a motion, second by Steve to have Valerie check into being able to accept a credit card payment for purchases.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

- c. Travel to get trees: Discussion on traveling to SD to pick up trees. Travel from state to state is approved as it is Ag based so there is no need to quarantine. Ryan will travel himself and only stop for fuel.

VIII. REPORT OF DISTRICT PROGRAMS

- a. OMG –Checks come from Grant County and Connie is on quarantine so the process will be a bit slower with some delays.

Morton County has 4 new contracts under the project extension.

IX. REPORT OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

- a. District Technician

- i. Equipment update: Ryan has been doing maintenance by repairing bearings on flatbed trailer and fixed the marker lights. While working on enclosed trailer found the front axle to be bent. Ryan took it to Mid Dakota Wheel Alignment to straighten the axle, and to fix wiring. Ordered bearings and parts for the fabric machine from the manufacturer.
- ii. Tree Update: Fabric will be delivered this Friday. Planning for tree pick up from Lincoln Oakes on the 22nd and Big Sioux on the 24th. Looking to do hand plant pick up May 1st & 2nd.
- iii. Travel with employees to plantings: Discussion was to get the protective/preventive equipment for the crew to use if they wanted to. Board is ok with crew traveling together to sites.
- iv. Manure spreader is out and was going to be used but ground too wet and got stuck. Have producers in Flasher that would like to use it and one that would like to take it to Sheridan County if possible.

- v. Safety book – wanted to make the board aware that there were DOT instructions for tying down the tractor for transporting and we had it correct.
- b. District Secretary
 - i. Wanted to make the board aware that we have sample shirts and vest for the board to look at when we can have face to face meeting to decide.
 - ii. Audit – Rocky made a motion, second by Richard to move forward with the next audit.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4) **Voting No (0)**

George Richard Steve Rocky

Discussion was that there maybe legislation brought forward by the state committee to raise the threshold amount for audits.
 - iii. Informed the board that Travis Rossow’s dad passed away. Wondering if the board would like to send flowers.

Rocky made a motion, second by Richard to purchase flowers for Travis’s dads funeral.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4) **Voting No (0)**

George Richard Steve Rocky
- c. 319 Watershed Coordinator
 - i. Some new contracts in the works from door knocking. Solar wells and cross fencing along with 2 other maybes. Hard to talk to people about it when you can’t go meet them.
 - ii. Water Sampling – Went out with Mckenzie to make sure that sampling was being done correctly. There must be 6 samples a month sent it in, so there will have to be 5 more this month. Testing now for nutrients and after May 1st they will start testing for E. coli. Chet will use the district vehicle when possible to collect water samples, however if both vehicles are in use, he will take his personal vehicle and be reimbursed for mileage.
 - iii. Testing for nitrates – Chet spoke with Jim Collins from the Department of Environmental Quality about testing for nitrates. There is no test specifically for nitrates, however high levels of phosphorus/E. Coli would indicate it came from livestock or human manure. Tests that show high in nitrogen would come from fertilizers. Testing manure is possible, however not offered locally, and it is very expensive to do.
 - iv. Water Sampling Service – they can buy the kit from the district and do it them selves or they can hire us, and we can do the sampling for them for a small fee. Other districts are charging for kit, mileage and time for an average for \$120.

The Extension service also has water sampling kits for producers free of charge, however the producer would have to collect and send in their samples themselves.
 - v. Update on Harmon Lake – Chet & Jon were to meet with the water board about REPP funding and with the Covid-19 happening they have not had a chance to meet. The water board has taken it upon themselves to do the water testing and such.

X. REPORT OF COOPERATING AGENCIES

- a. District Conservationist – Jon Fettig – nothing to report – on leave
- b. County Extension Agent – Renae Gress - attached is her report – They are questioning about having the county fair. All employees are working from home.
- c. Farm Bill Specialist – Zach Compson –nothing to report

XI. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- a. The personnel committee interviewed two applicants for the intern position. Both applicants were good, but the first applicant had direct experience with planting trees. The committee will offer the position to that candidate. They also interviewed an applicant for the tractor driver position, and they

will offer that candidate the position.

Richard made a motion, second by George to offer the following positions to the candidate's that were selected for the intern position, tractor driver, and tree planter.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

Richard asked that Valerie send out the salary information to everyone by email to discuss the salary we can offer to these positions.

- b. Salary – after board reviewed the information. Richard made a motion, second by George to offer the following amounts for the following positions:

Intern position = \$16, Tractor driver = \$17.50, and returning tree planter = \$17 with also giving the committee authority to negotiate if they need to.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

XII. CORRESPONDENCE

None currently.

XIII. APPROVE APPLICATIONS AND AGREEMENTS

- a. None currently.

XIV. PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING

Rocky made a motion, second by Richard to have the May board meeting on May 14th at 8am CDT at the USDA Service Center, also giving the authority to Aaron to make the call if this would need to be changed.

Motion Carried:

Voting Aye (4)

Voting No (0)

George Richard Steve Rocky

XV. SIGN EXPENSE VOUCHERS, PAYROLL, AND CREDIT CARD STATEMENTS

With the office being closed to the public and supervisors it was decided to have Valerie scan bills and send to Aaron and Richard for approval. Valerie will pay and sign checks for the time the office is at a level II status. All these bills and checks will be in a folder for the financial committee to review and sign off on when they're able to come back into the office.

XVI. ADJOURN – Motion to adjourn meeting at 10:15am by George.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Frohlich
Recording Secretary

Approved:



Aaron Steckler - Chairman