

MORTON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES OF MEETING

8:30 a.m. Thursday, November 17, 2022

8:30 a.m. CDT – USDA Service Center, 2540 Overlook Lane, Mandan, ND 58554

I. CALL TO ORDER –Aaron called the meeting to order at 8:30

II. ROLL CALL

Staff: Malissa McKee, Chance Porsborg, Landon Weiser, Ethan Gress (remotely via speaker phone)

Board Members: Aaron Steckler, George Ferderer, Richard Tokach, Rocky Bateman

III. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Richard motioned to accept the minutes of the previous meeting. Rocky seconded the motion.

Aye – (3) No – (0)

IV. TREASURER’S REPORT

Richard motioned to accept the treasurer’s report. George seconded.

Aye – (3) No – (0)

V. REPORT OF COOPERATING AGENCIES

a. District Conservationist – Landon Weiser

-Currently working on planning applications. Had 13 EQIP, which is average.

-Staff were measuring pipelines prior to the snow.

-Jake and Landon will be attending SCD convention

b. County Extension Agent – Renae Gress, absent – submitted an update report

-Upcoming pesticide trainings – Nov 17 in Flasher, Dec 14 in Mandan

-Succession Plan Training, Dec 8 in Bismarck

-Kids, Compost, Crops & Consumption Curriculum in two schools in December

-Producer Day, January 24 in Mandan

VI. OLD BUSINESS

a. Scheduling an informational meeting in western Morton Co, coordinating with Southwest Water Authority and Missouri West Water

**tabled- Steve was not present for this meeting and is heading up coordinating

VII. REVIEW WORK PLAN/CALENDAR

a. 11/11 – Veteran’s Day, office closed

b. 11/20-22 annual SCD convention, 11/20 at 6 pm are IV board meeting

c. 11/24 – Thanksgiving Day, office closed

d. 11/28 – Area IV supervisors meeting

e. 12/6-7 – Soil & Watershed Leadership Academy, Carrington

f. 12/13 – 319 Watershed project presentation to task force, 4201 Normandy, Bismarck

g. 12/14 – Private Pesticide Training, FCS 1600 Old Red Trail, Mandan

h. 12/26 – Christmas Day observed, office closed

i. 1/2/23 – New Years Day observed, office closed

j. 1/8,15,22,29, 2023 – Annie’s Project, Morton & Grant Co, 120 S Main St, Flasher

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Women's Ag Day
 - Malissa shared that she has been working on networking with others that have coordinated Women's Ag events locally as well as across the country via NACD connections. She is currently putting together a pamphlet for educational resources for women in agriculture to be presented at the event, and to be used outside the function also
 - Discussion of location – Baymont as well as Mandan Eagles
 - Topics and resources discussed – ATV safety, ND Safety council
 - Budget indicated as a line item in the mill levy budget to be referenced.
- b. Photo Contest
 - Richard suggested merging soil and water categories and adding a category with people doing something such as water sampling, planting trees, etc.
 - Suggested to move the dates to accommodate sharing in newsletter
 - George motioned to print in the newsletter with a 3 month date span for the contest, Rocky seconded

Aye – (3) No – (0)
- c. Scholarship Program
 - Richard discussed that previously there was language on the scholarship form regarding typing submissions. Discussed having language regarding font size added.
- d. Internet provider
 - Malissa shared that current internet provider Verizon contract has 10 Mbps download speed which is hindering pace of work on the district laptop, issue was found when setting up backup storage with Computer One.
 - Recommended download speed to be 100-200. Midco offers 100 at \$6 more than currently paying, exception would be needing another router at New Salem shop for tree sales.
 - Current service is \$79/mo, Midco plan is \$85/mo for 36 months for 100 Mbps or \$115 for 200 Mbps. Rocky indicated best to change with idea of growth and not just filling current need. There was discussion that can always update plan if needed.
 - Recommendation to have secretary do research with both Verizon and Midco on plans available and cost comparisons.
- e. NWQI (National Water Quality Initiative) project proposal
 - 6 month assessment in Big Muddy Watershed region regarding producer interest in best management practices (BMPs), assessment expands to 10 HUCs
 - \$35,000 to the district, \$15,000 to NRCS for this assessment
 - discussed to follow up with Greg at DEQ regarding source sampling to find contaminant in creek samples
 - Rocky suggested that SCD staff review safety procedures for water sampling
 - Malissa will be sending out documentation to board regarding the NWQI proposal
- f. Wildlife escape ramps
 - NRCS approached SCD staff regarding having wildlife escape ramps available to purchase in office. NRCS continues to have compliance issues with these portions of water tanks and would like to make it easier for producer and NRCS staff to close out practices by having them available and compliant to NRCS specs.
 - Selfridge SCD has a model available for sale for \$35/piece
 - longevity of wildlife escape ramp was discussed– per Landon, would be for life of contract which is equal to 10 years per NRCS specifications
 - Stainless steel would be recommended, sell if can find one

- recommended not to stock due to lack of space, provide info to producer for ordering and ship directly
- Richard motioned to purchase one to have on hand, with info to purchase; George seconded

Aye – (3) No – (0)

g. Possible new board members

- Richard indicated that Malissa mentioned that Thomas Osterbauer, previous district tech, would like to be on the board. Suggested to send an invitation to the next meeting
- There was also discussion regarding Dan Little and Wayne Beckwitz. Dan is unfortunately too busy currently, but is still interested. Landon has spoken with Wayne regarding and he is interested in being involved.

IX. REPORT OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

a. District Secretary

- Malissa provided a comprehensive print out of monthly updates and will do this going forward.
- Credit with Unum and BCBS
- WSI updated, valid through 12/14/23
- Working with planning committee for Farming & Ranching for the Bottom Line
- 3rd quarter IRS, DART, unemployment filing completed
- Facebook reach is up 231.7%
- Requested most recent copy of sales & use tax permit – received and posted

b. District Technician

- Ethan indicated that he went around Mandan and Bismarck and posted flyers for summer jobs (tree planter, intern, and tractor driver), also emailed to colleges and current ag educators
- Created a BisMan ad for the summer jobs as well – currently has 5000 views, 150 have read the listing with 6 currently watching the listing and 2 have corresponded with him with questions regarding the positions. Feel we will have a good amount of applicants for the positions come spring.
- Finalized the first order to Towner nursery this week and currently working on the fabric order
- Manure Spreader is currently in Center at Center Machine. Called them and were told that they somehow lost our contact information. Work has been completed, no invoice has been received at this time. Will be working with George and whenever it works with him, due to snow, will get down to his place for storage over the winter.
- Reached out to all producers that were on the wait list when the spreader went into the shop to notify them that we did not have a timeline as waiting on parts so they could arrange for other accommodations. Feedback was pretty understanding from the producers, had 4 or 5 people on the list at that time.

c. 319 Watershed Coordinator

- Welcome to Chance Porsborg as the new coordinator!
- Chance’s first official day will be on 11/21 and will be attending the annual convention with SCD staff.

X. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

a. Executive session

- SCD staff were excused for an executive session. No voting occurred.

XI. CORRESPONDANCE

XII. APPROVE APPLICATIONS AND AGREEMENTS – none to report and sign

XIII. PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING – 12/8 at 9:00

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

XV. ADJOURN – Richard moved to adjourn at 10:45, Rocky seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Malissa McKee
Recording Secretary

Approved: _____
Aaron Steckler - Chairman