

MORTON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES OF MEETING

8:30 a.m. Thursday, July 6, 2023

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 approximately 8:30 am
- II. **ROLL CALL**

Staff: Malissa McKee, Chance Porsborg, Jordan Robison (NRCS intern), Landon Weiser (NRCS)
Board Members: Aaron Steckler, Thomas Osterbauer, Richard Tokach, George Ferderer, Kent Belland, Steve Tomac
Others: Renae Gress, Morgan (NDSU Extension intern)
Absent: Ethan Gress, Rocky Bateman
- III. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

-George motioned to accept the minutes of the previous meeting as submitted by the District Clerk; Richard seconded.
Aye – (3) No – (0)
- IV. **TREASURER’S REPORT** – Malissa reported that the financials were reconciled late the day prior to the board meeting. The bank statements were retrieved from the Dakota Community website as not yet received in the mail. This did not allow for emailing out to the board for advance review; leaving up to the board’s determination if they would like further time to review or if they would like to review at this time. The additional reports were also printed, as discussed with Richard prior to the meeting.
-Richard motioned to postpone financials to allow more time to review; Steve seconded.
Aye – (3) No –(0)
- V. **REPORT OF COOPERATING AGENCIES**
 - a. District Conservationist – Landon Weiser
-Landon reported regarding NRCS updates. They have been out to check out several pipelines and tanks. Many pipelines have been flagged and projects are being worked on. Face to face CDU meeting was held along with a soil health assessment training that SCD staff attended. Dickinson Plant Materials grass establishment training was attended which included grass ID training. Currently working through contract reviews. Contracting general CRP, still waiting on CRP grasslands. Currently have 2 general CRP. CTA (conservation technical assistance) field visit on grazing questions. Working on the planning list, meeting producers, and field work
 - b. County Extension Agent – Renae Gress
-Renae reported regarding Morton County Extension updates. The annual plot tour is going to be held on 7/17 (flyers were provided to those in attendance at the meeting). Farm safety camp finished up last week with 16 kids in attendance. Currently working on fair items. Introduction of Morgan, intern working with Renae at Morton County Extension.
- VI. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - a. Men’s Ag Night – Chance
*partners, topics, event name
-Chance indicated that he is open to ideas on when, name suggestions, etc.
-Discussion regarding the upcoming NWQI Big Muddy Watershed Grazing Show, converse with producers at this event in regards to possible topics that would be of interest at such an event
-Richard suggested to ask at the Grazing show regarding time of year for event – fall/winter?
-discussion regarding beginning of November or December?
-discussed Grazing Show – Malissa suggested perhaps a mock rotational grazing plan would be helpful for those that are unaware of how NRCS puts this together and what they look like
*Landon is going to speak with Jon Fettig to see if he would be available to put this together

- feedback form at Grazing Show
 - *Malissa will send Women's Ag form to Chance as an example
- discussion regarding how to draw in attendees
 - *free food is a draw, also socialization
 - *motivational speaker discussed, not just Ag related for topics
- b. Women's Ag Night feedback
 - Malissa provided a compilation of feedback that was received via email and mail from the Women's Ag Night that was held on May 8 at Baymont.
 - *all positives received, constructive criticism received verbally to a board member which is helpful moving forward to plan for 2025
 - *future topics of interest – estate planning, self defense class, gardening, flower identify, perennials of our area, mental health, canning, yoga
- c. Workplan Calendar discussion – employee assignment changes?
 - discussed having board aware of what is upcoming, depending upon the event should be on the calendar several months out for planning
- d. Tax form 990 – section 115 organization , not required
 - Malissa updated the board in regards to tax form 990 that was previously discussed and an extension form submitted regarding – SCD is a section 115 organization, form 990 is not required
- e. Tree Surplus Sale – post event
 - Malissa reported that the surplus sale was a success. Able to run credit cards with the square software/machine, also accepted cash and checks. Weeks prior to sale, square software was confirmed to be up to date with correct bank information, updated with items and pricing.
 - Staff had a good process of tree crew along with District Technician Ethan getting orders taken from customers back at the tree cooler doors, writing down species and quantity and taking the ticket up to Malissa in the front office for entering an invoice and processing payment.
 - *boards were displayed by the coolers showing the available species, updated as availability changed throughout the day
 - Total of 1690 trees sold = \$5270, 1 roll of fabric sold = \$200
 - Approximately a couple thousand trees remaining after surplus sale

VII. REVIEW WORK PLAN/CALENDAR

- a. July 10 – Grazing Show, Glen Ullin – Sacred Heart Parrish Community Center
 - b. July – newsletter mailed out by 15th
 - c. July – DART and NRCS TA agreement due by 15th
 - d. July 15-19 NACD Summer meeting, Bismarck Hotel & Conference Center
 - e. July 18 – ND Leopold Conservation Award Tour, Spring Valley Cattle – Gartner Family, Glen Ullin
 - f. August 10 – Mill Levy submission due to County Auditor
 - g. July-August – EcoEd sponsorship, Oliver Co SCD (September)
 - *discussion regarding EcoEd sponsorship dollars, Malissa looked at check register for last year and confirmed sponsorship was \$500.
 - *Richard motioned to sponsor in the amount of \$500 and asked that staff attend if available, Steve seconded
- Aye – (3) No – (0)**
- h. September – Mill Levy hearing
 - i. September – scholarship information sent out
 - j. October – register for convention (November)
 - k. October – newsletter mailed out by 15th

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Mill Levy
 - Malissa indicated that she had sent an email to Dawn, Morton Co Auditor to confirm due date for Mill Levy request submission but has not heard back yet as Dawn was on leave

- discussion regarding \$40k put aside for building fund, discussed shopping around for a CD to move money out of checking to allocate for fund
- Steve indicated wondering if need to set aside additional money for building fund
 - *Malissa noted current mill is 0.64 = \$150K so have some room to request additional for building Fund
- noted to review Profit & Loss and Malissa will work on and converse via email
- b. Range Camp sponsorship – email from Kevin Sedivec re camper with financial hardship
 - total of 9 submissions, check issued for 3 currently
 - discussed other sponsorships, educational no submissions received this year
 - Steve indicated that in the future hope that items such as this staff will be more tenured to be able to make determinations on their own, bringing to board indicating that made decision for SCD to support such efforts; not necessarily needing input from the board for decision, willing to put job on the line to make decision up front and notify board members following
 - Richard motioned to move budgeted funds for educational sponsorship to Range Camp sponsorship and sponsor all 9 submissions this year, compared to 5; George seconded

Aye – (3) No – (0)
- c. New Salem shop/office – plumbing/bathroom
 - discussion regarding issues with toilet tank needing to be filled in order to flush, standing water in the bathroom and soaked carpet, wet walls more than condensation all around perimeter of the bathroom
 - *Aaron recommended having a plumber come out to the shop and get it fixed

IX. REPORT OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

- a. District Clerk
 - Malissa provided a monthly report for the board. The final documents were submitted to the ND auditors office for prior years annual reports. Notarized documents were submitted to Capital Credit Union to update names on the accounts. Website updates were completed for May meeting documents. Surplus sale invoice receipts were mailed out, customers were added to newsletter mailing address. NWQI first payment is processing through the system, should be receiving the reimbursement soon. Quick Books payment source was update for renewal. Followed up on CDU supply order. Transferred 319 reimbursement to MCSCD checking account.
- b. District Technician
 - Ethan was unable to attend the meeting, currently out in the field with tree crew applying fabric to tree plantings. He provided a report for the board
 - Tree planting was finished up on 6/9, hosted surplus sale on 6/16
 - fabric delivered from Agassiz Seed and Supply
 - Started fabric season 6/21, rain caused some delay but things are going smoother now
 - Still learning a lot as the season progresses – planning, planting, and fabric
 - Plan on doing a few site visits after the fabric season is over, technical assistance
 - *producers around New Salem
 - Plan to do routine maintenance checks on the tractor and vehicles as soon as fabric season is completed
 - Will proceed with survival counts when fabric is completed
 - Seasonal help have been doing a great job and are starting to get the hang of fabric installation
 - Hope to be done with fabric by the end of the month at the latest
- c. 319 Watershed Coordinator
 - Chance provided a monthly report for the board. Getting ready for Grazing show on July 10. Had an interview with Ag News 890 radio regarding the Grazing show. Glen Ullin has ad in paper for the event as well; front page and interior. Attended Burleigh Co SCD planning meeting as well as did photo for Burleigh co SCD pollinators event. NWQI narrative was submitted last week and reviewed, was sent back with notations for updates. Newsletter article was written for July. DART reported assisted to submit. New software training for 319 on August 2-3.
 - Community Gardens shed, Parks & Rec will put together this fall inquired as if to purchase now?

- *Aaron recommended to work with Parks & Rec for best time for delivering
- 3 projects completed for the watershed, planning a streambank renovation
- *working with separate BMP engineer as NRCS only has one in state for stream bank
- *engineers identified 6-8 areas of concern, not including producers; estimating couple \$100K project currently

- X. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** – employee midyear reviews (met separately after close of board meeting)
 - Ethan, 5/24 one year anniversary as tree crew, 8/11 as District Tech
 - Malissa, 6/14 one year anniversary
 - Chance, 11/21, seven month review

XI. CORRESPONDANCE –none to report at this time

XII. APPROVE APPLICATIONS AND AGREEMENTS

- a. NRCS
- b. 319 – one for signature

XIII. PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING – August 10 @ 8:30

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

XV. ADJOURN – board meeting adjourned at 10:33, personnel committee met immediately following until approximately 12:30

Respectfully Submitted,

Malissa McKee
Recording Secretary

Approved:

Aaron Steckler - Chairman