

# MORTON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES OF MEETING

Thursday, November 9, 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:** Ethan Gress, Chance Porsborg

**Board Members:** Richard Tokach, Rocky Bateman, Aaron Steckler, Thomas Osterbauer, Kent Belland, Steve Tomac

**Others:** Landon Weiser NRCS

**Absent:** Malissa McKee, George Ferderer, Jonathon Moser

**III. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Discussion regarding voting members and quorum requirements.

Richard motioned to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, Rocky seconded.

**Aye – (3)      No – (0)**

**IV. TREASURER’S REPORT**

Discussion regarding financial reports being received by the board.

Rocky motioned to approve the treasurer’s report. No seconds on the motion; motion fails.

**V. REPORT OF COOPERATING AGENCIES**

a. District Conservationist – Landon Weiser

EQIPs – 23 active contracts, currently working on checkout and payments

EQIP RCPP Meadowlark– 1 active and 1 new application

EQIP Act Now and EQAIP FY24 – signup deadline 5/10/24

10 new applications

EQIP CIC – signup deadline in spring, currently no applications

CSP – 1 active contract

CSP – GCI, 2 active contracts

Sharon and Steve concluding their careers with NRCS this year

b. County Extension Agent – Renae Gress (maternity leave)

**VI. OLD BUSINESS**

a. Area IV Farm Fundraising – Malissa

No discussion for board approval of Malissa to lead Area IV Research Farm fundraising.

b. Past due invoices, interest rate, collections – equipment leases, tree planting agreement updates

Discussion regarding lease agreements, obtaining tractor information for insurance purposes. Discussion regarding updating pricing on drill and custom seeding rates. Board recommendation to have equipment committee come up with rates for discussion on next meeting.

c. District Cell Replacement

Ethan researched new cell as replacement is needed, no deals without adding a line. Three tiers of replacement options – direct for model, \$159.99; \$350 - \$600 range for second bracket, \$700-\$1000 for new Samsung models. iPhone models are very expensive, 2 year old model or more for close to \$500 price range. Chance recommended having a case as well would be helpful.

- d. Winter event – Investing in the Future  
Chance provided some updates on the event. \$1000 cost for invitations and flyers from Image printing. Stopped at several local businesses for door prizes – Runnings, Dakota Community Bank, Front Street Mill Works, Agassiz. Will be purchasing a small item with remaining sponsor funds from Grazing show. November 13 deadline for dessert, 22<sup>nd</sup> for meal. \$17/plate, beef tips confirmed.  
Discussion regarding tumblers purchased for this event and future events – board indicated traditionally itemize SCD swag items on budget and clerk purchases all in bulk. Decision to use items on hand for now.

**VII. REVIEW WORK PLAN/CALENDAR**

- a. 11/1-3 Northern Plains SCD Employee Leadership Conference, Deadwood  
\*Chance and Ethan shared value of attendance
- b. 11/8 Burleigh SCD Appreciation Mixer, Elks  
\*Kent shared - achievement and tree award(s), thoughts to have in MCSCD and incorporate with another event such as Investing in the Future
- c. 11/10 Veteran’s Day observed, offices closed
- d. 11/13-15 NDASCD Annual Convention, Bismarck Hotel & Convention Center
- e. 11/17 end of FY22 federal budget extension
- f. 11/23 Thanksgiving, offices closed
- g. 12/5-8 TREEs program, Morton Co Schools
- h. 12/14 Investing in the Future, Baymont 5-9
- i. 12/25 Christmas, offices closed
- j. 12/31 tree orders, final date accepted
- k. 1/1 New Years, offices closed

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Plantskydd – update on pricing  
Chance reported to the board that pricing has updated from manufacturer, some items have been discontinued.
- b. Invoicing update – County and city tax, 90 day terms
- c. Equipment agreements  
\*Manure spreader labor invoice received  
Discussion regarding cleaning to stop the spread of disease, deposit not included in rental due to returned with beaters dirty. Labor invoice received for greasing and tightening of chains all under one item for \$150/hr labor. Greasing is part of the lease agreement. No labor rate agreed upon for district. Discussion that chain adjustment is reasonable for use of equipment. Discussion regarding reducing invoices submitted for repairs on lease equipment is common practice.  
Steve motioned to return half deposit to producer, \$175. Rocky seconded.  
**Aye – (2)                      No – (0)**  
**Richard abstained from voting due to conflict of interest**  
**\*See December 14, 2023 minutes for updated voting on this matter; Section III**
- d. NRCS employee retirements  
Landon indicated that Sharon Potts-Sayler and Steve Stensgard are retiring, two separate days to recognize. Inquiring on if the district
- e. Supervisor salaries  
Richard motioned to raise supervisor salaries to \$125, Steve seconded.  
Steve amended motion to raise supervisor salaries to \$150 as of January 1, 2024. Seconded by Rocky.  
**Aye – (3)                      No – (0)**

f. Supervisor handbook

Kent asked about a supervisor handbook. Chance handed out supervisor description. Century code Discussion regarding annual and long term plan. Discussion to have a separate day designated to planning and include extension as previously done pre covid.

**IX. REPORT OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES**

a. District Clerk

Malissa submitted a report in her absence

b. District Technician

Last month out of office some time for vacation and Regional conference in Deadwood. Have winterized the tree shed in New Salem. Hand plant orders are coming in steadily. Lincoln Oaks order has been submitted for priority. Relisted BisMan ad for summer help, already have a message response. Discussion regarding returning or experienced crew increase of \$1. Plans on storage for Manure Spreader for the winter – will discuss with George.

c. 319 Watershed Coordinator

Went to Grant Co to assist with Enviroscape training for new district tech. Working on 319 final report for DEQ. Water samples completed end of October. NWQI assessment final report has been signed and submitted. Attended Burleigh Co planning meeting. Signage for community garden shed, discussion for cost. Board recommended getting quotes.

Discussion regarding sample results – overall ecoli is down a little bit, can not attest to one reason or another, days that were spiked it had rained. Could push for more grass seedings around the creek. Phosphorous levels are down, nitrogen is up. Looking at crops that are planted around the creek, there is a lot of wheat this year. Organic matter run off is a possibility.

There is source testing that can be done to determine if it is animal or human in the ecoli, to determine if there is seepage from the lagoons in New Salem.

**X. CORRESPONDENCE – NACD membership dues**

**XI. APPROVE APPLICATIONS AND AGREEMENTS – none at this time**

a. NRCS

b. 319

**XII. PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING – December 14 at Baymont, 1:00 pm**

**XIII. SIGN EXPENSE VOUCHERS, PAYROLL, AND CREDIT CARD STATEMENTS**

Richard made a motion to have the district clerk work with accounting firm Haga Kommer to bring financials up to date. Seconded by Rocky.

**Aye – (3)      No – (0)**

**XIV. ADJOURN – Rocky motioned to adjourn at approximately 11:05 am**

Executive session followed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Malissa McKee  
Recording Secretary

Approved:

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Aaron Steckler - Chairman