

MORTON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES OF MEETING

Thursday, February 15, 2024

USDA Service Center, 2540 Overlook Lane, Mandan, ND 58554

I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Thomas called the meeting to order at approximately 9:05 am

II. ROLL CALL

Staff: Chance Porsborg, Malissa McKee, Ethan Gress

Board Members: Thomas Osterbauer, Kent Belland, George Ferderer, Aaron Steckler, Jonathon Moser, Rocky Bateman

Others: Ryan Foster NRCS, Landon Weiser NRCS

Absent: Richard Tokach, Steve Tomac

III. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Rocky motioned to approve the minutes as submitted by the district clerk. Aaron seconded the motion.

Aye – (3) No – (0)

IV. TREASURER’S REPORT

Aaron moved to table until next month as a member of the financial committee is absent. George seconded the motion.

Aye – (3) No – (0)

V. REPORT OF COOPERATING AGENCIES

a. District Conservationist – Landon Weiser

Landon presented his report. Starting preapprovals of EQIPs, 9 applications. Meadowlarks also at preapproval stage as well, 1 application. 6 applications so far for EQIP Act Now, funding left over from EQIP. 1 new application for CSP, sign up deadline is March 1. Sent out practices reminder letters to contract holders – grazing plan development letters were included. Ryan Foster acting CDU supervisor through March 8. ARC PRO training on 2/29, SCD staff Chance and Ethan will also be attending.

b. County Extension Agent – report submitted by Dena Kemmet

Ag and Natural Resources agent position for Morton County currently open and hiring.

Pesticide Certification and Commodity elections scheduled for Wednesday, February 21 at 4:30 pm

Lead Local event at Mandan Public Library, 2/23 9-4

Recent events – Pesticide Certification and General Fumigation classes were held in January

Farm to Fork of Agri International in Bismarck, week of February 15. Had 567 students and 68 adults

VI. OLD BUSINESS

a. Supervisor direct deposit forms – return completed

Malissa indicated that she has received 3 as of this time

b. Supervisor 2023 training reports – return completed

Elected and appointed supervisors – Malissa indicated that she has not received any at this time. Discussion regarding what qualifies as training items. Thomas indicated that he had a discussion with Hannah Nordby, would be available to come to a meeting to clarify requirements

c. Area IV clerk hours

Malissa presented report of accumulated clerk hours for February 2023 to January 2024, sum \$4717.92.

Rocky motioned to approve the report to submit to Area IV Research Farm. Aaron seconded.

Aye – (3) No – (0)

d. Rural Development Council updates – Steve

No report submitted.

VII. REVIEW WORK PLAN/CALENDAR

a. 2/19 – President’s Day, holiday office closure

b. 2/20 – Hebron Bank Marketing Club, NRCS/SCD present on cost shares

c. 2/21-22 – Bottom Line Ag Summit, BSC

d. 2/22 – 4:30 pm Area IV Research Farm mtg, BSC

e. 3/1 – end of continuing resolution

- f. 3/11-13 – District Annual Meeting, Fargo
- g. 4/3 – Waterfest, Engage Church Mandan

Living Ag 2/14-15, numbers down. Roughly 600 this year, last year 800, year prior 1200. Chance spoke with Tyler Kralik with extension, from what everyone is hearing numbers are down due to funding for buses. Some teachers are paying out of their pockets for bus services in order to get students to events. Would also explain why Waterfest numbers are also down. Tyler is working on putting together a proposal to bring to the school board and possibly other partners to aid in funding buses for events, Chance offered his assistance through 319 Watershed. Rocky noted that Bismarck discontinued running their own buses and are contracting with Harlow and pay by mile.

Kent shared Stutsman Co SCD conservation super star capes given out at events for kids.
Discussion regarding SCD logo on equipment as well as vehicles.

Chance shared he has a Water coordinator meeting at the end of the month.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Conservation Award nominations
Discussion regarding suggestions. Discussion regarding moving nominations across the county due to county size. Thomas – staff bring award ideas to next meeting to be presented at Investing in the Future event. Aaron – staff and DC bring conservation award nomination names and information to next meeting.
- b. Credits on account – cut off policy
Malissa reported that she went through the open invoice report, working through credits specifically. Higher dollar items have been generated a refund check. Discussion regarding when cut off for holding credits on accounts. Aaron made the motion - Credits that are a year old as of June 1, with exception of a refund request from a producer, will be refunded June 1. Rocky seconded.
Aye – (3) No – (0)

IX. REPORT OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

- a. District Clerk
Malissa shared her monthly report. Communication with Secretary of State’s office regarding oath of office on file and time frames for elected supervisors, updated office files.
- b. District Technician
Ethan shared his monthly report. Living Ag classroom 2/14-15. Attended Leadership Academy 1/30. Discussion regarding daily operating costs and unknown by staff if need board approval, specifically burlap purchase. \$169.99/roll this year, looking to purchase for this season and next; 2-6 rolls. Discussion regarding safe guarding supplies from rodents, purchase traps. Weed barrier fabric quote received from Agassiz, do have left over from last year; \$107/roll cost. Bismar ad is active, have an individual interested in tractor driver. Thomas encouraged to look up potential staff on ndcourts. Crew member from last year has committed for this year, other is a possibility with a back up individual available.
- c. 319 Watershed Coordinator
Chance shared his monthly report. Attended Leadership Academy 1/30. Learned another Watershed Coordinator has a podcast, reaching out to possibly be a part of that for episode or two. Planning for Waterfest is going well. Morning session is full, afternoon is working to fill up. Projects are moving along. Just received 319 reimbursement. BMP check for signature, will be taking that out to producer to touch base with them. Went out on a pipeline GPS with a producer last week, Ford got buried, air valence under front bumper in two pieces. Spoke with Aaron right away when occurred. Two parts available for replacement or can just take off. Board consensus, take off. NWQI received back again, will be last attempt to get grant – consensus along with NRCS management. Been worked on for over a year.

X. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Follow up with board members post committee meeting

Break for Executive session (10:15 – 10:35)

Rocky motioned to accept the personnel committee’s report. Aaron seconded and amended to make retro active to January 1st.

Aye – (3) No – (0)

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Certificate of Deposit renewal – Dakota Community
Discussion regarding 6 month vs 12 months. 4.6% for 6 months, 4.4% for 12 months.
Rocky motioned to have the CD roll into another 6 month term for the 4.6% rate. George seconded the motion.

Aye – (3) No – (0)

- b. Letter from Jodi Delozier regarding advisory board members
Thomas shared the letter he received.
Rocky noted that he takes exception to the portion of the letter indicating that advisory board members are not to take part in any important discussions. His understanding is that they have full voice, but do not vote.
Malissa noted that she took a poll of all the ND SCDs via email if they had advisory board members. Consensus was other SCDs do not, only one district did though those advisory board members had not been in attendance in years. Also found districts have a misconception that NRCS DC and extension agents are considered advisory board members, which is not correct. All information is being taken into account and Jodi is going to be using this as an educational tool for all SCDs at the District Annual Meeting in March.

XII. APPROVE APPLICATIONS AND AGREEMENTS – one 319 BMP check for signature

XIII. PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING – 3/14 at 9:00 am

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

XV. ADJOURN – meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 am

Respectfully Submitted,

Malissa McKee
Recording Secretary

Approved: _____
Thomas Osterbauer - Chairman