

**Minnehaha Conservation District
July 13th, 2020 Monthly Meeting
Minnehaha Conservation District Shed
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm**

Woerman called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Supervisors present: Gordon Heber, Jim Pfeifer and Bob Woerman

Supervisors absent: Brian Alderson and Jennifer Schmidtbauer

Advisors present: Dana Loseke

Advisors absent: Carl Eliason, Jim Jackson, Susan Kruse, Kelly Lyons and Mark McGee

Others present: John Parker, Denise Fletcher, Alina Krone-Hedman, Dan Wehmeyer, Deron Ruesch, Barry Berg, Alexa Kruse and Jay Gilbertson

Agenda: MSP to approve by Pfeifer and Heber. All ayes.

Minutes of June 8th meeting: MSP to approve by Heber and Pfeifer. All ayes.

Treasurer's report: Reviewed at meeting.

Bills: Reviewed at meeting. MSP to approve treasurer's report and pay bills by Pfeifer and Heber. All ayes.

NRCS activity report by Dan Wehmeyer and Deron Ruesch:

WETLANDS: We currently have 8 certified wetland determination requests in progress.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): Continuing to do field status reviews on expiring 2020 and 2021 contracts, as well as working on general, continuous and grassland CRP offers.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP): Continuing to work on CSP Classic applications and high screening applications. Rankings were completed on 7/10/20.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): Received funding on 1 Ag Waste application for a barn system. Working through construction and implementation season on active contracts.

Minnehaha was approved for phase 1 reopening on 6/15/20 and continues in that phase. This allows a maximum of 10 employees in the building at one time. In process of hiring a Biologist (Wetland Specialist) for the Sioux Falls Field Office. New Employee Orientation will be held 8/11/20 and 8/13/20.

Big Sioux River – RCPP Report by Barry Berg: 384 acres of SRAM and 33 acres of RAM contracts completed this spring. Approximately 30 acres left to finish. Need to put together agreements for Minnehaha Conservation District and EDWDD (East Dakota Water Development District), along with RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program) program agreement. Project Specialist, Alexa Kruse, started work on 6/29/20.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes – Parker noted that 3 candidates returned petitions for the 3 open positions on the Board this fall.

Update from Supervisors - None

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Service Report (bio-solids, tree planting, grass planting, Gevik Site, etc.)**

Bio-solids: Caught up until crops come off the fields. Trees: 56 total acres planted. Survival counts will be completed in August. Grass: Jobs to do in August, September and November. Gevik Site: Has been mowed and looking good. No news on the CCG grant that has been applied for. Parker showed pictures of improvements made to the site.

2. **CCG Grant – Urban Educator – NOFO Grant**

Krone-Hedman spoke about the Urban Innovation grant that was applied for. With grant funds, an Ag. Distribution network would be set up between producers and restaurants for a Farm to Table project. The grant would provide \$100,000/year for 3 years. High tunnel meetings being held with producers for NRCS programs. Working with the City on a 5 – 10-acre area that could be planted with pollinators.

3. **GF & P Trail Grant**

Will start working on contract details, getting work quotes, etc.

4. **Employee Updates**

Hersh Smith is leaving the department on 7/16/20. Eric Grootenboer has been hired, to start in August.

5. **Area Meeting – July 22, 2020**

The meeting will be held at the Flandreau Community Center. Bring your own lunch. Let Parker know if you plan to attend.

6. **Equipment Needs for the Future – Possible Trade and Purchase of New Drill**

Discussion was held about equipment needs. The 26' drill may need repairs. Producers may want a larger (30') drill with more monitors. Parker will get more information for the next meeting and send a letter to EDWDD to request a \$5,000 grant toward the purchase of a new drill or repair of the old one.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Water Festival Finance Update**

The Water Festival account has \$40,800 for 2021. Donation letters will be sent out. University of Sioux Falls is still planning on hosting the festival next spring.

2. **Future Workspace/East Dakota Water Development District**

Discussion was held about the expansion of the middle shed to build several office spaces, a restroom and meeting area. There is an existing water line to the building. District personnel could help with the construction. The EDWDD is also interested in partnering on this project. Parker will gather more information about the condition of the structure and cost for the next meeting.

3. **Cooler Use/Farmers Market at the Shed Possibility – in Connection with Urban Grant**

Discussion about the possibility of using the tree cooler in connection with the Urban Conservation grant. The cooler is currently used April, May and part of June for trees. More information will be gathered.

Executive Session (if needed) – Not Needed

CONSERVATION PLAN APPROVAL

Motion to sign agreements by Pfeifer and Woerman. Pfeifer and Woerman voted "aye". Heber abstained because of personal conflicts, as he explained to the District Conservationist. Motion did not pass.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Correspondence

MSP to adjourn at 4:46 p.m. by Pfeifer and Heber. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, August 10th, 2020 at 3:00 pm – Gevik Learning Center

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, District Office Assistant