

**Minnehaha Conservation District
December 14th, 2020 Monthly Meeting
Via Zoom
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm**

Woerman called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

Supervisors present: Brian Alderson, Gordon Heber, Jim Pfeifer, Jennifer Schmidtbauer and Bob Woerman

Supervisors absent: None

Advisors present: Dana Loseke

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

Others present: John Parker, Eric Grootenboer, Denise Fletcher, Alina Krone-Hedman, Dan Wehmeyer, Deron Ruesch, Barry Berg, Brian Top, Brian Scott, Jay Gilbertson, Travis Entenman and Alexa Kruse

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

Minutes of November 9th meeting: MSP to approve by Schmidtbauer and Alderson. All ayes.

Treasurer's report: Reviewed at meeting. MSP to approve by Schmidtbauer and Pfeifer. All ayes.

Bills: Reviewed at meeting. Approved to pay. MSP to approve by Pfeifer and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

NRCS activity report by Dan Wehmeyer:

WETLANDS: We currently have 11 certified wetland determination requests in progress.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): General signup: January 4th to February 12th; Grassland signup: March 15th to April 23rd.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP): Taking new applications at any time. Rankings and preapprovals for renewal applications are completed. 1 application got preapproved.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): Application deadline was December 11th but taking new applications at any time. CIS (Conservation Implementation Strategy) - joint NRCS/Partner meetings have been held regard proposals in two areas: 1. Soil Moisture Conservation Project (tillage management, cover crops, crop rotation and aftermath grazing). 2. Sustainable Agriculture (high tunnels and cover crops).

Sioux Falls office has been moved back to phase 0. 1 agency employee and 1 partner can be in the building at a time.

Big Sioux River – RCPP Report by Barry Berg: Working with new producers for next season. Have interest in over 300 acres. Surveyed several acres to date. There is a grazing compliance issue with an SRAM contract. Waiting for NRCS National Headquarters to move on the RCPP negotiations. Final RCPP report due on December 31st. Voucher # 3 was presented to the board. This includes a payment of \$3,862.64 for TopSoil Consulting (fee for technical assistance) and \$4,864.79 to a producer in the RCPP grazing program (water installation). MSP to pay voucher #3 by Heber and Pfeifer. All ayes.

Urban Educator Report by Alina Krone-Hedman: Krone-Hedman spoke at the virtual South Dakota Soil & Water Society conference on December 10th about her goals. She is working along with Parker and Wehmeyer on a high tunnel/cover crops CIS project for urban ag. Advertisements will be coming out. She will do webinars in the spring on raingardens and other gardening projects. There will possibly be Gevik site projects in the future.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes - None

Update from Supervisors - None

OLD BUSINESS

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

Bio-solids: Deep soil sampling was completed by mid-November and billed out. The new contract is done and may be extended to 2023. Trees: 28 acres planned. 2 big dairies to work with.

Grass: 425 – 450 CRP acres to seed. VA cemetery job was completed. Gevik Site: Ideas are being considered for the site by a committee that will meet this week via zoom. It was an excellent year for the district, with good outlook for next year as well.

2. Building Improvement Information - Shed

Parker presented costs for adding a bathroom, shower, office and meeting areas for the shed. The total cost would be about \$22,800, with approximately \$4,000/year operating cost. State funding in the amount of \$9,000 is expected to be received, along with a \$2,500 water festival donation for storage space. Parker mentioned that inexpensive office furniture could be available through the Government Surplus in Huron, SD. MSP to move forward with the project by Pfeifer and Schmidtbauer. All ayes.

3. Board of Supervisors Forms (Commitment, Confidentiality, Code of Ethics & Attendance)

Parker reminded members that these need to be signed and this will be the last reminder.

4. Annual Budget - 2021

Parker present the figures. He will need to check on a few of the items and revise in order to finalize for next month.

5. Supervisor Voucher

Gordon Heber claim - \$175 for 5 meetings per diem and 107 miles to be paid at current mileage rate. SMP to approve and pay by Pfeifer and Alderson. All ayes.

6. Pheasant Fest Cancelled for 2021 - will return in 2024.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Big Sioux River Project (Watershed Steering Committee – Adopt Operating Procedures)

Gilbertson spoke about the proposed changes to be made in the operating procedures. He believes that anyone who wants to participate as a stake holder can and should. A hard copy will come out to the Board before the January meeting.

2. Big Sioux River Project (SRAM – Maintenance Requirements)

Berg presented information on a violation that occurred on an SRAM contract site, involving cattle grazing with no alternative water source. MSP for the Board to send a letter to the producer by Alderson and Heber. All ayes.

3. Expansion of Current Services (Shrub and Tree Removal)

Parker led discussion about the District providing shrub and tree removal and fabric cutting services for customers. Would need snippers and a chainsaw, as well as a skid loader to rent. 4 CRP customers have already indicated interest. MSP to purchase a chain saw, snippers and safety equipment by Pfeifer and Heber. All ayes.

4. 2021 Annual Plan of Work

Parker presented this to the Board for review, to be finalized in January 2021.

5. Long Range Plan of Work

Parker presented this to the Board for review, to be finalized in January 2021.

6. Future Equipment Needs (Discussion)

Parker mentioned that the District's vehicles have some age and many miles on them. We may need to consider a heavier duty truck in the future, new or used, buy or lease. A bobcat with a grinder on the front would also be useful. He will do more research.

Executive Session (if needed) – not needed

CONSERVATION PLAN APPROVAL - none

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS - none

MSP to adjourn at 5:15 p.m. by Heber and Pfeifer. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, January 11, 2021 at 3:00 pm – via Zoom

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, District Office Assistant