



Petroleum County Conservation District

P.O. Box 118, Winnett, MT 59087-0118

406-429-6646 ext. 104

petroleumcd@midrivers.com

Local Common Sense Conservation

Ralph Corbett, *Chairman*, **Craig Iverson** - *Vice Chair*, **Laura Kiehl** -*Treasurer*,
Rodney Rowton- *Supervisor*, **Sarah Stevens**-*Urban Supervisor* **Diane Ahlgren** – *Supervisor*, *MMWG*

June 27, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:00 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Rodney Rowton, Sarah Stevens and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Nikki Rife and guests Brandon Steinberg, Acting DC for the Winnett Field Office, and Nikki Rife, NRCS Bozeman Office. The May 31st minutes were read; Laura Kiehl moved to approve as submitted and Sarah Stevens seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Reports:

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Rodney Rowton moved to approve the report as submitted, Laura Kiehl seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Laura Kiehl moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures later on this week or next week. She also noted that Rachel and she are working to finalize the fiscal year 2017 funding for the Missouri River CD Council and that she may need checks signed later on this week.

Ladies Day on the Range 2016 was discussed and it was noted that it will be a joint effort between Lower Musselshell, Petroleum and Garfield CD's and that the tentative plan is to have Ladies get on the bus in Jordan then pick up more ladies in Winnett and head to Bill Milton's place. The speaker would be Abbey Smith and she would talk on the bus about holistic management, and using multi-forms of media to benefit your operation. After the tour of Bill Milton's place guests would ride the bus or drive back to Winnett for a BBQ and Abbey will speak a little more.

Open Range Consulting – It was discussed at great length about having Gregg and Eric put together a priority map using the data that has been collected. It was also discussed to team up with several other districts and agencies to have data/photos recollected. It was also discussed to have Gregg or Eric come out to each of the areas and do some hands on workshops to show partners and producers how to use and manipulate the data. Nikki mentioned that there may be

some funding from the NRCS if we can get a scope of work written up and submitted shortly. Other funding sources were discussed as well and Carie said that she will continue to look for funding opportunities.

Six County Meeting – Carie noted to the board that she had sent out an email from Elena Evans with MACD about the meeting time and date. It has been figured that the meeting could be held in Lewistown or Winnett on the evening of September 20th.

2017 BSWC Member – Carie reported to the board that Laura Nowlin and she had met with Bryan Wilson with the MCC to have the mid-term visit. She reported that all is going well with the current member and that after some discussion with Bryan Laura Nowlin is going to put in a request for 2 members next year. It was noted that there are several projects that will need to be worked on and that the work load to do the projects would be more than one member could handle. Laura Nowlin is already looking for funding and has some already secured. Bryan thought that he could help out with finding some funding opportunities as well. Bryan also mentioned that he would be in charge of talking with NRCS about office space accommodations. Brandon Stienberg asked for Carie to forward the email correspondence about the office space to him.

MMWG Report: No report this month other than Diane had sent out an email to members about the Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant and that there is still money available to spray weeds until the end of September. She also reported to the board that Garfield Conservation District is looking for willing producers and places for bio-control sites along the Musselshell River.

MRCDC Report: There was no report this month.

MWC Report: Carie passed around a letter Laura Nowlin had received in regards to the district being awarded the WaterSmart grant. Carie mentioned that she is working on the ASAP paperwork and will turn have it ready in the next day or two.

MSGOT Report: Diane mentioned that there is nothing really to report other than the team will be part of the SGI tour that is happening over the next two days. She also noted that their next meeting will be in August.

NRCS: Brandon Steinberg reported that so far there are no EQIP contracts that are being approved as they all ranked medium priority but that there still might be a potential for one or two to be funded. He noted that Reba Ahlgren had finished up the CSP applications and submitted them last week and that a list of the pre-approved applications should be out by weeks end. Lastly he noted that Reba Ahlgren and Ashley Kiehl will be focusing on sage grouse projects over the next few months.

Supervisors Reports:

Craig – Absent

Diane- Reported that she had attended the CMR meeting and that there had been a thrashing of bison and that it would be a project for the group in the sense that they would be the vessel for the collecting of information and the forum for the discussions for both sides of the issue.

Laura – Nothing at this time.

Rodney – Reported that he had attended the Joel Salatin workshop and found it very interesting.

Ralph – Mentioned that all supervisors should have received a supervisor survey from Karl Christians with DNRC in the mail. He asked that they all respond to the survey.

Sarah – Nothing at this time.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

District Signs – Carie reported that this project is complete.

County Status – It was reported that the increase in the mill levy to keep our county going passed by a pretty substantial margin.

Supervisor Terms & Elections – Craig Iverson was voted in as the new county commissioner so it is unknown at this time whether he will continue on the board after December. It was noted that the district has two positions to fill currently and Craig's would be a third. Carie asked if it was her responsibility to contact potential candidates or the board members. It was noted that it was the board members role to do so and that they would be looking to contact possible candidates.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – After a lot of discussion it was noted that a simple position letter should be written and sent to MACD and NRCS. It was also noted that maybe an area wide wildlife resolution be written for Area 1. Carie was instructed to send the resolution process out to the board. It was noted that if the letter is worded from the resource standpoint instead of the feelings standpoint that it may carry more justification.

Permissive Mill Levy – It was noted that neither Karl Christians nor Laurie Zeller were able to make it to the meeting. Carie asked all board members to email her their questions and she would put together one email to both Karl and Laurie to answer.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

Employee Policy Handbook Changes – Carie handed the board the draft changes that she had made to include payroll and benefits. This area was added to help with the group benefits portion and adding a cap to the amount that the district pays. Carie also noted that the district needs to make sure that in regards to leave that we cannot have the clause of "use it or lose it" as employees cannot lose leave time they have to use it or be paid out when in excess of the maximum accrual. She asked the board to review and send any questions, corrections or recommendations to her and that the changes would be approved at the next board meeting.

2017 Work Plan – Carie handed the board the draft changes that she had made for the next year. She noted that the board would have to add the outreach and on the job training program that is being developed to help other districts. She asked the board to review and send any questions, corrections or recommendations to her and that the changes would be approved at the next board meeting.

Announcements:

Next board meeting July 25, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:45 pm

Ralph Corbett, Chairman

Carie Hess, District Administrator