



**LOCAL COMMON SENSE CONSERVATION**

**18 Main Street  
 PO Box 669  
 Chester MT 59531  
 Phone: 406-759-5778, ext. 102**

*The Liberty County Conservation District Board of Supervisors met January 26, 2023*

*Present:*

|                      |                     |                    |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Lanny Jones</i>   | <i>Rod Oraw</i>     | <i>Tyler Jones</i> |
| <i>Tyler Streit</i>  | <i>Megan Hedges</i> | <i>Mike Nelson</i> |
| <i>Diane Roberts</i> | <i>Kurt Matkin</i>  |                    |

*Absent/Excused:*

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Robert Pugsley</i> | <i>Rodney Svenson</i> |
| <i>Ray Morkrid</i>    |                       |

**CALL TO ORDER – Rod Oraw, called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.**

**DISTRICT BUSINESS**

**Motion** by Megan Hedges, seconded by Rod Oraw to approve the minutes of the November meeting. Motion carried.

**Motion** by Tyler Streit, seconded by Tyler Jones to file the Treasurer’s Report November and December. Motion carried.

**Motion** by Tyler Streit, seconded by Tyler Jones to pay November and December bills. Motion carried.

|                      |             |   |            |   |                    |   |                              |   |                       |   |                    |   |
|----------------------|-------------|---|------------|---|--------------------|---|------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------|---|
| <b>~M</b>            |             |   |            |   |                    |   |                              |   |                       |   |                    |   |
| <b>123</b>           |             |   |            |   |                    |   |                              |   |                       |   |                    |   |
| <b>Basis</b>         |             |   |            |   |                    |   |                              |   |                       |   |                    |   |
| <b>Payments</b>      |             |   |            |   |                    |   |                              |   |                       |   |                    |   |
| <b>November 2022</b> |             |   |            |   |                    |   |                              |   |                       |   |                    |   |
| ◊                    | <b>Date</b> | ◊ | <b>Num</b> | ◊ | <b>Name</b>        | ◊ | <b>Memo</b>                  | ◊ | <b>Account</b>        | ◊ | <b>Paid Amount</b> | ◊ |
|                      | 11/18/2022  |   | DBT        |   | Farmhouse Rags     |   | Gift for MACD Gift baske...  |   | 350.1 · Convention    |   | 16.00              |   |
|                      | 11/21/2022  |   | 123        |   | Diane M Roberts    |   | T & E MACD Convention...     |   | 370 · Travel          |   | 227.16             |   |
|                      | 11/21/2022  |   | DBT        |   | Baymont Inn        |   | Hotel for MACD Conven...     |   | 370 · Travel          |   | 196.24             |   |
|                      | 11/21/2022  |   | DBT        |   | USPS               |   | roll of stamps for Produc... |   | 310 · Postage         |   | 60.00              |   |
|                      | 11/28/2022  |   | 124        |   | Montana Depar...   |   | Cory & Belinda Hawks Y...    |   | Young Ag Couple...    |   | 100.00             | ◀ |
|                      | 11/30/2022  |   | 127        |   | Our Saviors Lut... |   | rental fee New Technolo...   |   | 381 · Workshop E...   |   | 200.00             |   |
|                      | 11/30/2022  |   | 126        |   | HSA Bank           |   | HSA account Diane Rob...     |   | 130 · Health Insur... |   | 375.42             | ◀ |
|                      | 11/30/2022  |   | DBT        |   | PERS               |   | Pers contribution for Nov... |   | 131 · Retirement      |   | 241.58             |   |
|                      | 11/30/2022  |   | 125        |   | Diane M Roberts    |   | November Wages               |   | Net Payroll           |   | 1,034.32           |   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         |             |   |            |   |                    |   |                              |   |                       |   | <u>2,450.72</u>    |   |

12/27/23  
ish Basis

Payments  
December 2022

| Date         | Num | Name              | Memo                         | Account              | Paid Am...             |
|--------------|-----|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 12/12/2022   | 128 | Dean of signs     | New County Sign Liberty...   | 331 · Advertising... | 387.50                 |
| 12/14/2022   | DBT | Dollar Tree       | Table clothes and decor...   | 381 · Workshop ...   | 25.00                  |
| 12/27/2022   | 132 | United States ... | 4th QTR 941 Payroll tax...   | 141.1 · Federal      | 885.22                 |
| 12/28/2022   | 133 | Rod Oraw          | Mileage Reimbursemen...      | 370 · Travel         | 48.36                  |
| 12/28/2022   | 134 | Lanny Jones       | Mileage Reimbursemen...      | 370 · Travel         | 198.40                 |
| 12/28/2022   | 135 | Tyler Streit      | Mileage Reimbursemen...      | 370 · Travel         | 55.80                  |
| 12/30/2022   | DBT | PERS              | Pers contribution for Dec... | 131 · Retirement     | 225.38                 |
| 12/30/2022   | 130 | Diane M Robe...   | December net pay             | Net Payroll          | 967.25                 |
| 12/30/2022   | 131 | HSA Bank          | HSA account Diane Rob...     | 130.2 · Permissi...  | 375.42                 |
| 12/30/2022   | 129 | Department o...   | State Withholding 2022       | 141.2 · State        | 662.00                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |     |                   |                              |                      | <b><u>3,830.33</u></b> |

**DUES TO NATIONAL OFFICE:** There was a discussion about the amount to pay to the NACD for 2023 dues.

*Motion by Rod Oraw, seconded by Tyler Streit to pay \$50 to the NACD for 2023 dues. Motion carried.*

**MACO INSURANCE UPDATE:** The LCCD received notice from MACo Insurance that they will no longer provide liability coverage for Conservation Districts. The district's current coverage will be in place through June 30, 2023. Diane has been working with Kassandra May at Wood Enterprises in Joplin to secure new insurance. We should have two quotes in March. One from Glatfelter and one from Payne West. Rocky Mountain Insurance is another option that we could pursue. Diane will follow up.

**LIBERTY COUNTY CHAMBER of Commerce:** There was a discussion about renewing our membership with the Chester Liberty County Chamber of Commerce.

*Motion by Tyler Streit, seconded by Megan Hedges to pay the \$95 chamber membership fee. Motion carried.*

***NRCS Report – Misty Vermulm, DC, Shelby Office***

**January 26, 2023**

- EQIP TIP proposals for 2024 were presented to the Area Office. They still must be determined investment ready by the State NRCS. Proposals affecting Liberty County include a TIP intended to keep expired CRP in grass production, one that is addressing soil erosion along roadways, and one along the Marias River below the dam, to reduce livestock impacts on the banks with fencing and off stream water. These will be presented to the State office in April.
- There is currently a Community Ag EQIP signup with a cutoff date of Feb 12<sup>th</sup>, that is mainly targeting smaller scale agriculture (for example, hi tunnels).
- CSP Renewal contracts were completed for Chester by the deadline of Dec 16.
- Producer Meeting on Jan 31<sup>st</sup> will be held at the Lutheran Church in Chester. Topics include an on-line MSU nutrient calculator, Food Security Act, HEL, and new technologies to use on the farm – as shared by local producers.
- Personnel: In Chester, staffing changes Laurie Massar - District Conservationist, has accepted a position with the Area office (effective Jan 15), Matti Osterman has accepted a position as a soil

scientist for the State NRCS (effective Jan 30<sup>th</sup>). They will have a presence in Chester but will not be working on local field office tasks. The DC position is open through an internal hiring system, although hiring tends to take time. In the meantime, the Shelby staff will assist until a District Conservationist position can be back filled.

- The Liberty County Local Work Group is listed on the NRCS website as seeking input on local resource issues through the survey that the district distributed.

- Generally, we review the NRCS/CD/DNRC Cooperative Working Agreement and MOA annually often at the start of the year – either January or Feb. The LCCD had reviewed and signed those in June, so a little different schedule and those will again be reviewed with the District Conservationist (or in June again if no one is hired by then).

Respectfully submitted by Misty Vermulm

**Extension Report – Jesse Fulbright** (not in attendance)

## **District Business**

### **LOCAL ACTIVITY**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** There was a discussion on the election of officers to serve for 2023.

Tyler Streit made a **motion** that Lanny Jones serve as Chair, Rod Oraw serve as Vice Chair and Megan Hedges serve as secretary treasurer. Motioned carried.

**CHOUTEAU/LIBERTY COUNTY SIGN UPDATE:** A deposit has been sent to the Dean of Signs in Great Falls for the new Chouteau County/ Liberty County sign. Diane contacted Jody at the Montana Highway Department and asked for any information needed on the requirements for placement of the sign. Diane is also working with Jackson Bramlette at Chouteau County to come up with a plan to place the sign once it is completed.

**LWG SURVEY RESULTS:** A survey was sent out in November to gather information for the Liberty County Local Work Group. The survey is also listed on the NRCS website to seek input on local resource issues. It will be handed out at the New Technologies Workshop on January 31 as well. Once all the information is gathered it will be forwarded to Misty Vermulm at the NRCS office in Shelby. An in person meeting will need to be held in 2024.

**NEW TECHNOLOGIES WORKSHOP:** The New Technologies Workshop will be held at Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Chester on January 31 from 10-2 p.m.

Guest speakers will be:

Laure Masser- Wind Erosion Fundamentals

Marni Thompson- Wind Erosion Simulator and Soil Health Basics

Jennifer Gallus- Soil tests Using the MSU website & Monitoring Acidification

Misty Vermulm- TIP (EQIP) Opportunities

Jeff Mattson- Experience with a Weed IT

Ivan Van Dessel- Using Excel to increase your bottom line.

Cody Ramberg- Using a Drone on the Farm

A **Motion** was made by Tyler Streit, seconded by Tyler Jones to give a \$100. Honorarium to Jeff Mattson, Ivan Van Dessel and Cody Ramberg. Motion carried.

### **310 MODEL RULE:**

It was discussed that in response to the 2019 legislative session changes, the Liberty County Conservation District will revise their 310 natural streambed and land preservation act rules governing the administration of the districts stream permitting program.

Changes include:

#### **RULE 10. DECISION.**

- (6) The applicant must notify the supervisors in writing within **30 days** of receipt of the permit if the applicant wishes to proceed with the project in accordance with the permit. No work may begin on a project before the end of the fifteen-day waiting period unless all team members and the district give written permission.

#### **RULE 13. DISPUTE RESOLUTION.**

- (2) The applicant may request arbitration as the method to resolve disputes by signing an arbitration agreement either before the application review process or within **30 days** of receipt of the supervisors' decision.
- (3) The applicant may request judicial review of the supervisors' decision by filing a petition in district court within **30 days** of receipt of the supervisors' decision.

A public hearing will be held on March 16, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the USDA conference room, 18 Main Street, Chester, Montana to provide an opportunity to present any views and submit written comments on the proposed changes. Copies of the draft rules will be available by contacting the district office.

**310 MAINTAINCE RENEWAL PERMIT:** Skierka Brothers Inc. 10 year renewal application was reviewed and approved with no changes.

*Motion was made by Megan Hedges and seconded by Rod Oraw to approve Skierka Bro. Inc 310 renewal permit with no changes. Motion carried.*

#### **PEER TO PEER WORKSHOP MARCH 3, 2023:**

The NRCS and LCCD would like to host another Peer to Peer Workshop with Marni Thompson and Jennifer Gallus to review Soil Health test results. **It will be held March 3rd at 10:00 a.m. at the USDA office in Chester. Invites will be sent out in February.**

**ENVIROTHON:** Diane has reached out to Stefanie Leach, CFI FFA Advisor to see if she would be interested in having students participate in the Envirothon program. Stefanie will see if she can spark some interest with the students and get back to Diane.

#### **REGIONAL AND STATE**

*Update from Mary Hendrix.*

*Next Meeting –February 16, 2023*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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*Diane Roberts, Administrator*

*Diane Roberts*

*Lanny Jones, Chairman*

*Lanny Jones*

District meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at the USDA Service Center, Chester, 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noticed.

**MISSION: TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS BY PROVIDING LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAMS TO CONSERVE, IMPROVE AND SUSTAIN OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT.**

**VISION: Having a community that is economically stable with the natural resources conserved by:**

1. providing education and encouraging control of nuisance weeds and eradication of noxious weeds
2. having no soils blowing above their tolerance level—ideally no soil or water erosion
3. sustaining and improving water quality, with rivers and streams running clear.
4. encouraging tree planting for shelterbelts and wildlife
5. encouraging recycling
6. working jointly with all other agencies/organizations to enhance conservation practices within the District
7. improving the public perception of the Conservation District