



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 July 20, 2023

Present:

<i>Lanny Jones</i>	<i>Tyler Jones</i>	<i>Megan Hedge</i>
<i>Rod Oraw</i>	<i>Diane Roberts</i>	<i>Geoff Osterman</i>
<i>Mike Nelson</i>	<i>Kurt Matkin</i>	<i>Tyler Streit</i>

Absent/Excused:

<i>Robert Pugsley</i>	<i>Rodney Svenson</i>	<i>Ray Morkrid</i>
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CALL TO ORDER: *Lanny Jones, called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.*

DISTRICT BUSINESS

Motion by Tyler Streit, seconded by Tyler Jones to approve the minutes of the May meeting. Motion carried.

Motion by Tyler Streit, seconded by Mike Nelson to file the Treasurer’s Report for May. Motion carried.

Motion by Tyler Streit, seconded by Mike Nelson to pay May bills. Motion carried.

Motion by Tyler Streit, seconded by Mike Nelson to file the Treasurer’s Report for June. Motion carried.

Motion by Tyler Streit, seconded by Mike Nelson to pay June bills. Motion carried.

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**Payments
 May 2023**

Date	Num	Name	Memo	Account	Paid Am..
05/08/2023	DBT	Jimmy John's	T & E Lunch MCDEO Meet...	370 · Travel	14.00
05/08/2023	160	Cicon & Associates	5 wall maps & 2 colored ma...	201.1 · Maps	181.00
05/15/2023	161	Diane M Roberts	Sam's Club reimbursement...	210 · Office Supplies	25.56
05/22/2023	DBT	Hi-Line Harvest Fest...	Vendor Fee	332 · Dues Expense	30.00
05/22/2023	162	Liberty County Comm...	Hi-Line Harvest Festival fee	212 · Promotions	100.00
05/24/2023	163	HSA Bank	HSA Contribution May	130.1 · LCCD contr...	34.58
05/24/2023	163	HSA Bank	HSA Contribution May	130.2 · Permissive ...	433.82
05/31/2023	DBT	PERS	May Pers contribution	131 · Retirement	265.88
05/31/2023	164	Diane M Roberts	May Payroll	Net Payroll	1,183.93
TOTAL					<u>2,268.77</u>

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**Payments
June 2023**

Date	Num	Name	Memo	Account	Paid Am..
06/05/2023	DBT	US Postmaster	Postage and a roll of stamps	310 · Postage	64.11
06/09/2023	DBT	Walmart	Range Days Supplies Teac...	380 · Education E...	19.79
06/09/2023	DBT	Michaels	Range Days Supplies teach...	380 · Education E...	11.19
06/09/2023	DBT	Baymont Inn	Hotel T & E expense MCDE...	370 · Travel	117.56
06/09/2023	DBT	Albertsons	Dinner MCDEO Conference	370 · Travel	6.38
06/09/2023	165	Diane Roberts	T & E for MCDEO Conferen...	370 · Travel	241.04
06/09/2023	166	Toole County CD	3 rolls Ground Fabric	201.7 · Weed Bar...	350.00
06/12/2023	DBT	Jimmy John's	Lunch MCDEO conference	370 · Travel	9.88
06/12/2023	ACH	Montana State Fund	Increase in insurance premi...	140 · Workers Co...	77.38
06/12/2023	DBT	Lincoln-Oakes Nurs...	Tree order	201.5 · Trees	785.09
06/16/2023	167	Rod Oraw	T & E Jan-June 2023	370 · Travel	50.70
06/16/2023	168	Lanny Jones	T & E Jan-June 2023	370 · Travel	156.00
06/16/2023	169	Tyler Streit	T & E Jan-June 2023	370 · Travel	19.50
06/26/2023	170	Diane M Roberts	Mileage Reimbursement Ra...	370 · Travel	166.36
06/26/2023	DBT	Walmart	Food 1000 Farms Regener...	381 · Workshop E...	4.96
06/26/2023	DBT	Walmart	Food 1000 Farms Regener...	381 · Workshop E...	11.38
06/26/2023	DBT	Sam's Club	1000 Farms Regenerative w...	381 · Workshop E...	203.72
06/26/2023	DBT	Chester Supermark...	Ice for 1000 Farms Regene...	381 · Workshop E...	9.45
06/26/2023	ACH	PERS	June Pers Contribution Dian...	131 · Retirement	259.13
06/26/2023	173	Diane M Roberts	June net wages Diane Robe...	Net Payroll	1,154.15
06/26/2023	172	United States Trea...	2 QTR 2023 Payroll taxes	141.1 · Federal	854.67
06/26/2023	171	HSA Bank	HSA June Contribution	130.1 · LCCD con...	34.58
06/26/2023	171	HSA Bank	HSA June Contribution	130.2 · Permissiv...	433.82
06/27/2023	174	U-I Contributions	2 QTR unemployment Insur...	141.3 · Unemploy...	11.02
TOTAL					<u>5,051.86</u>

MACD Dues: The 2023 MACD dues amount is \$2218.04. Due to lack of funds the CD has paid half dues in the years past. It was discussed that half dues would be paid for 2023.

*Motion by Tyler Streit, seconded by Rod Oraw to pay \$1109.02 for dues to the MACD for 2023.
Motion carried.*

NRCS Report – Misty Vermulm, DC, Shelby Office (not in attendance, written report)

July 20, 2023

NRCS Report

- Montana Range Days was carried out, with only minor hiccups through the course of the event. Overall, feedback about the workshops, locations, and instruction was positive. Next year, it will rotate to Miles City for 2024-25. Many thanks to the LCCD for allowing Diane to assist with that event.
- EQIP TIP 2024 proposals will be officially released this fall. The ones affecting Liberty County are one that is addressing soil erosion along roadways, and a second is for keeping expired CRP in grass with water or fence help, boundary fences, in addition to a TIP that will provide offsite watering for livestock along the Marias below Tiber Dam. Currently, NRCS is in the process of seeking an updated

strip-cropping payment rate and scenario to incentivize that practice. Recently this proposal has been better received at the state and national levels than earlier requests to increase the payment rate.

- CSP23 Classic applications have been assessed and ranked. Funding in 2023 is modest and is expected to be up in 2024. The Inflation Reduction Act funded some applications beyond the initial CSP funding allocation.
- CRP General accepted offers were given to FSA. Producers are contacted by FSA to respond if they want to proceed and those that do, NRCS will continue on with developing contracts. CD will be asked to sign the conservation plans.
- Personnel: We are still waiting on panels for Soil Con position in Shelby, 2 Soil Cons in Chester and for the DC positions in Chester and Shelby.
- CRP Grasslands sign-up with FSA closed and we should know results any day now.

Extension Report – Jesse Fulbright (not in attendance)

District Business

LOCAL ACTIVITY

Pugsley Bridge Update: Diane received an email update on the Pugsley Bridge stage II project from Zach Shattuck, Fish Wildlife and Parks. The email is listed below.

“We had our kick-off call today to outline the steps bios/partners need to take to start setting up projects. I think you and Luke are actually farther along than a lot of other folks so we’re in a good position to push your project through, ahead of any potential bottlenecks.

What I explained in the call and spoke to Luke about were the need to draft a scope of work and a more formalized budget that we can then submit paperwork on and start getting a contractor identified to do some of the assessment/survey & design work. We would then have our Design and Construction group draw up a contract and ensure the deliverables for the project are met.

We have our internal ORGs set up and we just need to start getting the details together. This is something that I think would be helpful in collaboration, simply piecing together prose in the approach and need, and then allow Luke to either further flesh out those details or discuss potential modifications/alternatives to make sure it fits everyone’s needs.

I’m trying to speak with as many bios and partners as I can this week but if you like, we can set up a call to discuss and outline any details I missed. Sorry for the long, painful process but hopefully we can get things moving soon. Thanks for all your patience and persistence!

Take care and talk soon,
Zach”

Diane will try to schedule a zoom call with both Zach and Luke to further discuss the process with the board.

HARVEST FESTIVAL: Diane has registered for a booth at the Harvest Festival in Chester in September. Items that will be highlighted.

- *Tree Sales*
- *Website with new 310 digital application*
- *310 permit process*
- *Items for sale/rent*

Diane will also order pens with the Liberty County name and website to hand out to help let people know we have a website page.

CHOUTEAU/LIBERTY COUNTY SIGN UPDATE: Currently the sign is at the Chouteau CD office. A board member from Chouteau County is making a metal sign and donating the cost. Diane had a phone conversation with Brian Romain about placing the sign on his property. He is fine with that but recommended putting rock around the bottom legs of the sign to keep the cattle from rubbing against the sign and knocking it over. Diane will schedule a sight visit on the property after harvest to confirm the placement of the sign and try to locate the exact place of the previous sign and put the new sign in the same place. Board members are invited to attend.

GILLY 310 APPLICATION PLATFORM ON WEBSITE: A 310 online digital platform has been added to the Liberty County Conservation website (libertycountycd.macdnet.org). The platform will simplify the application process and make sure applications are complete before they are submitted to the Conservation District.

ADMINISTRATIVE GRANT UPDATE: An administrative grant was applied for with the DNRC to help offset the increase in liability insurance and operating expenses for the 2023/2024 physical year. The application has been approved by the DNRC and documents are being signed and returned. The awarded amount is \$11,665. If the grant is completed by the DNRC funds should start to be disbursed in August.

CD EDUCATIONAL GRANTS: There are educational Mini-Grants for students and adult education that focus on local conservation issues. These grants are part of the DNRC's Conservation Districts Bureau State-funded grants provided by the legislature and awards can total up to \$5000. Implementation for the funded projects begins no sooner than 3 months following application submission which means we would need to apply for the grant in September to have funding for a winter workshop. If a CD has an Annual Event that needs funding the CD can apply for multiple years with one contract. Whatever grant we apply for must be a part of our strategic plan. Diane will talk to Misty about plans for a winter workshop and see if an educational grant might be an option to help with funding the workshop.

THOUSAND FARMS REGENERATIVE WORKSHOP: The NRCS, Liberty County and Chouteau County hosted the 1000 Farms Regenerative Workshop with Marni Thompson and Dr. Jonathan Lundgren, founder and director of Ecdysis Foundation at Steve Skierka's farm on June 26th. Fifty four people were in attendance. Chouteau Conservation District contributed \$110 to help offset the food costs for the event.

EMPLOYEE EVALUATION FORM: An employee evaluation form was handed out to board members for an employee evaluation of Diane Roberts. It was a one year review. Comments were to maintain the current quality of work, but do not burn out. Thank you for the extra effort to go after grants and educational opportunities. Exceeds District Standard.

REGIONAL AND STATE

Two handouts were presented as an update from Mary Hendrix.

Next Meeting –September 21, 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Diane Roberts, Administrator

Lanny Jones, Chairman

Diane Roberts

Lanny Jones

District meetings are held the 3rd 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