

**Minnehaha Conservation District
January 13, 2025, Monthly Meeting
USDA Service Center
Board Meeting at 3:00 pm**

Heber called the meeting to order at 2:59 p.m.

Supervisors present: Rick Bonander, Gordon Heber, and Allen Severtson

Supervisors absent: Travis Entenman and Jim Pfeifer

Advisors present: Kathleen Mackeprang and Brian Top

Advisors absent: Carl Eliason

Others present: John Parker, Denise Fletcher, Alina Krone-Hedman, Dan Wehmeyer, Deron Ruesch, Barry Berg, Jaelynn Dreckman, and Jeff Zimprich

Board Positions for 2025:

MSP to keep all positions the same as last year by Severtson and Bonander. All ayes.

Board Positions: Chairman – Gordon Heber, Vice Chairman – Travis Entenman, Treasurer – John Parker, and Secretary/Recorder – Denise Fletcher.

Agenda: MSP to approve by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

Minutes of December 9th meeting: MSP to approve by Severtson and Bonander. All ayes.

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

Bills: Reviewed at meeting. MSP to approve and pay bills by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

NRCS activity report by Dan Wehmeyer:

WETLANDS: 28 certified wetland determination requests in process. 10 FSA-569 potential violations.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): Not taking any new offers currently.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSTwP): Working on planning.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP): Working on planning/ranking.

Outreach: Ag Expo-Convention Center: January 15 & 16. **Sioux Falls Farm Show**-Convention Center: January 22-24. Pathways Intern accepted temporary job offer – start this summer.

Big Sioux River Project Report by Barry Berg:

SRAM & RAM: Working with producers. Have about 80 acres to sign up this spring.

EQIP/RCPP: No update.

OTHER RELATED ITEMS: Next steering committee meeting in March. Will have booth at the Soil Health Convention in Watertown on January 15-16. Jaelynn Dreckman has worked on updating information on the website. Non-Point Source Task Force has recommended \$525,000 for the Big Sioux River Project. Request was for \$1,031,750. No checks or reimbursements this month.

Urban Educator Report by Alina Krone-Hedman:

OUTREACH: NCDEA Educational Webinar – January 22 to discuss aspects of successful educational outreach programs. **Sioux Empire Water Festival** – March 3-5. Our annual event for area 4th graders on all things water.

CITY PARTNERSHIP: Prairie and Pollinator Program – starting preparation for spring. **Prairie and Pollinator Demonstration Garden** – will discuss plans in February for revitalizing this demonstration site. **Community Garden and Education Demonstration Area** – plans being worked on for spring 2025. Will be discussed with Urban Conservation Technician.

GRANTS/FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS: RFSI Grant – Received comments and working to see if solutions are possible to continue forward with possibly receiving funding. **SDACD Locally Led** – Plan to attend Lincoln County meeting on January 21. **NACD Technical Assistance Grant** – Received grant and started project in January.

OTHER: Soil Health Coalition – Continuing to work on Gevik site improvements. **Newsletter** – Plan to get printed the week of January 13th and send out by week of January 20th. Tentatively plan to go with new printer based on estimates. **Audubon Society** – Elected to the Audubon Great Plains Board.

Conversations & Conservation – Planned for February 4 at Remedy Brewing Co. at 5:30 p.m. Approximately 1 hour long social event for conservation professionals and board members. **Holiday Meet-Up** – Planned for January 16 at 6:00 p.m. at the Tavern Grille on Louise Ave. **NACD Summer Meeting** – July 24-30 in Milwaukee, WI. **NACD Regional Meeting** – June 23-25 in Brookings.

Public Comment Time – 15 minutes – Jeff Zimprich – Spoke about the 157-acre farm he has moved back to near Brandon, SD and his efforts to improve the land and create an educational program. He has worked with about 68 groups of people (1600 people) so far. The goal is to expose students and adults to soil and grassland principles. He feels that there is a good opportunity for the Conservation District and other partners to work together with his operation.

Update from Supervisors – Heber will be making a trip with other Research Farm representatives to Washington, DC on March 29th. A meeting with USDA is scheduled, as well as legislative staff meetings.

Bonander mentioned that a Lake County Supervisor he talked to admired what the Minnehaha Conservation District is doing.

OLD BUSINESS

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

Bio-solids: 2025 Bio-solids contract with the City of Sioux Falls has been submitted. **Trees:** 40 acres are planned. **Grass:** 300 acres CRP and 50 acres of other seeding are planned. **Gevik Site:** Kiosk with Soil Health Coalition is being worked on. The road repair is being discussed. **Water Festival:** Event is March 4-5. **Shelterbelt Clean Up Project:** Parker showed slides of some of the projects. One project is complete and two more are being worked on.

2. Eastern SD Soil & Water Research Farm Meeting in Brookings, SD on January 8, 2025

Heber and Parker attended this focus group meeting, which occurs twice a year.

3. Youth Pheasant Hunt

The District decided not to do the youth pheasant hunt.

NEW BUSINESS

1. NACD Grant-Received

This project started on January 1st. This will provide salary funding for Alina Krone-Hedman, Urban Conservation Education Coordinator and Ayden Bonnett, Urban Conservation Technician. Hope to get certified conservation planning in place for the technician.

2. Soil Health Conference – January 15-16, Watertown

Parker is not sure of attendance at this event. SDACDE will have a booth.

3. Annual Plan of Work

Parker presented the plan that will be sent to the State of SD. MSP to approve by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

4. Long Range Plan of Work

Parker presented this plan that will be sent to the State of SD. MSP to approve by Severtson and Bonander. All ayes.

Executive Session (if needed) - None

CONSERVATION PLAN SIGNING - None

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

MSP to adjourn at 4:38 p.m. by Bonander and Severtson. All ayes.

NEXT MEETING DATE: February 10th, 2025, at 3:00 pm – USDA Service Center

Submitted by Denise Fletcher, Recording Secretary