

**Petroleum County Conservation District**

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**Local Common Sense Conservation**

[www.petroleumcd.com](http://www.petroleumcd.com)

**Jay King** – *Chairman*, **Brenda Brady**, *Vice-Chairman & MSCA*,  
**Laura Kiehl** – *Treasurer & MRCDC*, **Ralph Corbett** – *Urban Supervisor*, **Rodney Rowton** – *Rural Supervisor*, **Butch Arthur** – *Urban Supervisor*, **Nathan Descheemaeker** – *Supervisor*

**January 31, 2024**

**Call to order:** Chair Jay King called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:06pm. Those present were Jay King, Rodney Rowton, Butch Arthur, and Laura Kiehl. Others in attendance virtually were Mark Bostrom, Caitlin Overland, Diane Ahlgren, Therese Hartman; Rebecca Boslough; Molly Masters; MRCDC Coordinator; and Veronica Grigaltchik (Virtual), DNRC CD Specialist. Others present in person were Katie Lund, PCCD Fiscal Manager; Brent Smith, CEMIST; and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator. Ralph Corbett, Brenda Brady and Nate Descheemaeker were absent.

**Approval of Minutes:** Laura Kiehl moved to approve the December 20, 2023 regular board meeting minutes as corrected; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed. Rodney Rowton moved to approve the January 16, 2024 special board meeting minutes; Butch Arthur seconded. Motion passed.

**Guest/Public Comment:** None.

**Partner Reports:**

**MRCDC:** Molly Masters stated that we secured the Ag building at the fairgrounds for the CMR CWG Meeting. We need to provide our own insurance or pay \$100 for insurance.

**MWC:** No report

**MSGOT:** No report

**MSU Extension:** No Report.

**DNRC:** Veronica Grigaltchik stated that the 2<sup>nd</sup> round for CDAs is open till March 1<sup>st</sup>. Will need to sign an authorizing statement, and also attach the minutes from this meeting when submitting everything. Discussed different options for submitting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Round request. Project, Pollinator, and Planning grants open February 1<sup>st</sup>. This is the second cycle, and they will close Mid-March. Next round will be in the fall. The CEMIST project will close this fall and expire September 30<sup>th</sup>. She recommends that the PCCD apply for the CEMIST grant in this round. The Declaration for Nomination and Oath of Candidacy forms are Due by March 11. This is for elected supervisors whose terms are going to end this year, and are interested in running again.

**NRCS:** No report

**Pheasants Forever:** Brent Smith stated that Josh Hobbs is in the middle of transitioning out of ACES by the end of February and will be fully funded by Pheasants Forever March 1<sup>st</sup> on. He will remain in the NRCS Office for now.



**Winnett ACES:** Laura Kiehl stated that the 1<sup>st</sup> session of Reimaging Rural took place. It's primary focus is helping local residents reinvigorate their town. Next session is February 12<sup>th</sup>.

**CEMIST:** Brent Smith stated that they attend the Fort Belknap Mid-Winter Fair. Applied for the AIS grant; it is competitive. The Feral Hog Tour is set for March 4-8 on the highline.

**BLM:** No report.

**Supervisor Reports:**

**Brenda Brady:** No report.

**Laura Kiehl:** Laura has been attending the Petroleum Irrigation District meetings with FCA, engineers, etc. The FCA and engineers are working on applying for DNRC grants for preliminary engineering, getting a report done for a project grant, and a \$15K grant to get a cultural study done.

**Ralph Corbett:** No report.

**Jay King:** No report.

**Rodney Rowton:** No report.

**Nate Descheemaeker:** No report.

**Butch Arthur:** No report.

**Old Business:**

**A. MSGOT Lease Contracts:** Jay visited with several folks and it was decided the best way to go forward with having funds for possible audits was to add 1-2% into the grant application when applying for project grants. There are cheaper auditors out there that would be less than \$30K. Jay discussed 6 different options for going forward with MSGOT funding payments to landowners:

- 1. Space land payments out evenly over five or six years. Use MSGOT \$30k for the first two years then put 1-2% of grant funding and MSGOT landowner funding towards audits.
- 2. Use MSGOT \$30k to do one or two years of audits and lump landowner payments in two or three of their fiscal years.
- 3. Have Western Sustainability Exchange do one or more of the leases and avoid triggering an audit.
- 4. Do two years of audits but space them out. I.e. our fiscal year 2025 and 2027. Could therefore space payments to landowners over four of their fiscal years.
- 5. Do option two or four but also do smaller payments in years surrounding audit years that would be small enough to not trigger an audit.
- 6. Look at doing our audit with the county's audit.

Mark Bostrom discussed the audit process and he thinks that we will just be doing a compliance audit and should not be \$30K. Rebecca Boslough stated that MACD might be able to help. Therese stated that the contracts can be amended with the length of time and change amounts. It will be separate for each contract. Caitlyn reiterated that when changing contracts that we just need to file an amendment. Next steps will be visiting with land owners and what they all think for payment structure with all the different options, and finding an auditor. Need to plan a meeting with land owners and the CD.



B. **McDonald Irrigation – Grant:** This grant was submitted. We will know more on the grant after it closes April 30. Project grants open in July.

C. **Fuels Mitigation Program** – Nothing new to report. Tabled until the next meeting.

**New Business:**

- A. **310 Updates** – None.
- B. **Audit Options** – Covered prior in the meeting.
- C. **Review CEMIST Board notes & recommendation** – Laura Kiehl moved to approve the recommendation for salary increase that was made by the CEMIST Executive Council; Butch Arthur seconded. Rodney abstained. Motion passed.
- D. **MRCDC Representative Form** – Rodney Rowton moved to appoint Laura Kiehl as the MRCDC representative, with Jay King as the alternate; Butch Arthur seconded. Motion passed.
- E. **Warhorse Tour** – Jay talked to Ray Hale. The diversion dam has been torn out. A group of land owners (in the 70s/80s) had the dam usable again and they said they do not think it is worth the effort. Would like to go look at it, but not going to pursue any further if there is not any land owner interest. Need to let land owners know there is funding out there for dam infrastructure.
- F. **No Till Drill Committee Meeting** – Plan a board meeting Feb 7<sup>th</sup> at 1pm for board members and Kalin with Hoge Repair Shop.
- G. **Template regarding resolution** – Tabled till next meeting, move to old business.
- H. **CDA Grant** – Went over the budget for the 2<sup>nd</sup> round ask for the CDA grant. Rodney Rowton moved to approve the CDA Grant Cycle 2 Budget for \$41,429, which includes MACD Dues of \$3500; Laura Kiehl. Motion passed.
- I. **SOQ submission(s) for Engineering/Planning/Grant Admin for PCCD/Delphia Melstone** – Rodney Rowton moved to select WWC Engineering for the required engineering, planning and grant writing/administration services for the Delphia Melstone Water User's Association proposed new regulating reservoir, assuming Delphia/Melstone approves using WWC; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed. Trish will contact Lynn Rettig and once they approve, will send an acceptance letter to WWC Engineering.

**Administrative:**

- A. **Grant & District Updates**
  - Reviewed the updated grant summary sheet, the MWC outstanding grants that haven't been submitted, and DNRC grant that hasn't been fulfilled. Possibility of repercussions to the CD and/or having to returning funds. Discussed the geological survey that needs to be signed. Laura Kiehl moved to approve the continuation of the USGS Gaging Station Joint Funding Agreement; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed. Looked over the DNRC CD Accountability Assessment Survey. Veronica stated that we have time still to get it completed.
  - Discussed what dictates unexcused absences and that most CDs have on their agenda after Roll Call to vote for absences as excused or not. Going forward, will add "Approval of Absences" to the CD agendas.
    - 1. 10-minute training – Long Range & Annual Work Plans: Tabled to the next board meeting when there are more board members present.
    - 2. Board Election overview: Went over the board election folder. Trish will contact Petroleum County Courthouse to get in line with what they have on file. Trish will update the Board Election timeline sheet.
    - 3. Admin possible more CD hours - Discussed possible future increase in hours after more funding comes in.

**Financial:**

Katie discussed the termination account and what needs to be transferred. Suggested use a formula to follow. Take current figures, plus a years' worth of PTO (\$13,324.36) and transfer to the termination account. This can be looked at annually. Other option is having 6 months labelled as termination account & leave 6 months out of that account, so it can be used elsewhere. Laura Kiehl moved to create a termination account within our savings, to cover 6 months and current PTO for each CD employee, excluding the MRCDC Coordinator, since they have their own termination account; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

**1. Petroleum CD:** Rodney Rowton moved to pay the PCCD unpaid bills; Butch Arthur seconded. Motion passed.

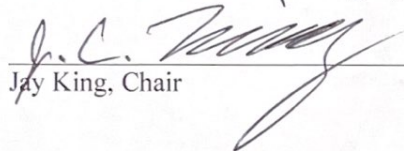
**2. Missouri River CD Council:** Rodney Rowton moved to pay the MRCDC unpaid bills; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed.

**Correspondence:** Trish will drop off the summer camp information to the Winnett School.

**Announcements:**

A. Next Board meeting: Wednesday, February 28, 5pm, PCCD Office.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 8:12pm

  
Jay King, Chair

  
Trish J. Smith, District Administrator