



Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

DRAFT MASWCD MINUTES
Regular Meeting
USDA Service Center
Jefferson City, Missouri
March 27, 2013

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Present

Kenny Lovelace, President
Steve Radcliff, Past President
Tom Lambert, Area II
Ryan Britt, Area III
George Engelbach, Area V
Ben Gorden, Area VI
Dan Greeson, Area VII
Mike Kelley, Area VIII
Henry Heinze, Treasurer
Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

Karen Brinkman Acting NRCS State Cons.
Colleen Meredith, DNR Soil & Water
Bill Wilson, DNR Soil & Water Program
Clint Dalbom, MDC
Sandy Stratman, Employees Assn. Pres.
David Hale, Area VI Alternate
David Morris, Livingston SWCD

Not Present

Bruce Biermann, Area I
Beverly Dometorch, Area IV

President Kenny Lovelace welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Introductions were made around the room. Quorum established. No revisions to the agenda.

The minutes from the November 25, 2012 meeting were approved as printed and presented. Motion for approval made by Tom Lambert, Mike Kelley seconded. Motion carried unanimously (6-0). George requested an updated printout of the Board members and alternates.

A treasurer report was given by Henry Heinze. He stated 83 districts have paid 2013 dues and one district has paid partial dues for 2013. He stated that David Dix still has the CD's until they mature then they will be moved to Henry. The bank signature letter finally made it all the way around for signatures. Henry stated he still was missing some receipts so it was emphasized to the Board to be sure to send in any receipts they had not yet submitted. The report for the accounts held in Jefferson City was reviewed. The administrative funds for the past MDC grants are still in the Jeff City grants account. Mike Kelley made a motion to move \$50,000 of the grant administrative funds to Henry for investing and the other \$28,852.63 to the legislative fund. Dan Greeson seconded the motion. Motion carried

unanimously (6-0). Tom Lambert motioned to approve the treasurer report and file for audit. Mike Kelley seconded. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

NRCS Report: Karen Brinkman attended for J. R. Flores. He is still on detail as acting Southeast Regional Conservationist until sometime in May. Ms. Brinkman reported the offices are in the pre-approval process for EQIP contracts with some contracts already being written. There is \$24-\$25 million available for EQIP in Missouri. Last year Missouri obligated \$29 million for EQIP. 60% of the EQIP funds are targeted for livestock concerns along with \$10 million for initiatives such as MRBI, etc. The continuing resolution funding the agency expires today; the new continuing resolution to fund the federal government through September 30 is in front of the President to sign. The new bill has some additional cuts as well as retains the sequester cuts. Conservation Planning training will be offered in the next month. This will be a series of webinars for the classroom part of the training, but there will still need to be field training for about 3 days later in the summer. The training webinars are a result of suggestions from the Field Office of the Future meetings. The MLRA (soils) offices are changing. They are being made more regionalized and will be managed by the national office. E-mails are being sent to the district employees through Sandy Stratman since the district e-mail addresses are not part of the NRCS e-mail database and many of the district employees do not have e-mail addresses on the NRCS e-mail database.

Commission Report: Colleen Meredith distributed copies of the publication by the Governor's office on the drought assistance. She reported that the meetings recently held for input on the Matching Grants had pretty good attendance overall. There will be a report and summary of the input presented at the meetings at the Commission meeting on April 3. The April 3 Commission meeting will be held in Chariton County with an afternoon tour of their cover crop pilot program. A new Soil & Water Commissioner was appointed replacing Kathryn Braden. The new Commissioner is H. Ralph Gaw from Moniteau County. The supplemental budget request for \$5.2 million has been passed through the House and the Senate budget committee but not completed through the approval process yet. It is for FY-2013 funding. Sales tax revenue is up about 2% from the same time last year but still not back to the levels received in 2001. The DNR budget has been through the hearing process, they don't expect any issues. Ms. Meredith reported the Program Office has been through a re-organization based on the input from the meetings held last year seeking input from outside partnering organizations as well as internal input. She stated all departments within DNR are going to be doing this. The program now has 4 sections – Fiscal & Audit, Policy, District Assistance East and District Assistance West. She stated there are still 6 topics to work on from the Plan for the Future and they plan to do meetings like the matching grant meetings for each of these topics. Richard Fordyce recently received the Conservationist of the Year award from Conservation Federation. She stated there is a You Tube video of the tour the Commission had following the last Commission meeting they had at the Lincoln University Carver Farm. Because of the sales tax renewal coming up in 2016 they plan to have more videos on You Tube to help with awareness of the program. In response to a question about the cover crop practice Ms. Meredith stated the pilot project will be discussed at the Commission meeting, not sure when it might be available state-wide.

Ms. Meredith stated there is legislation filed this year that would move the program from DNR to the MO Department of Agriculture and move the parks program from DNR to the Economic Development Department Tourism Division. The bills have not been assigned to a committee yet and the general feeling is that they will not go very far this year. She

stated that having the program in DNR works well in her opinion because of the access to the water quality programs especially during the drought assistance program this past summer. Ben Gorden stated he appreciated the willingness of the Program Office to come out to the various areas of the state and ask for input.

Employee Association Report: Sandy Stratman distributed a copy of a report she gave at the NACD North Central meeting in Chicago in January. The report covers the 8 states in the North Central Region and information about the employees association for each of those states. She stated the new Memo of Understanding should be heading to the districts for approval and signatures in the next few weeks. She stated she had received a comment from a district employee with concern about how many district employees have been leaving. They felt maybe these employees should be interviewed to see what the main reason was for them leaving.

MDC Report: Clint Dalbom reported the animal killed in Howard County recently was really a wolf from the Great Lake states region. He stated there is no plan to re-introduce wolves into the state, there are just a few that wander into the state. The department has started tracking black bears and discovered that some are actually native Missouri bears. The feral hog activities have stepped up, but there are so many of them. He stated a lot of the hogs are located on public lands, either MDC or national forest land. He said the elk are doing well, but they did lose a few during the winter. There were several calves born last year, but none this year yet. The hemorrhagic disease was spotty but state-wide. There were 4 more chronic wasting cases confirmed. They are forecasting good numbers for turkey season. MDC has re-written their internal policy on providing recommendations to the Corps of Engineers on reservoir water flow and will be having a meeting with partnering organizations for their input. He did state MDC has no regulatory authority on this issue, only gives recommendations. He did state that farm ponds are exempt from the Corps rules.

Old Business: Kenny Lovelace, Beverly Dometrorch, Sandy Stratman and Peggy Lemons attended the NACD North Central Region meeting in Chicago in January. They discussed what they heard at the meeting. There was an excellent soil health demonstration given at that meeting.

There were several from the Board that attended the NACD meeting in San Antonio, those who attended discussed workshops they went to and what they learned. Sandy Stratman stated she attended the soil stewardship workshop and was able to put information from that workshop on her Maries SWCD website. This was the first time Missouri has had a national award winner. Kenny Reichert received the Olin Sims award at the NACD meeting.

Kenny Lovelace and Beverly Dometrorch attended the spring Fly-In with NACD in Washington, D.C. last week. Kenny stated the visits with the Congressmen/women and Senators went well and it seemed like most were ready to work with you. The next NACD meeting is in July in Washington, DC.

The contract with Tan-Tar-A for the Training Conference has been revised to include the new dates for 2013, 2014 and 2015. The conference will now be held mid-December instead of immediately following Thanksgiving.

An update was given for the MDC Incentive program. \$125,000 was received in December with applications starting to come in late December. To date approximately 50 applications have been submitted with not quite \$50,000 obligated. Payments are just starting since a few of the mid-contract management practices have just been completed.

New Business: The Matching Grant meetings were previously discussed during the DNR/Commission report.

A discussion was held on Area Meetings. Is it best to have them in the summer or at the Training Conference, or both times? It appeared to be consensus that the summer meetings were more beneficial with better attendance. Colleen Meredith suggested they might use the summer Area Meetings as one of the Plan for the Future meetings to gather input on one of the topics from the Plan. Tom Lambert made a motion to have the Area Meetings with the partners being involved. Ryan Britt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (6-0). The Program will start working on dates and locations with input from the Area Directors on suggested locations and dates and times.

Peggy Lemons reported that the Missouri Envirothon Committee is considering hosting the 2015 North American Envirothon and is seeking support from the partners before making their final decision. This would bring approximately 500 students and adults from across the United States and Canada to Missouri for a week, staying on the campus of one of the universities being considered. If the final decision is made to put in a bid to host the competition, then there will be a follow-up request for financial support as well. Tom Lambert made a motion to support the submission of a bid to host the 2015 North American Envirothon in Missouri. Mike Kelley seconded the bid. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

AREA Reports: Bruce Biermann, Area 1, was not in attendance due to his daughter's house being destroyed by fire a couple of days ago. Tom Lambert made a motion for MASWCD to send a gift card for \$500 to Bruce's daughter to help with expenses. Mike Kelley seconded. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Tom Lambert, Area 2, reported dirt work is going pretty good now, finally since they got some moisture. He provided information on one of the editors for the Missouri Ruralist that is interested in attending the Training Conference.

Ryan Britt, Area 3, stated his district was a little behind and looking at the possibility of rolling over some projects for the first time in several years. He said he wasn't sure about the rest of his area on their status on completion of projects.

George Engelbach, Area 5, stated he would like DNR to consider temporary employees to fill in when district employees have issues that prevent them from doing the field work or are on extended leave.

Ben Gorden, Area 6, stated that his district plans to extend their student intern program. Most of the ponds in his area are full and the districts have been able to spend most of their cost-share money on grazing practices. He also stated his district is looking at initiating a pilot program for cover crops (drill and seed costs) from their local funds. He stated he has a county that has asked him to come to their meeting to discuss the benefits of being a member of MASWCD.

Dan Greeson, Area 7, said he hasn't heard from any of his counties, there has been plenty of snow in his county but most of the rest of his area got rain. He stated his area is predominately pasture land. He expressed his concern that we need to be in a position to act, not re-act, to legislation, etc. He said politics has a lot to do with our organization.

Mike Kelley, Area 8, said it has been cold and wet but a little bit of color is starting to show. The boot hill area has not started planting yet. He said he read that the average temperature this year could be 10 degrees higher than normal and could pull the water from the ponds. Most of the farmers in his area are feeding the last of their hay now.

Correspondence: None.

Other Business: Kenny Lovelace stated that during their meeting with NACD in Washington, DC, Beverly Dometorch had noticed that the NACD issues seem to be veering off from soil and water. She thought maybe a resolution submitted to the North Central region would be a good idea to bring this issue out. Kenny stated he would like to have a committee to work on the intended resolution and wanted Beverly to head up the committee. He also stated he wanted Steve Radcliff to be on the committee because of his past experience with NACD. One or two more people may be added to the committee. Kenny Lovelace and Steve Radcliff both stated that the North Central Region pays the majority of the dues NACD receives but the NACD priorities seem to be more oriented to water quantity, endangered species, etc., which are more important to the western states.

An update on the legislation filed this year in the Legislature that concerns the soil and water conservation districts was given. Colleen Meredith said she feels it is early in the process and that DNR is watching the bills but don't look for them to move through the session this year.

A motion was made at 3:50 p.m. by Tom Lambert to go into Closed Session to discuss legislative issues. Mike Kelley seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously (6-0).

A motion was made at 4:45 p.m. by Mike Kelley to come out of Closed Session. This was seconded by Ryan Britt, motion carried unanimously (6-0).

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mike Kelley to adjourn. Tom Lambert seconded the motion. The Motion carried unanimously (6-0). The next meeting will probably be in June with the date to be set at a later date.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

Kenny Lovelace, President