

Bonner Soil & Water Conservation District

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes



Date: February 7, 2012
Time: 1:30 pm
Place: 1224 Washington Ave., Suite 101

Attendance: Herman Collins, BSWCD
Dale Van Stone, BSWCD
Vern Hollett, BSWCD
Alice Wallace, BSWCD
Cassie Tauber, BSWCD
Harry Menser, Associate
Erin Mader, POBC

Greg Becker, NRCS
Linda O'Hare, BSWCD
Bill Lillibridge, SWC
Delwyne Trefz, SWC

Absent: Fairy Delay, Associate; Molly McCahon, L*A*S

From 12:00 to 1:30 ICRMP Training information was reviewed regarding employee practices. Members present included Herman Collins, Dale Van Stone, Vern Hollett, Cassie Tauber, and Linda O'Hare.

The board meeting was called to order at 1:40. Herman introduced and welcomed Bill Lillibridge, Engineer for SWC out of Lewiston, and Delwyne Trefz, District Support Services Specialist with the Commission out of Boise.

Approval of Minutes:

Alice moved to approve the January 10, 2012, minutes, and Dale seconded the motion. *The motion carried.*

Financial Report:

- Vern reviewed the January financial report and moved it be approved. Cassie seconded the motion, *the motion carried.*
- Discussion was held on the interest rate earned at the LGIP, and options to gain a better rate. Cassie moved to contact Tom Gibson with D.A. Davidson and pay him for up to 2 hours to review our investments and make recommendations, taking into consideration liquidity and level of exposure. Alice seconded the motion, *the motion carried.*
- Alice moved and Cassie seconded the motion to pay transfer \$18,000 to the LGIP, \$8,000 from State Appropriation and \$10,000 from Grouse Creek F&G. *The motion carried.*
- Dale moved and Vern seconded the motion to donate \$500 to the Pend Oreille Water Festival, *the motion carried.*

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS: Greg Becker reported as follows:

- Information from snow surveys indicates snowpack at Schweitzer is average, but water content is 85%. The valley survey near the extension office indicated 24% water content.
- NRCS is doing outreach on WRP, and Greg submitted an article to the Daily Bee yesterday. Outreach is also being done on hoop houses through EQIP, and Greg will get information out on that this week. Greg helped with one hoop house for an organic farmer last year, and this year they are opening it to all ag producers. Last year, 7 of the 17 EQIP contracts were a result of an article submitted to the Daily Bee.
- Kirk Sehlmeier, Sandpoint FO SCEP student in 2010, graduates from Ohio State on March 18th, and will return to the Sandpoint office as a full-time NRCS Forester shortly after that. Nick Studebaker's last day in our office is February 21st, then he will move to the Idaho Falls/Rigby area as their Soil Conservationist.
- Schweitzer Road: Greg talked to Scot Hanson at the Independent Highway District regarding an update on snow removal at Schweitzer Road so far this winter since the 319 grant was denied. They are doing a combination of sodium chloride application with sand, and there is definitely a reduction in the sand application. The City has

purchased monitoring equipment, and they daily monitor the water near the drinking water station – which has indicated no excess salt. Greg said the whole 319 application process and the scrutiny by the board have been a very positive influence on the snow removal process, and if the board had any further questions he would relay them. Cassie moved and Alice seconded the motion to have the board send a thank you letter to the Independent Highway District on their positive handling of everything involved with Schweitzer Road snow removal. *The motion carried.* Cassie will write the letter and send it to the board members for approval.

POBC: Erin reported as follows:

- Erin and Molly attended the Annual Regional Lakes Conference in Spokane Saturday. Fish & Game gave a report on historic nutrient levels in Lake Pend Oreille over the last 150 years, and Erin will share the information with us when it is complete.
- Another topic at the Lakes Conference pertained to beavers and restoring wetlands - Erin requested more information in regard to that.
- Earth Day Festival is April 22nd, Sunday, at the Charter School, and Erin and Molly will help with a Flowering Rush dig the day before.
- Field trips at the Waterlife Discovery Center are being planned and schools invited. Last year Erin and Molly helped teach 250 students in grades 2-6 about water quality. Erin talked about the help the Master Naturalists are providing at the WDC.
- The Annual State of the Lake meeting is February 22nd at the Ponderay Events Center from 6-9pm. Topics will include information on fish population and the recovery effort, and Erin will speak on aquatic invasive species.

L*A*S: Molly was unable to attend – Linda reported that Molly’s work on the Coeur d’Alene L*A*S Manual is going very well, and Molly appreciates the expertise given by the DEQ people involved with the Lake Management Plan. The end product will be a top-of-the-line guidebook.

BSWCD: Linda O’Hare highlighted her written report which included the following:

- Dan Whatley will only be able to work for the district at the boat inspection stations 2 days a week this summer as he has another part-time job. We have not yet received a contract for boat inspections stations this summer.
- **Avista Pend Oreille Basin Commission Grant:** Letters of support from the Pend Oreille Basin Commission and Bonner SWCD were sent to Senator Keough the end of January to support her request to JFAC for FY2013 funding for the Coordinator position. Erin and Linda prepared a “minimal” draft budget for FY2013 also. Alice moved and Cassie seconded the motion to approve Erin’s hourly wage at \$22/hour retroactive to the January 30th pay period. *The motion carried.*
- Fish Creek 319 Grant: The work is completed, invoicing was done and final payment was made to APEX Construction. We will inspect the road work again in the spring before the final report is submitted.
- Legislative Display Day - January 26th in Boise. Pictures of the all the displays are on the IASCD website. Next year we need to do more outreach to the legislators as the attendance was not high.
- Tree Seedlings – We have sold 28,125 seedlings. We are utilizing UI and POW to fulfill some of our orders as our nursery supply has run out.
- 30th Anniversary of the Forestry Contest – the first steering committee meeting was yesterday and plans are going well. The use of the contest for high school student forestry certification is more complicated than we anticipated, but Karen will continue to work on it.

SWC: Bill Lillibridge reported as follows:

- Legislative Issues: The legislature has confirmed the two new commissioners, Mr. Trebisch and Mr. Wright, who are both from southern Idaho and have backgrounds in ag banking. The rule for district allocations passed unanimously, and the reports required of the districts has gone from 4 to 3.
- February 21st is the next SWC meeting.
- The ICRMP \$850 premium for districts will not be paid by the SWC this year due to having their funding cut and their office rental costs increasing with NRCS. Also, the legislature did not approve the 2/1 match for districts.
- Mark Hogen has been ill and working some from home, but he should be healthy enough to return to the office by April. Mark will then allocate his time based on requests from the districts in Division I, and offer his help in planning, surveying, implementation, weed management, and grazing.
- Bill said he will attend our next board meeting.

- A lengthy discussion was held on our district's interpretation of the Commission's obligation for technical assistance. Many things were discussed, but the bottom line was that communication between SWC and Bonner SWCD definitely needed to improve.

SWC: Delwyne Trefz reported as follows:

- Delwyne reviewed the partnership setup and the non-regulatory conservation function of districts. The Commission now has 9 field staff to serve 50 districts, and Delwyne has set up the Technical Assistance Work Group (TAWG) to determine protocol for prioritizing the needs from districts. They want to recommend a protocol for determining workload for their technical assistance employees and how to split their time between districts in the future. The protocol will be recommended to the Commission for their approval, and then implemented. Billie Brown will be one of the representatives on the TAWG from Division I, and the Bonner board has recommended Bob Flagor, the district employee from Kootenai-Shoshone SWCD be the other. Delwyne requested the board to take into consideration the policy making extent of the TAWG's task, and would they prefer another elected supervisor to be the second person from Division I. None of the board members could take on that task, and were confident with Bob Flagor representing them. Delwyne said the Work Group will make the process as equitable as possible, with fairness over time.

OLD BUSINESS

Audit: The board reviewed the final audit, and Herman made a pencil correction on page 12 changing the entity providing office space without cost to the district from SWC to NRCS. Dale moved to approve the audit and sign the management representation letter to Leonard Schulte and to pay the bill of \$2600. Vern seconded the motion, *the motion carried.*

Budget for FY2013: The board reviewed the proposed budget for FY2013; Alice moved and Vern seconded the motion to approve the budget, *the motion carried.*

Supervisor Elections for November 2012: If our district needs to hold an election (more candidates running than positions open), the county will pay the election expenses. The supervisors up for re-election either pay a \$40 filing fee, or complete a petition with 5 signatures. Petitions will be available at the next meeting.

Personnel Policy: This item was tabled until the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Officers for 2012: Alice moved that a unanimous ballot be cast for retaining last year's officers, Dale seconded the motion, *the motion carried.* Congratulations to Herman Collins, Chairman; Dale Van Stone, Vice-Chairman; and Vern Hollett, Secretary/Treasurer.

Boat Inspection Stations: No contract has been received yet, hopefully we will have it by the next meeting.

Up-date of Annual Plan of Work and 5-Year Plan: As time was short, last year's plan with suggested revisions from Greg, Molly and Linda was handed out to the board for their review, and this item will be addressed at the March meeting. The deadline for submission to the SWC is March 30th.

Division I Meeting: The Division I meeting will be held March 9th beginning at 9:30 am in Bonners Ferry. More information will be available at the March 6th board meeting.

ICRMP Renewal: Linda reviewed the information needed to update our liability insurance. She will submit it to ICRMP.

CORRESPONDENCE

Information from Idaho Ag in the Classroom has been received. This item is not included in our budget, but Cassie asked to table it until the next meeting as she felt it needed our support.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00.

Respectfully submitted by Linda O'Hare, District Administrator.

Approved by:

District Supervisor Signature

Date

Recap of Motions:

Approval of January 2012 minutes

Approval of January 2012 financial report

Approval of hiring Tom Gibson to review our investments

Approval of transferring \$18,000 to LGIP

Approval of paying \$500 donation to Pend Oreille Water Festival

Approval of writing a thank-you letter to Independent Highway District

Approval of paying Erin Mader \$22/hr

Approval of FY2011 audit and paying \$2600 audit bill

Approval of FY2013 budget

Approval of unanimous ballot for retaining last year's officers

All services of the Bonner Soil & Water Conservation District and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to national origin, race, color, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap. Auxiliary aides or services for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please call 263-5310 five (5) days prior to the meeting so that suitable arrangements can be made.