

**SHERIDAN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING
November 14, 2006 @ 9 am
USDA BUILDING**

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Jeff Wivholm. Present were: Tim Holte, Todd Marsh, Kent Nathe, Manuel Vazquez, Supervisors; Steve Hove, Associate Supervisor; Mickey McCall, Judy Benson, SCCD; Monica Friedrich (NCRS).

Public Comments:

No Public Comments.

Award Certificate:

Chairman Jeff Wivholm presented Supervisor Tim Holte a certificate and MACD pin for his 15 years of service to the Sheridan County Conservation District Board.

Approval of Minutes – October 10, 2006 Meeting

After a review of the minutes from the October 10th meeting, Kent Nathe made a motion to approve the minutes. Mickey noted that mention of the 223 grant application had been omitted from the storage facility discussion. The following was inserted after the final line of the storage facility paragraph: The Board also agreed to apply for a 223 grant for water monitoring equipment. The motion to approve the amended minutes was made by Kent Nathe and seconded by Tim Holte, the motion carried.

Financial Report:

The financial reports were reviewed. Renewal on CD #7003517 in the amount of \$2761.78 was discussed. Current interest rate on that CD is 2 %. A motion was made by Tim Holte to renew at a higher interest rate if possible that motion was seconded by Kent Nathe. Motion carried. The cash in the Money Market account was discussed and decided to move cash from that account along with the CD renewal to a CD totaling \$10,000.00. Tim Holte made a motion to increase the CD and Todd Marsh seconded. The motion carried. In reviewing the Profit & Loss Statement, a question was asked on a deposit of \$215.21 for the Research Farm. It will be checked and reported at the December meeting. Todd Marsh asked about the supervisors health insurance recorded as an expense being changed to a liability account on the balance sheet rather than an expense as it is paid by the supervisors each month. The District's share paid for the employee's health insurance would remain an expense item. A motion to approve the financial report was made by Tim Holte and seconded by Todd Marsh. The motion was approved. The bill payments totaling \$7,559.20 as listed on the Expenses by Vendor Summary was reviewed. A motion for approval was made by Tim Holte and was seconded by Manuel Vazquez, the motion carried. The checks were signed by Supervisors Tim Holte and Jeff Wivholm.

NRCS – Monica:

NRCS Report

- Evaluated Plant Material Center (PMC) plots planted in 2003 on Rick Hilyard's and Dean and Neal French's saline lowland cropland. The two species that show promise are Hybrid Wheatgrass (cross between quackgrass and bluebunch wheatgrass) and beardless wildrye.
- EQIP ranking will be completed tomorrow, Nov. 15 for 2007 county allocations. There is still a special initiative signup coming for not-till which will be area wide. Our proposal for Piping Plover special initiative was denied for funding. This decision was based on not continuing special initiatives beyond 2 years, and this would have been the third year for Piping Plover.
- Reviewed 2006 conservation program funding in Sheridan County. We were allocated funds for 21 EQIP and WHIP contracts, amounting to \$459,468.
- Precision Ag may be a special initiative under EQIP in 2008 for this area.
- Tim attended the Zero Spread Noxious Weed meeting last month. Packets are available with this information for those interested.
- CRP contracts from the most recent signups have been finished. Any that were not approved before Sept. 25, 2006 will only be allowed to hay once in ten years, graze once in five years.
- A new Duck Nesting Habitat practice has been added to the Continuous CRP program. This is for wetland restoration.
- Emergency Conservation Program funds still have not been allocated to Sheridan County.
- Dave White mentioned at the DC meeting last month that the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) may be the only program that is funded adequately in 2007. We have interested producers, but until the appraisal process is improved, will not likely result in accepted offers.
- Monica will be speaking at the Stockgrower's meeting on Saturday, November 18 on EQIP program for livestock producers. This meeting is at the Montana State Bank meeting room beginning at noon.

Unfinished Business:

- Area Meeting-Scobey
Jeff Wivholm, Jon Bolstad, Mickey McCall, Judy Benson and Monica Friedrich attended the area meeting in Scobey, Thursday, Oct. 12, beginning at 9 a.m. at the Scobey Saddle Club. Tim Holte was awarded a certificate and MACD pin for 15 years service on the SCCD board. Roosevelt County presented a resolution on revising the 3 day water storage in pastures with livestock. It will be presented at MACD.
- MACD Annual Convention-Great Falls
The Annual MACD Convention was held in Great Falls at the Heritage Inn, Nov. 7 – Nov. 10. Jeff Wivholm, Mickey McCall and Judy Benson attended. Each CD was asked to bring a gift item for auction. Our gift basket, made by Doug Smith,

containing flax, lentils and a lentil cookbook was sold for \$85.00 with proceeds going to the MACDEO. Guest speakers included Governor Schweitzer outlining his alternative energy plan and Conrad Anker, Mount Everest mountain climber, from Bozeman. The 2007 MACD convention will be held in Bozeman.

- BSPPA Symposium
The BSSPA Symposium was held in Whitefish Oct. 25-27. Judy attended and reported that it was very informative. Within the next year administrators are going to be required to be certified in contract management. The certification will be done in 4 modules with a written exam following each. Asset management was one of the topics discussed. It was advised that all assets be categorized and recorded. Grant management and accounting were covered at another session.
- Rut Filler
Mickey had checked into five or six different models, but will do further checking on prices.

Mickey's Report

Aquifer

- Well measurements on once per month schedule
- Semi-annual measurements completed during the week of October 16
- Completed quarterly aquifer report for DNRC

Oil Brine

- Unable to locate a site to reclaim for around \$10,000
- Oil Brine Grant expired on October 31
 - Did not expend all monies
 - Waiting for final invoice from MBMG
- Will have final report completed by the end of November
- Prepared Power Point presentation on project
- Gave presentation at RC&D meeting on Oct. 26th

Big Muddy 319 Grant

- Jon Reiten is working on the data and maps.
- Jon and I are working of the sampling and analysis plan.
- No money has been released for field work

USGS

- Working on landowner permissions for second phase of project
- Submitted RFQ to USGS
 - One year with 2 additional year options
 - \$11,000 per year
 - Work required –well measurements and data reports
- Searching for drilling equipment.
 - NRCS drill not available

- Have contacted and sent proposal to MSCA
- Discussed issue with Jon Reiten of MBMG
- Rick Sodja is also searching for equipment

223 Grants

- Applied for a 223 grant for \$8,000 for a storage building
 - Testified before RCAC (Resource Conservation Advisory Council)
 - Verbal response from Bob Fossum was that request was denied
- Applied for a 223 grant for \$12,196 for equipment replacement
 - Testified before RCAC (Resource Conservation Advisory Council)
 - Verbal response from Bob Fossum was that request was granted for \$10,000

Mickey also reported on the RC&D meeting that had been held in Plentywood on Thursday, October 26. He stated that the representative from the governor's office had shown interest in his oilfield reclamation presentation.

New Business:

- Insurance Rate Increase
The insurance rate increases that will go into effect January 1, 2007 were reviewed by the board. The single rate will be \$373.00, the two-party rate will be \$746.00 and the family rate will be \$933.00.
- Payroll Withholding
A payroll withholding error from the first and second quarters of 2006 in the amount of \$225.02 on social security and Medicare withholdings was found when the 2006 payroll was entered on the QuickBooks system. It was brought to the attention of the board and will be amended with the 4th Quarter tax return. A tax deposit to Montana State Bank for that amount will be made as soon as possible.
- Holiday Pay
A memo from Laurie Zeller regarding holiday pay and overtime pay was presented to the board. Her memo stated that Conservation Districts were required to pay the overtime and that the extra hours could not be used as comp time. The situation occurred during the week of the MACD convention since the holidays, Nov. 7, Election Day and Nov. 10, Veterans Day were travel days for the convention. Todd Marsh made a motion to pay the overtime in addition to the holiday pay and Tim seconded, the motion carried.
- Meeting Time
The board meeting time was discussed as to a possibly meeting at a later time during the winter months to make it more convenient for those feeding cattle. The next meeting will be a luncheon meeting to be held at noon on December 12, 2006.

- Christmas Party
The Conservation District Christmas Party was discussed. It was tentatively decided to have it Friday, December 1, 2006 at the Vet's Club meeting room. Ryan Young was making arrangements for that facility. Marcia Rice had agreed to cater the dinner of prime rib, which was a unanimous decision. Judy will send out invitations and make phone calls as the date gets closer. It was also suggested that invitations be sent to Thelma Williams, Jon Reiten, incoming Representative Julie French, and Senator Sam Kitzenberg as well as employees, board members, and NRCS employees.

Adjournment:

- Todd Marsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Tim Holte. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, December 12, 2006 at noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy A. Benson,
District Administrator

Approved,

Jeff Wivholm, Chairman
Date: