

Petroleum County Conservation District

P.O. Box 118, Winnett, MT 59087-0118

406-429-6646 ext. 104

petroleumcd@midrivers.com

Local Common Sense Conservation

**Ralph Corbett, *Chairman*, Craig Iverson - *Vice Chair*, Laura Kiehl - *Treasurer*,
Rodney Rowton- *Supervisor*, Amanda Gillett- *Supervisor* Diane Ahlgren - *Supervisor MMWG*,**

January 25, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:00 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson Rodney Rowton, and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Nikki Rife and guests Laura Nowlin, Musselshell Watershed Coalition and Travis Wilson, Big Sky Watershed Corp member. The December 22nd minutes were read; Diane Ahlgren moved to approve as submitted and Laura Kiehl seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment: Travis Wilson introduced and gave the board a brief background on himself. It was noted that he will be working for the district, the coalition, and the council.

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Rodney Rowton moved to approve the report as submitted, Diane Ahlgren seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Diane Ahlgren moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board and submitted the grant billing for the month for their review and signatures. Carie noted that she would need signatures on a couple of grant reporting and contract documents before the next board meeting and it was the general consensus for Ralph to sign as chairman as those are completed. Lastly we need to complete thank you's for our transition workshop both for participants and presenters. It was reported that Nikki will be meeting and working with Eric Sant of Open Range Consulting on the monitoring data that has been done in the area on February 8th and 9th. Grass Class is coming together and Billy Whitehurst will be here to speak about livestock nutrition and handling. The class is scheduled for February 11th from 2:30pm – 5:30 pm. The Garden workshop is in the works and Toby Day will be here February 24th at 4 pm and will be held at the Winnett Methodist Church.

MMWG Report: It was reported that there is a tentative meeting February 9th in Mosby.

MRCDC Report: Working on the next CMR meeting which is scheduled for February 25 in Lewistown at the Eagles and their quarterly meeting which is scheduled for February 16 and the location is to be determined.

MWC Report: Laura reported that the capacity grant through Lower Musselshell Conservation District has been completed and that she had applied for the Watershed Management Grant through the district has been awarded but that it is routing through the contracting phase currently. She reported that there will be water rights meetings with the water court judge on February 25th at 1 pm in Roundup and 5 pm in Harlowton. She asked if the board members had any questions about the basin adjudication and if so to send to her and she will send to the judge. The coalition staff has been attending meetings of partners asking for gauging station funding for another 2 years. Laura reported that the coalition is looking at Channel Migration Zone mapping for the lower section of the river. It was noted that that project would end up being a planning grant that would move into a possible RRGL application. Lastly she reported that there is a full coalition meeting on February 9th starting at noon at the Roundup Ambulance Barn.

Supervisors Reports:

Amanda – Absent

Craig – Reported that he attended the Transition/ Ranch Management workshop and felt it was well attended and went well.

Diane- Reported that the MSGOT has held their public meetings on the rule changes and that she felt that it left more questions than answers. She said there is to be a conference call in February and a full meeting in March where they hope to have applications to review.

Laura – Asked if there was a way to get a few small portable tables for when we have workshops we would have more room and that the tables would be easier to put up and down.

Rodney – Nothing at this time.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

NRCS: Nikki reported that Kevin Spafford will be at the Farm Forum on Wednesday January 27th at 9am. She reported that she will be gone to the Society of Range Management meetings the week of February 1 thru the 5th and will be on leave the week of President's day. She mentioned that the University of Wyoming will have ranch sustainability forum in Sheridan March 8-9th. Nikki asked the board for ideas for an area tour of Sage Grouse initiative projects, she noted that this would be around the first part of July and it will be done in partnership with Western Joint Ventures and that they are looking at 4 buses. It was reported that there will be a special initiative for pollinator plantings as well as another SGI and CSP sign up. Lastly it was noted that Skip and Diane Ahlgren have been awarded the Olin Sims Conservation Leadership Award and they will be leaving this weekend to head to Reno to accept.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

District Signs – Carie informed the board that she has been trying to reach Mid State Signs to check on the status of the signs.

January 25, 2016

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County Status – Carie reported that she had attended a special meeting of the county commissioners about the status of the county and that she informed the commissioners that there are grants out there that could help with some of the general fund shortfall in the areas of training, technology, planning and project. She noted that they were going to have a public meeting February 16th.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

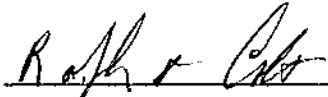
District Employee Handbook - Carie noted that she had found a few spelling errors in the policy but other than those changes there was nothing changed. She passed around a copy of the policy for the boards review. Laura Kiehl moved to approve the Employee Policy Handbook as submitted and Diane Ahlgren seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

District Payroll Policy – Carie noted that the board needed to review and approve the payroll policy for the 2016 calendar year. She passed around a copy of the policy for the boards review and Rodney Rowton moved to approve as submitted and Diane Ahlgren seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

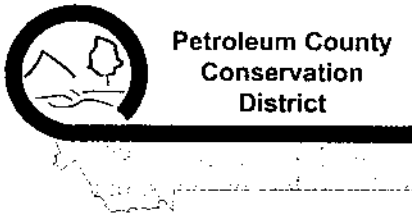
Announcements:

Next board meeting February 29, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:15 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



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Local Common Sense Conservation

**Ralph Corbett, Chairman, Craig Iverson - Vice Chair, Laura Kiehl -Treasurer,
Rodney Rowton- Supervisor, Amanda Gillett- Supervisor Diane Ahlgren – Supervisor, MMWG,**

February 29, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:10 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson Rodney Rowton, Amanda Gillett and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Nikki Rife and guests Laura Nowlin, Musselshell Watershed Coalition Coordinator; Travis Wilson, Big Sky Watershed Corp member; Stacey Barta, DNRC Rangeland Resource Coordinator; Paul McKenna, Petroleum County Commissioner; Rachel Frost, MRCDC Coordinator. The January 25th minutes were read; Laura Kiehl moved to approve as submitted and Amanda Gillett seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment: Stacey Barta, DNRC Rangeland Resource Coordinator stated that she was making it to each district and introducing herself so that people can put a face with a name. She that there is a Range Forum coming up May 4 & 5th in Billings at the Big Horn Resort and that the evening of the 4th would be the most beneficial to the districts.

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Diane Ahlgren moved to approve the report as submitted, Amanda Gillett seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Amanda Gillett moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board and submitted the grant billing for the month for their review and signatures. Carie noted that she would need signatures on a couple of grant reporting and contract documents before the next board meeting and it was the general consensus for Ralph to sign as chairman as those are completed and that she will send out an update to the board.

Laura Nowlin gave the board an update on the Cemetery project and that the Cemetery Board has received the Central Montana Foundation grant that the district sponsored. They have also applied for another grant for the project but are waiting to hear if that was a successful application.

MMWG Report: Diane reported that the group had a meeting February 9th in Mosby in which there was good attendance. She noted that there was a lot of discussion on the storage project and the preliminary water rights. Scott Irvin was in attendance and stated that the group could ask

for an extension to the preliminary water rights as long as the group is working on the project, which does not necessarily mean moving ground.

MRCDC Report: Rachel reported that the council held their quarterly meeting on February 23rd in Lewistown. At that meeting the council reviewed their grounding rules/ by-laws, nominated officers, had project updates and reviewed CD memberships. She reported that Montana Rangeland Partnership Program had been successful with securing funding to hire 2 range technicians. Those technicians should be in place and ready to roll sometime in March. One tech is to be stationed in Miles City and will serve the greater Miles City areas, the second will be stationed in Lewistown and serve the greater Lewistown areas. They will be available for all things range related from monitoring to grazing management support. Rachel reported on the Ranching for Rivers Program which is a 50/50 cost share with producers and promoted the use of riparian pastures and grazing management. The program is working on the education and outreach side as well with doing education events for recreationist and having signs with the project information at recreational areas in the project areas. The program had a successful first round of applications. CMR working group had a successful meeting on February 16th in Lewistown. She noted that facilitator Bill Milton had been contacted by Friends of the Black footed Ferrets from Wyoming and Colorado. They presented on the conservation efforts they have been working on with prairie dogs and the ferrets in Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, South Dakota and Montana. The Friends have been working with the NRCS through the EQIP program to secure funding to pay producers to keep prairie dogs on the land in reintroduction areas. The question was asked of the board "is this something you feel would be a good idea to look into in Montana?" The next meeting is scheduled for April 14th in Winnett and the sage grouse subcommittee is scheduled to meet on March 10th in Lewistown to work on the conservation menu. Lastly she reported on her attendance to the Tamarisk Coalition conference in Grand Junction Colorado where she presented the Montana Saltcedar Team's database that Matthew Schmidt had put together. She reported that it was very well received and that the coalition would like to use it as a model for their efforts.

MWC Report: Laura reported that the coalition has been very busy over the last few months. She reported that the Roundup Reach Comprehensive Alternatives Analysis has been fully funded with funds from the Department of Natural Resource Conservation and Fish, Wildlife & Parks and that work is scheduled to begin in March. She reported that the coalition will initiate conversations for the Martinsdale Supply Canal Re-Route project. She mentioned that the Watershed Management grant and the DNRC Planning grant have been awarded, that the Montana Land and Information Act grant, the DEQ grant applications and a 319 mini grant through SWCDM are in process. Lastly she reported that she has attended 18 different partner meetings and been successful in solicitation funding for the Martinsdale Gaging Station for the next 2 years.

Supervisors Reports:

Amanda – Reported that things have changed at home and that she will be resigning from the board. She stated that she would bring in her official resignation letter to the next board meeting. She is also trying to find her replacement.

Craig – Reported that he is going to run for a county commissioners seat and that he feels that he can't do both.

Diane- Reported that the MSGOT has held their February 19th meeting and that the committee is plugging forward. She stated that all of the information is on the website at sagegrouse.mt.gov and the information is mind blowing. She said that they had a conference call and it was thought that grazing districts could provide the habitat and get paid for it.

Laura – Reported that she has seen sage grouse strutting in their LEK's and that she was seeing good numbers so far. She also reported that she did some investigation on the tables that she mentioned last month and that at schooloutlet.com they are \$64.45 each for a 18" by 8' table and at Walmart.com they are \$49.00 each for an 18" by 6'.

Rodney – Nothing at this time.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

NRCS: Nikki reported that in regards to the demonstration that was done prior to the board meeting, that grazing districts could use that information to prioritize and show what habitat is there. She asked the board if they would like her to pursue having a priority map completed by Eric as including the carbon and organic matter data set would be cost prohibitive for the district. Nikki mentioned that when talking about the challenges that area producers face such as if someone has too many prairie dogs they would usually sod bust to reduce the numbers. Those producers could use the priority map to find alternatives to sod busting.

Nikki stated that she had talked with Abby Smith with Jefferson Center for Holistic Management about presenting at our Ladies Day on the Range. Nikki reported that Abby has done a lot with digital marketing and social media as well as holistic management. Abby charges \$500 plus travel costs to present. It was thought that maybe we could coordinate with Garfield, Lower Musselshell, and Meagher Counties on their Ladies Day on the Range and possibly share speakers.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

District Signs – Carie mentioned that she had been in contact with Mid State Signs since the last board meeting and that our signs had fallen through the crack and had not been ordered on their end. It was stated that they should be completed soon and be ready for pick up. She will contact them again to see about a pick up date.

County Status – Paul McKenna was in attendance to learn about the district at the district's request. The district sent an invite to the commissioners and the weed board to see where they may be able to collaborate on projects in the future. It was noted that the commissioners had held a public meeting on February 16th and that the meeting was well attended and that the increase in the mill was well perceived by the community.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

Supervisor Terms & Elections – Ralph Corbett moved to appoint Craig Iverson as a Petroleum County Conservation District Supervisor until December 31, 2016, Rodney Rowton seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Carie reminded Rodney Rowton that if he wanted to stay on as a supervisor that he needed to file with the Elections Officer by March 14, 2016. She handed him the paperwork to do so. Carie had stated that she had a resolution written but with all of the changes she would like to talk with Kate Descheemaeker and Laurie Zeller before the board sends to the county. Diane Ahlgren mentioned that she may be interested in an Associate Supervisor position with the board.

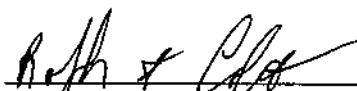
Board Re-Organization – It is the time of year when the board needs to reorganize the officers and with all of the changes coming forth Diane Ahlgren moved to keep the same officers as last year which are Ralph Corbett, Chairman; Craig Iverson, Vice Chair; Laura Kiehl, Treasurer. Craig Iverson seconded the motion which passed unanimously. It was also noted that with Nick Schultz no longer on the board that the board needed to appoint a representative to the Missouri River CD Council. Laura Kiehl had attended a meeting on the 23rd in Lewistown and she mentioned that the council is looking at having members and an alternate from each district. Diane Ahlgren moved to appoint Laura Kiehl as the Petroleum County Conservation Districts representative and Amanda Gillett seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Diane mentioned that if she stays on as an associate supervisor that she would be willing to be Laura's alternate.

Announcements:

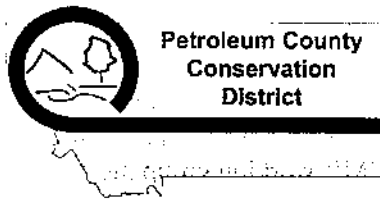
Laura Kiehl asked if the Black Footed Ferret reintroduction and conservation could be put on next months agenda.

Next board meeting March 28, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



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Rodney Rowton- Supervisor, Amanda Gillett- Supervisor Diane Ahlgren – Supervisor, MMWG**

March 28, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 4:09 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson Rodney Rowton, Amanda Gillett and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Nikki Rife and guests Travis Wilson, Big Sky Watershed Corp member; Rachel Frost, MRCDC Coordinator. The February 29th minutes were read; Craig Iverson moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Diane Ahlgren moved to approve the report as submitted, Amanda Gillett seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Craig Iverson moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board and submitted the grant billing for the month for their review and signatures. Carie noted that she would need signatures on a couple of grant reporting and contract documents before the next board meeting and it was the general consensus for Ralph to sign as chairman as those are completed and that she will send out an update to the board. Carie mentioned that she had attended the annual Fuels Mitigation meeting last week in Lewistown and that some new ideas on how to move forward with that grant program and funding were discussed and that she would be working on tying up some documentation that would help write a possibly 223 grant for the next funding cycle. Travis reported that he has been working on doing research for the well project for the district and that he has went through the final report from the last project and been pulling landowner data into an Excel spreadsheet and updating some of the data from the GWIC site. He also mentioned that he had drafted a flyer to put in the district newsletter.

MMWG Report: No report this month.

MRCDC Report: Rachel reported that the range techs for the Montana Rangeland Monitoring project have been hired and that their first day will be April 6th but that they will immediately attend training so the first office day is April 11th. She reported that the Ranching for Rivers program has contracted all of the \$35,000 for projects to landowners along the Missouri River

and that they are possibly looking to put that project into an RRGL application to seek additional funding as there are several more interested landowners in the program. She noted that the council has scheduled their 2016 River Rendezvous for June 9th in Fort Benton and that it is shaping up to be a great tour. She informed the board that the CMR working group meeting scheduled for April 14th in Winnett may need to change the venue to a larger one as Noreen Walsh will be attending in the afternoon. She had asked the board earlier about sponsoring a grant to the Montana Watershed Coordination Council for \$10,000 to fund the group for another year. She mentioned that the grant was pretty straight forward and a 2 page application. She also noted that she was seeking other funding opportunities for the group as well.

MWC Report: Travis reported that the coalition is gearing up their volunteer salinity monitoring for the year and the first monitoring dates have been set for April 21-23 and will be every other week through October.

Supervisors Reports:

Amanda – Nothing at this time.

Craig – Nothing at this time.

Diane- Read from an article about the regulatory expansion of Endangered Species Act listings and Critical habitat designation for the Citizens for Balanced Land use website.

Laura – Nothing at this time.

Rodney – Nothing at this time.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

NRCS: Nikki reported that there will be another honey bee EQIP sign up and that CSP sign up ends on March 31st. She mentioned that they are working on their EQIP ranking and screening. She asked the board about the possibility of getting a priority map made of the Open Range consulting data.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

District Signs – Carie mentioned that the sign company has been lacking in customer service and that she had been called by Mr. Wichman and that at that time they had questions about the signs and had still not made them. They are supposed to be working on them and that they should be done before too long. Carie mentioned that the old sign frame on the south end of the county is still lying there and should be picked up. She also asked Rodney Rowton if the frame on the east side was in place as she had not seen it in her travels that way.

County Status – There is nothing new to report other than there is the possibility of another public meeting before the June voting.

Supervisor Terms & Elections – Amanda Gillett handed Chairman Ralph Corbett her letter of resignation. There were several questions asked Carie noted that she would refer to Laurie Zeller to make sure that the district is following statue and report back to the board via email.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management - These items were moved to the next meeting so that language for a position statement could be looked at.

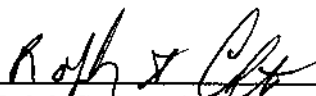
Diversity Workshop – It was noted that the district on several occasions tried to hold a diversity tour but they never kicked off. Amanda Gillett had sent an email out after the last board meeting about the possibility of bringing Joel Salatin to Winnett to speak about diversity. It was thought that it would be bringing the tour to us. With the District's capacity funding we could pay for Joel to come to Winnett. He has worked us a deal of \$10,000 that includes all of his travel and associated costs. It was discussed that the districts capacity grant is slated to terminate June 30, 2016. It was noted that Carie should check with DNRC to make sure they are ok with the reallocation of the funding line items and to ensure that the project stays within the scope of work before proceeding with signing a contract with Joel. It was noted that she would complete this and let the board know.

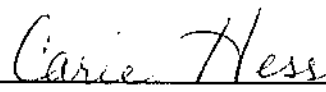
Open Range Consulting – Eric Sant - Eric Sant presented via phone the geospatial range monitoring data with Earth Sense Technology that was collected for the Petroleum County area producers by Open Range Consulting a couple of years ago. This was a follow up of the training that was completed last month in Lewistown. He showed the board what t data was collected and how it was collected. He then went in to how the district could use the data for project and resource prioritization. It was thought that a prioritization map maybe the next step with the data.

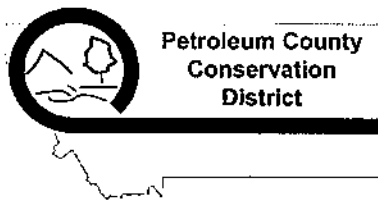
Announcements:

Next board meeting April 25th, 2016 @ 5pm, but may need to be moved due to Envirothon.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



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**Ralph Corbett, Chairman, Craig Iverson - Vice Chair, Laura Kiehl -Treasurer,
Rodney Rowton- Supervisor, Amanda Gillett- Supervisor Diane Ahlgren – Supervisor, MMWG**

April 27, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:04 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson Rodney Rowton, and Diane Ahlgren by phone. Also present were Carie Hess and Nikki Rife and guests Katie Makarowski, Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MTDEQ), Emily Standley, Montana Rangelands Partnership, Laura Nowlin, Musselshell Watershed Coalition, Sarah Stevens and Tony Thatcher, DTM Consulting Inc. by phone. The March 28th minutes were read; Rodney Rowton moved to approve as submitted and Craig Iverson seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Katie Makarowski, MTDEQ – Katie introduced herself to the board and informed the board of projects that MTDEQ is working on in our area. She gave the board handouts of the various streams in our county that either have work that is being done or that will be worked on this year, TMDL streams with reasons they are considered impaired, and maps. MTDEQ has started work on the Musselshell in the Upper Basin and is working their way down. She wanted to make sure that the board was included in the knowledge and communications about work going on and what can be expected.

Tony Thatcher, DTM Consulting Inc. – Joined the board via a phone webinar conference line to present a presentation on what Channel Migration Zone Mapping is starting with the history. He moved into the process of how and what data that is collected and how it is used to make the maps. He did state that there are always new ways to use these maps regularly. He concluded with stating that it is feasible to do channel migration zone mapping on the Musselshell River and that there is a lot of good data and imagery out there pre and post 2011 flood.

Laura Nowlin, MWC – Laura talked with the board about what the coalition has been doing. She presented the Department of Interior WaterSmart Grant application she has been working on and is 95 percent complete other than letters of support which are coming. Laura asked the board if they would approve the application so that it could be entered in Grants.gov by the May 1st deadline. Craig Iverson moved to approve the grant application and submittal into Grants.gov, Rodney Rowton seconded the motion which passed.

Emily Standley – Montana Rangeland Partnership Program – Emily introduced herself to the board and shared a program history and FAQ sheet with the board. She also explained the program and what type of works that she could do and how she could help local producers.

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Laura Kiehl moved to approve the report as submitted, Craig Iverson seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Rodney Rowton moved to approve as submitted and Craig Iverson seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board and submitted the grant billing for the month for their review and signatures. Carie passed around the final District Development grant application for the board to read if they wished. She noted that she would have to testify on this application sometime in mid-May.

MMWG Report: No report this month.

MRCDC Report: It was reported that funding in the amount of \$6,600 was awarded for the CMR Community Working Group which should last until November or longer. It was also noted that the Sage Grouse Subcommittee of the CMR Community Working Group has a launch date of June 1st for the conservation menu. Their next quarterly meeting will be June 8th in Fort Benton and their annual River Rendezvous will be June 9th in Fort Benton. Rachel is working on a projected budget and anticipated expenses through year end.

MWC Report: Laura Nowlin reported that the Martinsdale Gaging Station fee went up \$100 per year so the new total is \$2,100 but that the annual cost the partners are paying did not raise due to a small surplus from last year.

MSGOT Report: Diane Ahlgren informed the board that the Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team (MSGOT) has received nine grant applications and that they are on the website. Eight are conservation easements and one is a fencing project.

NRCS: Nikki reported that this field office has two potential contract and they should know by mid-May on their final status. She reported that there will be a CSP meeting Thursday at the office. She reported that with the new position that she will be away at training May 9-13th and May 16 – 20th. She will then start teleworking and is due to start in Bozeman around the first of June.

Supervisors Reports:

Craig – Nothing at this time.

Diane- Reported that she had attended the BLM Lewistown Field Office Sage grouse amendment meeting. She noted that the stakeholders need to be engaged in the implementing of the sage grouse plans.

Laura – Nothing at this time.

Rodney – Nothing at this time.

Ralph – Mentioned that at a recent Snowy Mountain Development Corp meeting a Fergus commissioner stated that employee evaluations are going to be a thing of the past as they are being phased out.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

District Signs – Carie stated that she has the signs and that it her plan to work with Rodney and Ralph to get the signs up in the next week or two.

County Status – There is nothing new to report other than there is the possibility of another public meeting before the June voting.

Supervisor Terms & Elections – Sarah Stevens had been contacted by Rodney Rowton to see if she would be interested and she attended the meeting to see what things were like. Carie informed the board that Kate Descheemaeker had called and that she thought that Nate would be interested in a position.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management - These items were moved to the next meeting so that language for a position statement could be looked at.

Diversity Workshop – Carie informed the board where Amanda and she were at with preparing for the workshop. Flyers are out and more will be going out this week. We are already starting to get RSVP's for the event.

Open Range Consulting – Nikki talked with the board about the priority map as nothing was decided at the last meeting. It was noted that the board felt the map would be a good tool. Carie mentioned that a 223 grant could be applied for and noted that at the last meeting it was brought up to also have the pictures retaken on a non-wet year.

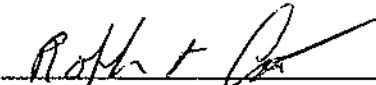
New Business:

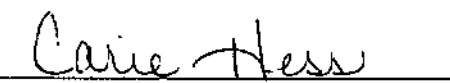
Permits – None at this time.

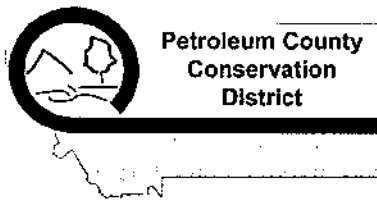
Announcements:

Next board meeting May 31st, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



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Rodney Rowton- Supervisor, Sarah Stevens-Urban Supervisor Diane Ahlgren – Supervisor, MMWG**

May 31, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:03 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Rodney Rowton, Sarah Stevens and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Nikki Rife and guests Emily Standley, Montana Rangelands Partnership, Brandon Steinberg, Acting DC for the Winnett Field Office, and Scott Kiaser, Department of Natural Resources, Miles City Office. The April 27th minutes were read; Laura Kiehl moved to approve as submitted and Diane Ahlgren seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Emily Standley – Montana Rangeland Partnership Program – Emily introduced herself to the board and shared a program history and FAQ sheet with the board. She also explained the program and what type of works that she could do and how she could help local producers. She mentioned that she has a monitoring workshop scheduled with Ranchers Stewardship Alliance in Malta and that she will be presenting at The Nature Conservancy meeting in Malta as well.

Brandon Steinberg – Acting DC for Winnett Field Office – Brandon introduced himself and noted that he is here on a 90 day detail which will end the middle of August. He mentioned that he will be in the Winnett Field office on Wednesday's but that he can be reached by cell phone as well which he gave to the board members.

Scott Kiaser – Department of Natural Resources, Miles City Office – Mentioned that he was here to see what the district has going on and to answer any questions that the board may have.

Reports:

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Rodney Rowton moved to approve the report as submitted, Laura Kiehl seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Diane Ahlgren moved to approve as submitted and Sarah Stevens seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board and submitted the grant billing for the month for their review and signatures. A quick update of the Ladies Day on the Range 2016 was given, a report of how the annual kid's day went was given, an update on where logistics are at with the June 15th Joel Salatin workshop was given, and the board reviewed information from Gregg and Eric from Open Range Consulting about the costs associated with having a priority map done as well as a new data collection done on a dry year. The board thought that Carie should move forward with finding funding to pay for the map and for the data collection.

MMWG Report: No report this month.

MRCDC Report: It was reported that the next CMR working group meeting in June 23rd in Circle.

MWC Report: It was reported that the RRGL grant had been submitted and that Laura Nowlin is waiting to hear about the Water Smart Grant that was submitted. Gauging station letters and invoices will be going out soon. The next coalition meeting is June 14th in Roundup.

MSGOT Report: Diane Ahlgren informed the board that the Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team (MSGOT) met on May 24th and awarded 3.1 million in funding to projects. She noted that 4 easement projects were funded and 1 conifer project was funded. The rest were deferred to the next meeting in August.

NRCS: Nikki reported that most of the EQIP applications for the Winnett Field office were medium priorities and most likely will not be funded. There are a couple of CSP applications that may be funded. She mentioned that Brandon will be here on Wednesday's and that Ashley Kiehl will come down on Friday's to help with the projects that are being worked on. She reported that the Montana is focused on grazing management plans compared to other states in regards to the sage grouse initiative. She noted that the SGI tour will be at the end of the month. Nikki reported that Montana Range Days are June 20-22 in Harlowton. Lastly she reported that the Society for Range Management (SRM), Northern Great Plains section meeting is scheduled for Maple Creek Canada and that she will be attending.

Supervisors Reports:
Craig – Absent

Diane- Reported that she had attended part of the DEQ meeting in Roundup and that DEQ has data collection and monitoring scheduled for the Lower Musselshell this summer. She also reported on the Range Forum that was held in Billing and that it was a good meeting that involved range leaders from other states as well.

Laura – Mentioned that there is some interest in the no-till drill around the county. It was noted that the district is looking for interest to see if there is enough to be able to purchase a drill. Carie mentioned that other districts that have drills have stated that you need a minimum of 3,000 at \$8 -10 an acre to make the annual payments and to cover maintenance costs.

Rodney – Reported that the Eastern Boundary sign is up.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

Sarah – Nothing at this time.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

District Signs – Carie reported that this project is complete and that the reporting is being completed to submit to DNRC. She had pictures that were passed around to the board of the signs.

County Status – There is nothing new to report until after the primary election on June 7th.

Supervisor Terms & Elections – Sarah Stevens has graciously accepted the appointment of Urban Supervisor and was sworn in this afternoon before the board meeting. We still have 3 positions open that will need to be filled. It was noted that Nate Descheemaeker and Jim Brady may be good candidates. Carie mentioned that she would have more information at the next board meeting.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – It was reported that Montana NRCS is not wanting to be involved at this point with the reintroduction of these species. After a lot of discussion it was noted that a simple position letter should be written and sent to MACD and NRCS. It was also noted that maybe an area wide wildlife resolution be written for Area 1.

New Business:

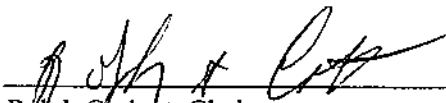
Permits – None at this time.

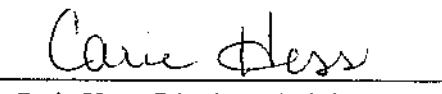
Permissive Mill Levy – After some discussion and questions among board members Diane Ahlgren moved to set fiscal year 2017 as the base year for the Permissive Mill Levy for group health benefits, Laura Kiehl seconded the motion which passed unanimously. It was noted that since there were so many questions to ask Karl Christians and Laurie Zeller if they would attend the June 27th meeting to help answer those questions. Carie mentioned that she would resend the PowerPoint that was used in the webinar to the board.

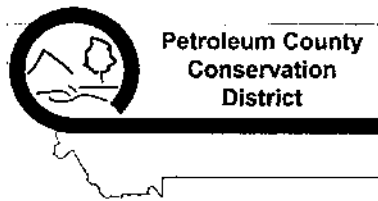
Announcements:

Next board meeting June 27, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:05 pm


Ralph Gorbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



Petroleum County Conservation District

P.O. Box 118, Winnett, MT 59087-0118

406-429-6646 ext. 104

petroleumcd@midrivers.com

Local Common Sense Conservation

**Ralph Corbett, *Chairman*, Craig Iverson - *Vice Chair*, Laura Kiehl -*Treasurer*,
Rodney Rowton- *Supervisor*, Sarah Stevens-*Urban Supervisor* Diane Ahlgren – *Supervisor, MMWG***

June 27, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:00 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Rodney Rowton, Sarah Stevens and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Nikki Rife and guests Brandon Steinberg, Acting DC for the Winnett Field Office, and Nikki Rife, NRCS Bozeman Office. The May 31st minutes were read; Laura Kiehl moved to approve as submitted and Sarah Stevens seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Reports:

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Rodney Rowton moved to approve the report as submitted, Laura Kiehl seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Laura Kiehl moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures later on this week or next week. She also noted that Rachel and she are working to finalize the fiscal year 2017 funding for the Missouri River CD Council and that she may need checks signed later on this week.

Ladies Day on the Range 2016 was discussed and it was noted that it will be a joint effort between Lower Musselshell, Petroleum and Garfield CD's and that the tentative plan is to have Ladies get on the bus in Jordan then pick up more ladies in Winnett and head to Bill Milton's place. The speaker would be Abbey Smith and she would talk on the bus about holistic management, and using multi-forms of media to benefit your operation. After the tour of Bill Milton's place guests would ride the bus or drive back to Winnett for a BBQ and Abbey will speak a little more.

Open Range Consulting – It was discussed at great length about having Gregg and Eric put together a priority map using the data that has been collected. It was also discussed to team up with several other districts and agencies to have data/photos recollected. It was also discussed to have Gregg or Eric come out to each of the areas and do some hands on workshops to show partners and producers how to use and manipulate the data. Nikki mentioned that there may be

some funding from the NRCS if we can get a scope of work written up and submitted shortly. Other funding sources were discussed as well and Carie said that she will continue to look for funding opportunities.

Six County Meeting – Carie noted to the board that she had sent out an email from Elena Evans with MACD about the meeting time and date. It has been figured that the meeting could be held in Lewistown or Winnett on the evening of September 20th.

2017 BSWC Member – Carie reported to the board that Laura Nowlin and she had met with Bryan Wilson with the MCC to have the mid-term visit. She reported that all is going well with the current member and that after some discussion with Bryan Laura Nowlin is going to put in a request for 2 members next year. It was noted that there are several projects that will need to be worked on and that the work load to do the projects would be more than one member could handle. Laura Nowlin is already looking for funding and has some already secured. Bryan thought that he could help out with finding some funding opportunities as well. Bryan also mentioned that he would be in charge of talking with NRCS about office space accommodations. Brandon Stienberg asked for Carie to forward the email correspondence about the office space to him.

MMWG Report: No report this month other than Diane had sent out an email to members about the Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant and that there is still money available to spray weeds until the end of September. She also reported to the board that Garfield Conservation District is looking for willing producers and places for bio-control sites along the Musselshell River.

MRCDC Report: There was no report this month.

MWC Report: Carie passed around a letter Laura Nowlin had received in regards to the district being awarded the WaterSmart grant. Carie mentioned that she is working on the ASAP paperwork and will turn have it ready in the next day or two.

MSGOT Report: Diane mentioned that there is nothing really to report other than the team will be part of the SGI tour that is happening over the next two days. She also noted that their next meeting will be in August.

NRCS: Brandon Steinberg reported that so far there are no EQIP contracts that are being approved as they all ranked medium priority but that there still might be a potential for one or two to be funded. He noted that Reba Ahlgren had finished up the CSP applications and submitted them last week and that a list of the pre-approved applications should be out by weeks end. Lastly he noted that Reba Ahlgren and Ashley Kiehl will be focusing on sage grouse projects over the next few months.

Supervisors Reports:
Craig – Absent

Diane- Reported that she had attended the CMR meeting and that there had been a thrashing of bison and that it would be a project for the group in the sense that they would be the vessel for the collecting of information and the forum for the discussions for both sides of the issue.

Laura – Nothing at this time.

Rodney – Reported that he had attended the Joel Salatin workshop and found it very interesting.

Ralph – Mentioned that all supervisors should have received a supervisor survey from Karl Christians with DNRC in the mail. He asked that they all respond to the survey.

Sarah – Nothing at this time.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

District Signs – Carie reported that this project is complete.

County Status – It was reported that the increase in the mill levy to keep our county going passed by a pretty substantial margin.

Supervisor Terms & Elections – Craig Iverson was voted in as the new county commissioner so it is unknown at this time whether he will continue on the board after December. It was noted that the district has two positions to fill currently and Craig's would be a third. Carie asked if it was her responsibility to contact potential candidates or the board members. It was noted that it was the board members role to do so and that they would be looking to contact possible candidates.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – After a lot of discussion it was noted that a simple position letter should be written and sent to MACD and NRCS. It was also noted that maybe an area wide wildlife resolution be written for Area 1. Carie was instructed to send the resolution process out to the board. It was noted that if the letter is worded from the resource standpoint instead of the feelings standpoint that it may carry more justification.

Permissive Mill Levy – It was noted that neither Karl Christians nor Laurie Zeller were able to make it to the meeting. Carie asked all board members to email her their questions and she would put together one email to both Karl and Laurie to answer.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

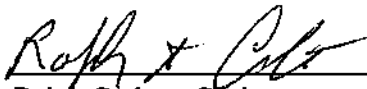
Employee Policy Handbook Changes – Carie handed the board the draft changes that she had made to include payroll and benefits. This area was added to help with the group benefits portion and adding a cap to the amount that the district pays. Carie also noted that the district needs to make sure that in regards to leave that we cannot have the clause of "use it or lose it" as employees cannot lose leave time they have to use it or be paid out when in excess of the maximum accrual. She asked the board to review and send any questions, corrections or recommendations to her and that the changes would be approved at the next board meeting.

2017 Work Plan – Carie handed the board the draft changes that she had made for the next year. She noted that the board would have to add the outreach and on the job training program that is being developed to help other districts. She asked the board to review and send any questions, corrections or recommendations to her and that the changes would be approved at the next board meeting.

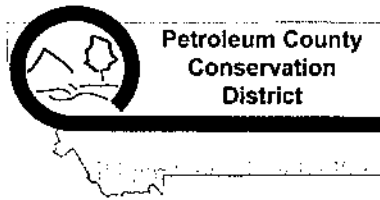
Announcements:

Next board meeting July 25, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:45 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



Petroleum County Conservation District

P.O. Box 118, Winnett, MT 59087-0118

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Local Common Sense Conservation

**Ralph Corbett, *Chairman*, Craig Iverson - *Vice Chair*, Laura Kiehl -*Treasurer*,
Rodney Rowton- *Supervisor*, Sarah Stevens-*Urban Supervisor* Diane Ahlgren – *Supervisor, MMWG***

July 25, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:05 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson, Sarah Stevens and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Brandon Steinberg, Acting DC for the Winnett Field Office, and guest Emily Standley, Montana Rangelands Monitoring Partnership Range Technician and Travis Wilson, BSWC member. The June 27th minutes were read; Sarah Stevens moved to approve as corrected and Diane Ahlgren seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Emily Standley, Montana Rangelands Monitoring Partnership Range Technician – Reported that the program is starting to really take shape and she is working with landowners in Phillips, Fergus and Petroleum setting up monitoring sites and collecting monitoring data. She is already has a few more landowners set up for August but is also helping with Montana Youth Range Camp.

Reports:

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Laura Kiehl moved to approve the report as submitted, Sarah Stevens seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Diane Ahlgren moved to approve as submitted and Craig Iverson seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures later on this week or next week.

Ladies Day on the Range 2016: Carie reported that she had emailed Nikki but they had not been able to get together last week to discuss this and get a 223 grant application written up. It was noted that the application deadline is July 29, 2016 and that a signature might be needed sometime this week for the application.

Open Range Consulting: Carie reported that she had emailed Nikki but they had not been able to get together last week to discuss this but that Nikki was working on a proposal to the NRCS for possible funding.

Six County Meeting: At this time there is nothing new to report. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 20th 2016 in Lewistown but no time as of yet.

2017 BSWC Member: Brandon Steinberg reported that he had talked with the Area HR department and that the decision to house more than one BSWC member lies with the DC in the office. He stated that even though he has no problem with having a second member in the office but cautioned that the new DC could be against it. He also stated that he would try to get something in writing agreeing to have two BSWC members in the field office.

MMWG Report: Diane reported that the group was going to hold a meeting on July 26th to look into getting a weed sprayer hired.

MRCDC Report: Laura reported that there was a tour of the Saint Mary's siphon which is a deteriorating 100 year old structure. The Milk River Watershed Alliance is starting up again and this is looking to be their first big project. Through the Coalbed Methane Program four new wells were drilled in Powder River County. These wells contain the methane gas and they are currently looking at how to release that so that the wells can be used. The council will be hosting a Facilitator training on October 20th at the Lewistown Eagles. This training is open to administrators and supervisors and both are urged to come. It was reported that the next CMR working group meeting will be August 25th at the Fort Peck interpretive Center. The group will be working on their work plan and forming their sub committees for a few of the more intense topics. Lastly it was reported that the Ranching for Rivers program was a huge success and that the funding has been fully expended and the reporting complete. They are now working on a video documentary showcasing the program's success to be aired at the state convention in November.

MWC Report: Travis reported that the coalition's salinity monitoring program is going well and that he is making his mid- season rounds to check in with the volunteers. He reported that on July 27th that both Laura and he are meeting with some ladies from One Montana to do some video documentary on climate change. Lastly he stated that the next coalition meeting is scheduled for August 9th at the Methodist Church in Roundup starting at noon.

MSGOT Report: Diane reported that on August 29th the team will be looking at the applications that were deferred. Her concern with some of the projects is that the mitigation tool is not in place yet and that this could cause some problems later on. She reported that she had attended the sage grouse subcommittee meeting in Lewistown on July 14th and they listened to a regional BLM planner presentation on how they will be monitoring the sage grouse. She noted that a group from Winnett/ Petroleum County that attended included Sig Pugnud, Chris King, Nick Schultz, Laura Nowlin, Jim Brady, Reba Ahlgren and Bonnie Dill. Diane mentioned that she feels everything is in writing and that she has some concerns about how it will play out in the end. Lastly she reported that the Winnett/ Petroleum County contingency had a brief impartial meeting with Caroline Simme after the July 14th meeting.

NRCS: Brandon stated that his last day of his 90 day detail will be August 12th. He noted that the paperwork for a Supervisory DC position in either Lewistown or Winnett has been send to the HR department but that it will be a while before the position is filled and that there will be a regular DC in the other office. He reported that there are 2 CSP applications that were pre-approved and that field office staff is working on those, and no EQIP contracts for this round.

Supervisors Reports:

Craig & Diane- Reported that they had both attended the presentations the first day and presented on the second day of the SGI tour the end of June. They noted that Dave Nagel and Joe Smith have been putting some good things coming out on grazing and that the old correlation between stubble height and chick survival is being found not true.

Laura – Reported that their neighbor may be using black-foot ferrets to control his prairie dogs.

Rodney – Absent

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

Sarah – Nothing at this time.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

Supervisor Terms & Elections – It was noted that Craig Iverson and Diane Ahlgren's terms are up December 31st and that Amanda Gillett's seat is still vacant. It was noted that Sig Pugrud, Nate Descheemaeker, Jim Brady and Levi Nowlin may be interested and good candidates. Laura Kiehl also mentioned that she would talk to Wes and Malori Stahl to see if they were interested as well.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – The board reviewed their 2014 resolution and decided that they may need to just do an amendment and word smith the existing resolution. The board also discussed having a position statement and it was noted that Carrie would draft some language up and send to the board for review and comments.

Permissive Mill Levy – It was noted that Carrie had included in their board packets the updated permissive numbers that set the base at \$10 a month per employee. The board mentioned that they still have reservations about paying an employee that is not living in the county money from a permissive levy. It was noted that we have a full year to work through any problems and have our questions answered before we can pull the levy. In that time we will need to have a meeting with the county commissioners and a public meeting as well.

2017 Work Plan – It was noted that the amendments had been made to the work plan from last meeting and that the work plan was included in their packets. It noted that the only thing that was missing was the Supervisor portion. The board went through the work plan and each signed up for items they were interested in being the go to for. Ralph Corbett then moved to approve as a final work plan, Laura Kiehl seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Employee Policy Handbook Changes -- Carrie noted that she has been working with Karl Christians with DNRC on the changes and language. He had sent her the most current template of the model handbook which she included in their packets. It was asked if they would review and if they see any changes that need to be made to let Carrie and or Karl know. It was noted that they could not approve the handbook at this meeting.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

District Operations Audit/ Financial Review FY 2016 – Board members Diane Ahlgren, Laura Kiehl, and Ralph Corbett came in before the board meeting and conducted the District Operations Audit for the Petroleum County Conservation District and the Missouri River CD Council and Financial Reviews for the Petroleum County Conservation District, Missouri River CD Council, and the MACDEO. The board members informed the board of their findings and suggested a few things that could be done to be in more compliance.

Laura Kiehl moved to approve the District Operations Audit and Financial review for the Petroleum County Conservation District as submitted; Diane Ahlgren seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ralph Corbett moved to approve the District Operations Audit and Financial review for the Missouri River CD Council as submitted; Diane Ahlgren seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ralph Corbett moved to approve the financial review for the MACDEO as submitted; Sarah Stevens seconded the motion which passed unanimously. It was noted that a simple write up will be done and given to the MACDEO with the findings of the review.

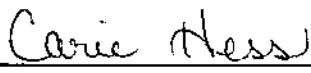
Announcements:

Next board meeting August 29, 2016 @ 5pm.

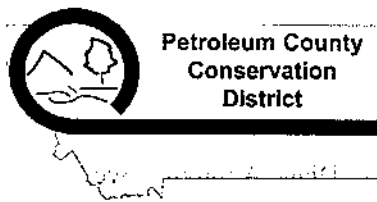
With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 8:05 pm



Ralph Corbett, Chairman



Carie Hess, District Administrator



Petroleum County Conservation District

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Local Common Sense Conservation

**Ralph Corbett, Chairman, Craig Iverson - Vice Chair, Laura Kiehl -Treasurer,
Rodney Rowton- Supervisor, Sarah Stevens-Urban Supervisor Diane Ahlgren -- Supervisor, MMWG**

August 29, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:07 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson, Sarah Stevens Rodney Rowton and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Reba Ahlgren, and guests Bill Milton, Laura Nowlin, MWC Coordinator, Emily Standley, Montana Rangelands Monitoring Partnership Range Technician and Travis Wilson, BSWC member Chris King, Petroleum County Commissioner/ Producer, Gari King, Sig Pugrud, James Brady,. The July 25th minutes were read; Laura Kiehl moved to approve as corrected and Diane Ahlgren seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Bill Milton – Bill started out by saying that he has had several conversations with Diane Ahlgren and Reba Ahlgren about conservation districts convening a stakeholder/ neighborhood group to discuss and have a good open dialogue about landscape issues at the county level with all of the partners and players. It is the hope that this will foster the communications at the local level to find a common ground with those partners that will allow some middle ground on the issues for the betterment of everyone. He explained that in Holistic Management there are 3 circles, the outer circle represents the problems, the middle circle represents the personal attitude towards the problem and the inner circle represents how you design your approach to the problem. He mentioned that the core principle is dialogue. He mentioned that these meetings should be more relaxed in nature and if the district would like to move forward and start the process to convene a group that he thinks the setting should be at someone's home over a meal. Bill was asked as a facilitator is it better to have someone local facilitate or should it be someone from outside of the area. He note that if someone local can make sure that there are meaningful discussions that move forward, show progress, and are able to share internally then you are good but if not do not hesitate to bring someone in.

Emily Standley, Montana Rangelands Monitoring Partnership Range Technician –

Reported that the program is going well and that she is been busy working with area producers in Phillips, Fergus and Petroleum counties. She will be attending the Range Tour coming up next week and mentioned a possible funding opportunity for grazing workshops from the American Bird Conservatory and Bird Conservancy of the Rockies.

Laura Nowlin, Petroleum County Planning Board – Reported that the Planning Board is conducting surveys in regards to the county growth policy. She handed each person in attendance a survey and asked for them to fill it out and return it either to her , a planning board member or the person named on the survey.

Ralph mentioned that SMDC has a brochure on the Petroleum County data.

Reports:

Financial report: Carie read the Petroleum CD's financial report Diane Ahlgren moved to approve the report as submitted, Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then read the MRCDC financial report, Rodney Rowton moved to approve as submitted and Sarah Stevens seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures later on this week or next week mainly due to the new payroll schedule that had to be made to confirm to the new Public Employee's Retirement System reporting system.

Ladies Day on the Range 2016: Carie reported that a 223 grant application has not been able to be written up and submitted by the deadline but that she thought that the funding from the American Bird Conservatory and Bird Conservancy of the Rockies. She mentioned that she thought that the bus idea was not going to work due to the gravel road issue and time of year. Carie also mentioned that we could still travel to Bill Milton's place and have Abby Smith talk most of the morning and maybe have Emily do a monitoring lesson in the afternoon.

Open Range Consulting: Carie reported that Nikki had submitted a proposal to NRCS but that she has not heard anything further. Carie will continue to look into funding options for this project and try to at least secure funding for the Petroleum County portion.

Six County Meeting: At this time there is nothing new to report. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 20, 2016 in Lewistown but no time as of yet.

Partner Reports:

MMWG Report: Diane reported that the group held a meeting in July 26th to discuss weeds and the Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant that they have that is expiring at the end of September. They were trying to get a commercial applicator hired to spray for everyone but found out that with the way the grant was written that there was not enough money in the grant to get that accomplished.

MRCDC Report: Laura Kiehl reported that that she had attended the quarterly meeting here in Winnett on August 23rd along with the evaluation meeting. She noted that there will be a professional video of the Ranching for Rivers program that would be completed by the state convention and would be shown there.

MWC Report: Laura Nowlin reported that there had been an application for 2 BSWC members submitted for the MWC, PCCD, and MRCDC for the 2017 year. She has just received word that the award was for 2 members. With that we will need to collect \$20,000 for the host site portion of which she has \$10,000 secured. She noted that we would also need to gather additional funding for travel for the members. Laura noted that she has Travis working on a 319 Mini Education Grant through SWCDM for \$2,000 that would be for travel for the 2017 members.

Laura asked the board if they would be the grant sponsor for the funds. Laura Kiehl moved to be the grant sponsor for the 310 Mini grant application; Diane Ahlgren seconded the motion which passed unanimously. It was noted that the deadline for the application was August 31, 2016. Laura also mentioned that the members would be working on a variety of things for the coalition they would be working on a canal seepage study and an infrastructure study. Laura mentioned that John Rouane, Travis Wilson and she had attended the Drought Advisory Committee meeting in Helena to give a report on the Musselshell Basin. She also noted that there the Lt. Governor is having drought forum meetings across the state and that they are working on a Montana drought response plan.

MSGOT Report: Diane reported that the team had postponed their August meeting until October 7th as the contracts for the easements were not ready yet. She also noted that there is no mitigation tool yet but that they are reconvening the original stakeholder's group and putting together a technical committee in hopes to have a first draft of the tool out by January 1st. She noted that the CMR Working Group Sage grouse sub-committee will be meeting in September in Lewistown.

NRCS: Reba Ahlgren filled in for acting DC Marni Thompson and mentioned that they have had 2 CSP applications approved for contracts and she will have tem for the board to sign at the next meeting. She reported that they are working on the EQIP inventories so that those applications can move into the next ranking cycle. Reba also updated the board on where they were with hiring a DC for the office noting that Marni Thompson will be acting until December 2016. Currently they have the listing out for a Supervisory DC with the choice of either Winnett or Lewistown, and once that position is filled probably in January then they will open a regular DC position for the other office.

Supervisors Reports:

Craig Nothing at this time.

Diane- Mentioned that the Young Ag Leadership Conference is the end of September and asked if there were any ideas on people to ask to see if they are interested. Diane also mentioned attending the most recent CMR meeting where the group is working on their work plan. She noted that Bison was the number 1 item on the work plan and that they are forming a Bison subcommittee and that they need a representative from Petroleum County. It was noted that there are a total of 6 work plan items which also include weeds, Tourism/ recreation, bringing the young people back to the communities, economics.

Laura – Nothing at this time.

Rodney – Mentioned that they are doing a tree removal project on BLM near Mosby rest area to try to get grass to grow back. He said they were moving to more BLM land on Old Stage Road next.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

Sarah – Nothing at this time.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

Supervisor Terms & Elections – It was noted that Craig Iverson and Diane Ahlgren's terms are up December 31st and that Amanda Gillett's seat is still vacant. Sig Pugrud and Jim Brady were in attendance to sit in on a meeting to see what they thought of it.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – The board reviewed the draft position statement that was written and Bill Milton asked what the board wanted to do about the issue. After some discussion the board and due to the length of the meeting it was noted that they would bring this back up at the next meeting.

Permissive Mill Levy – Carie reported that she had asked both Karl Christians and Laurie Zeller the questions about the permissive mill levy and who is eligible for it and about the use of the money for non-county residents. Both Karl and Laurie stated that there are several ways that this could be handled and from several funding sources to allow for all employees to be given a group benefit stipend.

Employee Policy Handbook Changes – Carie noted that the final model language is not completed yet and that once it was she would bring forward to the board for review and approval.

New Business:

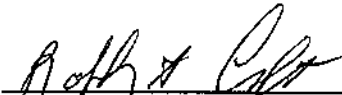
Permits – None at this time.

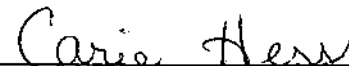
Employee Evaluations – Carie stepped from the room, while the board when through Laura Nowlin and Rachel Frost's evaluation materials. The board deemed that both Laura Nowlin and Rachel Frost's evaluations were complete and positive. The board then discussed Carie Hess's evaluation materials and then she was asked to come back in to further discuss her evaluation. After discussion with Carie about what was presented in her evaluation, Craig Iverson moved to approve all three evaluations as submitted and Sarah Stevens seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

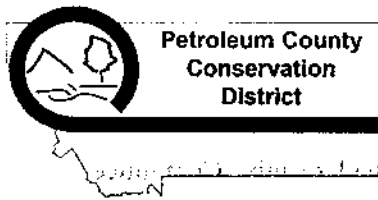
Announcements:

Next board meeting September 26, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



Petroleum County Conservation District

P.O. Box 118, Winnett, MT 59087-0118

406-429-6646 ext. 104

petroleumcd@midrivers.com

Local Common Sense Conservation

**Ralph Corbett, *Chairman*, Craig Iverson - *Vice Chair*, Laura Kiehl -*Treasurer*,
Rodney Rowton- *Supervisor*, Sarah Stevens-*Urban Supervisor* Diane Ahlgren – *Supervisor*, MMWG**

September 26, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:05 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson, Sarah Stevens Rodney Rowton and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Reba Ahlgren, and potential supervisors Sig Pugrud and James Brady. The August 29th minutes were read; Craig Iverson moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Reports:

Financial report: Carie briefly overviewed the Petroleum CD's financial report Rodney Rowton moved to approve the report as submitted, Laura Kiehl seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then briefly overviewed the MRCDC financial report, Laura Kiehl moved to approve as submitted and Craig Iverson seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures later on this week or next week mainly due to the new payroll schedule that had to be made to confirm to the new Public Employee's Retirement System reporting system.

Ladies Day on the Range 2016: Carie reported that due to office staff being busy that we would not be able to put a tour on for 2016 but that it would be a top priority for spring 2017.

Open Range Consulting: Carie reported that Nikki had submitted a proposal to NRCS but that she has not heard anything further. It was reported that Nikki had been out for about a week but that Carie would try and get a hold of her to find out where we are and move forward.

Area One Meeting: It was reported that the Area One Meeting went well and that there were about 60 people in attendance. The district was given several compliments about the meeting.

Partner Reports:

MMWG Report: Diane reported that it looks like there will be an Montana Conservation Corp crew out on the lower end of the river in late October working through the landowners and the Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant money to spray Saltcedar and possibly knapweed as well. She

noted that there had been a meeting with Bonnie Dill with the Petroleum County Weed District and Dave Burch with the Montana Department of Agriculture.

MRCDC Report: Laura Kiehl reported that she had sat in on the Executive Committee conference call and that on that call it was reported that Ron Stoneberg had written a letter about the CMR working group that had been published in a couple of papers. A copy of that letter was handed out to the board members for their review. She also reported that the Ranching for Rivers Program has been very successful and that Rachel has been asked to present in Idaho and Oregon about the program. Lastly she reported that the council was undertaking a collaborative effort with the Montana Saltcedar Team to produce an educational video on Saltcedar which would be aired on the Pursuit Channel. Currently they are gathering the funding for the video which would cost around \$2,000.

MWC Report: Diane reported that the next coalition meeting is October 11th in Roundup at noon. Carie reported that the district is now in a fully executed contract with the WaterSmart grant. Diane noted that she had been interviewed by One Montana who is interviewing producers and water users along the Musselshell and talking about climate change.

MSGOT Report: Diane reported that the next meeting is scheduled for October 7 in Helena. She reported that she had listened in on a call where the original stakeholders were discussing the mitigation tool. She noted that there was lots of good input but that the devil is in the details. She noted that the contracts for the already approved easements and conifer encroachment projects are not coming together and that there have been lots of negotiations going on with partners and applicants. These contracts should have been finalized in August but now it will be at least October before they are possibly finalized.

NRCS: Reba Ahlgren reported that Jay Fuhrer is going to be in Lewistown and Winifred December 14th and 25th for soil health workshop. She also reported that the NRCS is working on a special initiative that would allow producers to seed crop back to grass but they need to sign up before October 31st for spring money. It was noted that this would probably be a onetime deal as well. Lastly Reba brought before the board 2 CSP contracts with conservation plans that she gave an overview of each contract. She sent them around for the board to look at and for them to be signed.

Supervisors Reports:

Craig Nothing at this time.

Diane- Reported that the Sage Grouse subcommittee met on September 15th and noted that the BLM continued reporting on how they will monitor and administer sage grouse management. It was noted that there has been discussion at some of the meetings that technicians doing field work have been experiencing issues with obtaining permission to cross private land and that there is talk of using satellite imagery to conduct the studies. She noted that the next meeting for the partners and the sage grouse subcommittee is October 12th in Lewistown.

Laura – Reported that she had submitted the final portion of the review process to Carie for archiving with the evaluation report. She also reported that she had heard that Austin Kiehl and Jay King were interested in attending the Young Ag Leadership Conference. Carie noted that

they both could submit payment of their registration to the district for reimbursement. She reported that there is a new gauging station on Flatwillow Creek.

Rodney – Reported that the BLM is still working on their tree removal project in the Mosby area.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

Sarah – Nothing at this time.

Sig – Nothing at this time.

James – Jim mentioned that he had spoken with the BLM about the closing of two tracks in the Tin Can area to help with hunters using two tracks and scaring the land.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

Supervisor Terms & Elections – It was noted that Craig Iverson and Diane Ahlgren's terms are up December 31st and that Amanda Gillett's seat is still vacant. Sig Pugrud and Jim Brady were in attendance to sit in on a meeting to see what they thought of it.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – The board reviewed the draft position statement that was written and will be looking to make corrections and additions. It was reported that at this time it appears that the NRCS will not be tackling this issue in the near future.

Permissive Mill Levy – It was noted were the board was in the process. It was noted that the board would not be looking to do any of the public hearings or advertising until after the first of the year.

Employee Policy Handbook Changes – Carie brought before the board the newest additions to the policy. It was noted that the district needed to be more defined in the NRCS vehicle usage section. It was noted that Carie and Reba would do some more investigation on the use of the NRCS vehicles and report back at the next meeting.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

Local Work Group – Carie prepared a draft for a new start to the local work group that the district has done in the past. She presented how she would like to move the group in a new direction that is a combination of the old group and the new group that Bill Milton presented at the last meeting. It was noted that the program would be a work in process.

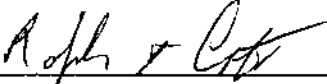
Website – Carie mentioned that she would like to have the district get a website. She noted that the approximate costs would be about \$150 for three years. She noted that both Travis and Rachel had agreed to help get things started and the site up and running. Craig Iverson moved to

purchase a domain name and web hosting for up to three years and with a budget of up to \$150. Rodney Rowton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

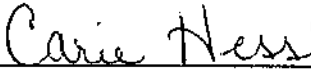
Announcements:

Next board meeting October 31, 2016 @ 2pm.

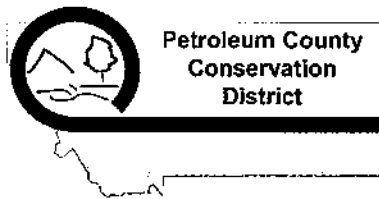
With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:21 pm



Ralph Corbett, Chairman



Carie Hess, District Administrator



Petroleum County Conservation District

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Local Common Sense Conservation

**Ralph Corbett, *Chairman*, Craig Iverson - *Vice Chair*, Laura Kiehl -*Treasurer*,
Rodney Rowton- *Supervisor*, Sarah Stevens-*Urban Supervisor* Diane Ahlgren – *Supervisor, MMWG***

October 31, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 2:00 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson, Sarah Stevens Rodney Rowton and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Marni Thompson, and potential supervisor James Brady and guests Karly De Mars, Don Pyrah, and Bonnie Dill. The September 26th minutes were read; Rodney Rowton moved to approve as submitted and Craig Iverson seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Karly De Mars with Lewistown Field Office Bureau of Land Management Wildland Fire Division and Don Pyrah with Department of Natural Resources Fire Division came in and talked with the board about the Fuel Mitigation program that the district has funding for through Snowy Mountain Development Corporation. Don Pyrah handed out an outline of the project that he had envisioned similar to the Garfield County program and the Pines Recreation Area in the Glasgow area. The end goal of the program would be to increase local fire response capabilities and to hire an engine crew and an additional type 6 response vehicle. The crews would also work primarily in the timbered areas but it was noted that they could do some sage brush and conifer work in the sage grouse core areas within the county. Questions that still remain is who is the employer and who will be the one supervising the crews.

Bonnie Dill, Petroleum County Weed District came in to thank the board and Travis Wilson for helping with getting Montana Conservation Corp crew into spray Saltcedar along the Musselshell River. She also informed the board that the weed district should have an applicator on hand by the start of the next spray season.

Reports:

Financial report: Carie briefly overviewed the Petroleum CD's financial report Craig Iverson moved to approve the report as submitted, Laura Kiehl seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed. It was noted that Carie would like to transfer another \$2,500 into the savings account before the end of the year. The board was in agreeance to transfer the amount into the savings account.

Carie then briefly overviewed the MRCDC financial report, Craig Iverson moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures later on this week or next week

mainly due to the new payroll schedule that had to be made to confirm to the new Public Employee's Retirement System reporting system.

Open Range Consulting: Carie reported that Nikki had submitted a proposal to NRCS but that that proposal was not funded for this year but was held over for the next fiscal year as a possibility. Carie noted that there are a few grant opportunities out there that she could work on getting more information on and look at requirements for submitting an application. It was also noted that the Bureau of Land Management Lewistown Field Office was also looking for some funding to have this project done on a larger scale.

New Working Group – It was brought up that supervisors should come to the next meeting with some ideas as to what they would like to see this group do and Carie should have a better idea and more information on this group.

BSWC Member Update – We held interviews and have selected 2 members that have both accepted the position. We have all of the funding secured to pay the districts portion of their stipends and for some travel. We will continue to look for additional travel funding as they settle in and projects are underway.

Website - The district does have a website currently it is not live but it is hoped that by the first of the year it will be live.

MWCC Symposium - Carie gave the board an update on how the symposium went and that Rachel Frost, Laura Nowlin, and herself were able to get Travis Wilson's evaluation done. It was a good networking event for all but really for the watershed coordinators.

Partner Reports:

MMWG Report: Diane reported that a Montana Conservation Corp crew was out on the lower end of the river in late October working through the landowners and the Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant money to spray Saltcedar and possibly knapweed as well. It was noted that Travis has the data and he thought that he may be able to get a map completed of what was done.

MRCDC Report: Laura Kiehl reported she had attended the CMR Community Working Group Meeting in Jordan and that one of the presentations was on Big Horn Sheep reintroduction around the state. The Hellis in the Gravely Mountains and the lawsuit that has been filed in regards to their sheep was brought up. It was also noted that they have to have a 14 mile separation between the Big Horn Sheep and domestic sheep along with in some places a double fence. She also noted that the CMR group held its first Bison subcommittee meeting the evening before the full meeting. She also noted that the group has an annual work plan with 5 projects that they will be working on over the next year.

MWC Report: It was reported that the next meeting is scheduled for December 3th in Roundup starting at noon.

MSGOT Report: Diane reported the October 7th meeting was postponed and the next meeting is scheduled for November 18th and that she would be listening in by phone or video conference. She also mentioned that she had listened in on the original stakeholders group who is meeting to discuss the mitigation tool and what should be included in the tool.

Lastly she mentioned that Caroline Simes would be in the Winnett area November 3rd and 4th.

NRCS: Marni Thompson reported that they have opened the DC position as the shared position and once that was filled that they would open the regular DC position in Winnett. Marni will then move to an area planner. She mentioned that Jay Furher will be in Winifred and Lewistown areas doing workshops. The Sage Grouse Initiative will have a special initiative to be working on renovating cropland to grassland. She reported that they are working on finishing fieldwork on EQIP. She informed the board that their local work group concern from last year is soil health and that will follow through to this year as well. Lastly she noted that they are training for the new CSP program.

Supervisors Reports:

Craig Nothing at this time.

Diane- reported that the Rangeland Resource Executive Committee is looking to rejuvenate range committees around the state, the committee is thinking about going by MACD areas with having an area range representative. She also mentioned that they are having problems with the Rangeland Improvement Loans being used. She noted that we have had a damp October and that Petrolia, Yellow water, and Vogel were all up. Lastly she mentioned that they are going to have something similar to the Leopold Award in Montana.

Laura – Reported that she would like to see if the district would look into the combustible CO2 engine for poisoning varmints. She thought that the cost about \$1,200.00.

Rodney – Nothing at this time.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

Sarah – Nothing at this time.

Sig – Absent.

James – Nothing at this time.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

Supervisor Terms & Elections – It was noted that at the November meeting the board would finalize the appointments. Rodney Rowton moved to appoint Sigrud Pugrud to Diane Ahlgren's term and James Brady to Amanda Gillett's position. Craig Iverson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – It was thought that board members to research the costs to vaccinate and that they would review the position statement at the November meeting.

Permissive Mill Levy – It was noted were the board was in the process. It was noted that the board would not be looking to do any of the public hearings or advertising until after the first of the year. It was noted that the board would start discussions in late February and have Laurie Zeller and Karl Christians attend or phone in.

Employee Policy Handbook Changes – Carie mentioned that the changes had not been completed and that the appendices had not been received. She will inform the board as soon as they have been and then the policy can be reviewed and approved.

New Business:

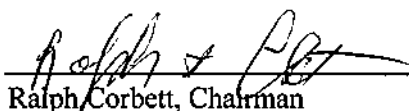
Permits – None at this time.

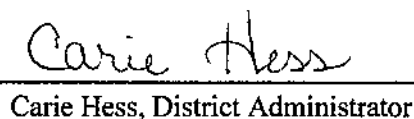
State Convention – Resolutions were reviewed and it was noted that all board members should send their comments and votes to Laura Kiehl. She will be the voting member of the board.

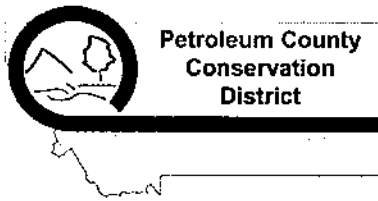
Announcements:

Next board meeting November 28th, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 5:25 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



Petroleum County Conservation District

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Local Common Sense Conservation

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Ralph Corbett, Chairman, Craig Iverson - Vice Chair, Laura Kiehl - Treasurer & MRCDC, Rodney Rowton - Supervisor, Diane Ahlgren - Associate Supervisor & MWC, MMWG, & MSGOT, Sarah Stevens - Urban Supervisor, James Brady - Supervisor, Sig Pugnud - Supervisor

November 28, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:15 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson, Sarah Stevens Rodney Rowton, Diane Ahlgren, James Brady and Sigrid Pugnud. Also present were Carie Hess, guest Laura Nowlin and Emily Standley and by phone Marni Thompson. The October 31st minutes were read; Rodney Rowton moved to approve as corrected and Sarah Stevens seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Emily Standley, Montana Rangelands Partnership - Emily reported that she has done some grazing workshops over the last couple of months now that field season is closing. She also reported that she had attended the local grazing meetings as well as presented at the MACD State Convention in Sidney. Lastly she asked the board that if they knew of anyone who would be interested in starting a grazing plan or updating their existing grazing plans to please share her contact information with them.

Reports:

Financial report: Carie briefly overviewed the Petroleum CD's financial report noting that in her haste she had accidentally printed a check to MasterCard instead of an ACH. Ralph Corbett moved to void the check and pay by ACH and Diane Ahlgren seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Laura Kiehl moved to approve the report as submitted, Sarah Stevens seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then briefly overviewed the MRCDC financial report, Craig Iverson moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures later on this week or next week. She also mentioned that she would be working on closing out those grants that were due to expire and getting those grant reports completed and submitted.

Open Range Consulting: Carie reported that Nikki had submitted a proposal to NRCS but that that proposal was not funded for this year but was held over for the next fiscal year as a possibility. Carie noted that there are a few grant opportunities out there that she could work on getting more information on and look at requirements for submitting an application. It was also noted that the Bureau of Land Management Lewistown Field Office was also looking for some funding to have this project done on a larger scale.

New Working Group – It was brought up that supervisors should come to the next meeting with some ideas as to what they would like to see this group do and Carie should have a better idea and more information on this group.

It was also noted that a community working group had met just prior to the board meeting and that several topics were brought up and that it appears that there are two that will be moving forward right away. One of the projects to come forth would be to have the Conservation District support an application for a feasibility study to see if a local group or organization could be put together to be able to purchase land for conservation efforts such as a grass bank. Laura Nowlin reported that she had done some looking into a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant (NFWF) that could be written but that those applications were due December 15th and the awards would be announced in March. It was noted that if things did not come together with match money and in-kind that the district could withdraw the application in the future. Craig Iverson moved that the Conservation District should support and submit the application; Diane Ahlgren seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Website - The district does have a website currently it is not live but it is hoped that by the first of the year it will be live. Things are being added to the site to get it ready to go live.

MACD State Convention – The 2016 convention was held in Sidney and it seemed to go well. The 2017 convention will be held in Glasgow at the Cottonwood Inn.

Partner Reports:

MMWG Report: Nothing to report at this time.

MRCDC Report: Laura Kiehl reported she had attended the quarterly meeting in Sidney and that the council did a year in review presentation. It was noted that the next meeting would be January 5th after the Milk River Watershed Alliance (MRWA) meeting in Havre. It was also noted that there was a bison association meeting scheduled for January 6th or 7th in Great Falls and a Bison subcommittee meeting in Lewistown on December 5th. Lastly it was reported that the council would be working towards meeting with Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and Noreen Walsh again in 2017.

MWC Report: It was reported that the next meeting is scheduled for December 13th in Roundup starting at noon. The Roundup Reach Alternatives study is completed and that the Renewable Resource Development Grant (RRGL) ranked 59 of 94 but that the Governor's budget only has funding included for the top 24 projects. The Big Sky Watershed Corp Members will start January 9th.

MSGOT Report: Diane reported that things have been happening quickly now and that the original stakeholder's group is working on the mitigation and habitat tools. She noted that she had attended a meeting on November 18th in Sidney and that the next meeting is December 6th in Helena. It was noted that they approved another easement at the last meeting this one is on a ranch that was already approved for a conifer removal project. It was reported that quite a few of the original projects have been removed but that they have approved three. Lastly she noted that Carolyn Simes was in the area working on sage grouse stuff and attending local meetings the

first part of November and that Carolyn is receptive to the idea of term easements in addition to perpetual easements.

NRCS: Marni Thompson reported the field office had received three SGI special initiative applications which would allow cropland to be turned into native grasses. She noted that they are continuing with the EQIP planning and field work and that she had received a list from Reba about the different topics for future workshops and that they were working on getting something together for February. Lastly she reminded the board that Jay Furher was coming to the Lewistown and Winifred areas on December 14th and 15th.

Supervisors Reports:

Craig- Reported that having attended the community work group meeting earlier that afternoon that it was very inspirational.

Diane- Reported that Laura Nowlin did a wonderful job with the Musselshell Watershed Coalition presentation at the state convention. She also reported that she had attended the community working group meeting before the CD meeting and felt that it went very well.

Laura – Reported that she was the voting representative for Petroleum County CD at the state convention and that the bylaw changes were discussed but no changes were made. She also noted that they gave Jeff Tiberi a raise but did not give Elena a raise. She lastly noted that Jeff Mosley with Montana State University Extension gave a talk at the state convention that was also a great presentation.

Rodney – Nothing at this time.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

Sarah – Nothing at this time.

Sig – Reported that the Petroleum County Planning Board will have their next meeting on December 8th and that District staff and board are invited to attend.

James – Nothing at this time.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

Supervisor Terms & Elections – It was noted that Carie would resend out what Jane Holzer with the Montana Salinity Control Association had sent about the responsibilities for the representative for that group and that the board would come to the December meeting with an idea on who to appoint to that board. Rodney Rowton moved to appoint James Brady to fulfill Amanda Gillett's open position on the District Board, Sarah Stevens seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Laura Kiehl moved to appoint Sigrid Pugrud to fulfill Diane Ahlgren's position on the District Board, Rodney Rowton seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Craig Iverson's position is expiring December 31, 2016 but he has agreed to be appointed as an

Associate Supervisor of the board and Diane Ahlgren has also agreed to be appointed as an Associate Supervisor of the board. It was also noted that Nate Descheemaeker should be contacted to see if he would be willing to sit on the board.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – Laura Kiehl had done some research on the costs to vaccinate prairie dogs but stated that she could not find a lot of information on it. The numbers that she did find were from 2014 in a UC Davis report that stated it costs about \$500,000 to vaccinate. She also noted that she has seen a second hatch this year in her area. This item would be discussed more at the December meeting.

Permissive Mill Levy – It was noted were the board was in the process. It was noted that the board would not be looking to do any of the public hearings or advertising until after the first of the year. It was noted that the board would start discussions in late February and have Laurie Zeller and Karl Christians attend or phone in.

Employee Policy Handbook Changes – Carie mentioned that the changes had not been completed and that the appendices had not been received. She will inform the board as soon as they have been and then the policy can be reviewed and approved.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

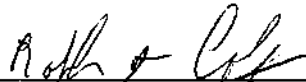
Christmas Party - It was noted that the board would just have a simple get together after the next board meeting.


CO Engine – Laura Kiehl brought in several informational packets about the different varieties of CO engines there are and prices. It was stated that at this time the board would not make a choice but would review this at the next meeting with a more definite answer.

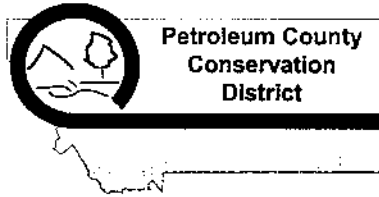
Announcements:

Next board meeting December 28th, 2016 @ 2 pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:25 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator



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Ralph Corbett, Chairman, Craig Iverson - Vice Chair, Laura Kiehl - Treasurer & MRCDC, Rodney Rowton - Supervisor, Diane Ahlgren - Associate Supervisor & MWC, MMWG, & MSGOT, Sarah Stevens - Urban Supervisor, James Brady - Supervisor, Sig Pugrud - Supervisor

December 29, 2016

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 2:15 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson, Rodney Rowton, Diane Ahlgren, James Brady and Sigrid Pugrud. Also present were Carie Hess, guest Laura Nowlin, Bill Milton, Nate Descheemaeker, and Kate Descheemaeker. Reba Ahlgren and Marni Thompson, NRCS. The November 28th minutes were read; Laura Kiehl moved to approve as corrected and Craig Iverson seconded, motion carried.

Guest/ Public Comment:

Laura Nowlin – Spoke to the board about the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant application that submitted. She informed them that the request was for \$32,500 for salary and benefits for a coordinator to do a feasibility study to see what type of structure within our community would be best suited to be a collaborative buying agent to purchase lands in the county and keep them as working ranches. The coordinator would be supervised by a smaller group of CD supervisors and landowners that would be more active than the full group. The coordinator would then seek more experts in areas of realtors, easements ect.. It was noted that the awards will be announced in late February to mid-March and that the person would start in May and end in November by Stockgrowers.

Reports:

Financial report: Carie briefly overviewed the Petroleum CD's financial report and answered any questions. It was noted that on the overall categories there needs to be some adjustment or new ones added as some line items are out of budget. Craig Iverson moved to approve the report as submitted, Laura Kiehl seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Carie then briefly overviewed the MRCDC financial report, Sig Pugrud moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

Administrative report: Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures next week. She presented the one report that she had completed for review and signature.

Open Range Consulting: Carie reported that there is nothing new to report on this item but that she would like to keep it on the agenda and will update the board as more information comes in.

New Working Group – It was mentioned that the community working group may take over this group so maybe it should be tabled until the community working group is up and going.

It was also noted that the community working group had a planning meeting just before the district board meeting to help with planning of the January 30th meeting.

District Outreach Materials – Carie had put together some materials and wanted the board's opinion and approval of the purpose and mission statement of the district as well as a one page handout to take to the legislature. She also asked for the board to review and approve the well information packet that Travis Wilson had submitted. The board tabled these until the next meeting so that they had time to review in depth and make suggestions.

Website – Carie mentioned that the district website is live and that there is the last years' worth of information on it currently. She showed the board what it looked like and noted that she would be adding things in the next couple of months. She noted that if board members look at the website and find glitches or see something missing to please contact her.

Partner Reports:

MMWG Report: Diane Ahlgren mentioned that the Conservation District is holding the water rights for the storage project. It was noted that there is a sunset date on those rights which is in 2020. She asked if the board wanted to write a letter to the group about the water rights and the sunset date looming in the not so distant future. Bill Milton asked if that this project should be looked at by the Musselshell Watershed Coalition as it was a top 15 project in the watershed plan. It was noted that members of the MMWG should attend a coalition meeting and bring this project up.

MRCDC Report: Laura Kiehl reported that the next quarterly meeting is scheduled for January 5th in Havre in conjunction with the Milk River Watershed Alliance meeting. She noted that there were no December meetings of the CMR working group or the bison sub-committee. It was noted conservation menu that the sage grouse sub-committee has put out is proving to be a valuable tool. She also reported that the Mussel Response team is handling all the mussel stuff in the state. She reported that council member Dick Iversen out of Richland CD mentioned that the Fort Peck tribe is upset with the state as they had been promised bison and the transfer of those animals has been halted. It was mentioned that funding was found for the Ranching for Rivers project for counties on the western side of the state and that there is an RRGL application in for legislative approval for more money for the program on the eastern side. Lastly she reported that the council had approved a letter of support for the NFWF grant application and some in-kind contributions. They will be discussing the match money at the quarterly meeting.

MWC Report: Laura Nowlin reported that representative Harris is carrying a petition for water commissioners to the legislature. She noted that the next coalition meeting is scheduled for February 14th in Roundup.

MSGOT Report: Diane Ahlgren reported the group met on December 6th and approved a couple more contracts for easements. She mentioned that so far the team has allocated three million of the ten million dollars in their funding on conservation easements. She noted that the group has drafted a (HQT) Habitat Quantification Tool and at the next meeting they are going to try and run some of the projects through it but that it is complicated to understand it is to see it. They will be completing public hearings on the tool and rules in January as well. There is to be one in Roundup on January 6th.

NRCS: Marni Thompson reported the money has been allotted for the sage grouse special initiative to seed crop back to grass. They will be working with those producers who signed up for the program. They are continuing to work with producers on EQIP and it is there hope to have them all tied up by March. There is a new CSP program with a sign up deadline of February 3rd. Currently they are being trained on the program and will keep the board informed of what can be expected. Lastly she reported that she has Joshua Dukart in mind for a late May workshop. She handed out his bio to the board. She also noted that she is working with Reba and Carie on Ladies Day on the Range and those should be finalized by the next meeting.

Supervisors Reports:

Craig- Nothing at this time.

Diane- Reported that the sage brush planting in Petroleum County was reported in the media. She mentioned that BLM had planted sage brush plugs in knee high cheatgrass and that the outcome is mediocre at best.

Laura – Reported that on Christmas Eve she had a blue heron fly by her place.

Rodney – Reported that Lloyd had received a letter that there would be more fuel mitigation work being done on Jackson Coulee.

Ralph – Nothing at this time.

Sarah – Absent.

Sig – Reported that the Petroleum County Planning Board met on December 8th and that it was well attended. She noted that there was interesting discussion on how most of the agencies could find funding possibly for acquisitions, roads but not weed control. It was thought to have an annual meeting with the agencies that are active in the county for updates. She also noted that she had attended the school board meeting with Charlie Ahlgren about the Beef project from the Community working group. She noted that the school board and staff seem to be onboard with the project and that there will be a meeting on January 6th to work out the details. It was also noted that there were about 100 letters sent out to local Stockgrowers asking for donations and to date there are 14 animals donated and approximately \$400 in cash donated.

James – Reported that he had attended the informal meeting with representative Daines and that most of the conversation was focus around PILT payments in the county.

Correspondence: Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

Old Business:

Supervisor Terms & Elections – It was noted that at this time no one has stepped up to be appointed to the Montana Salinity Control Association Board.

Nate Descheemaeker was asked what his thoughts were about being appointed to the board and Nate replied that he was up to being appointed to the board. Sig Pugrud moved to appoint Nathan Descheemaeker to fill Craig Iverson's position until the next regular election. Rodney Rowton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Lastly the district had not received a

letter from the Town of Winnett in regards to appointment of the Urban supervisors so the board agreed that this should be tabled until next month.

Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management – The board discussed this more and came up with some revisions to the current statement. It was noted that they would bring the final recommendation to the January meeting for approval.

Permissive Mill Levy – It was noted were the board was in the process. It was noted that the board would like to hold a conference call with Laurie Zeller and Karl Christians at the February Meeting to have all their questions answered before moving forward.

Employee Policy Handbook Changes – Carie mentioned that the changes had not been completed and that the appendices had not been received. She will inform the board as soon as they have been and then the policy can be reviewed and approved.

CO Engine – It was noted that at the November meeting Laura Kiehl had brought in three different descriptions and costs for a CO engine. The board at this time is still looking into all of the information on these engines to see if one is best suited for the district and the associated costs.

New Business:

Permits – None at this time.

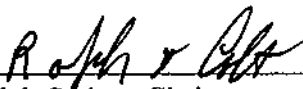
223 Grant for Workshop Series – Carie mentioned to the board that the next deadline for 223 grant applications is January 15th and that she would like to submit one to cover cost associated with the workshop series which would include a garden workshop, Ladies day, kid's day and the Josh Dukart workshop. Jim Brady moved to approve submitting an application and Sig Pugrud seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Legislative Events – Carie mentioned that the Rotunda day at the Capitol and the Legislative Meet & Greet are scheduled for January 24th. She informed the board that the Rotunda event is a free event where the district could put up a display and speak to legislators at breaks and lunch. She noted that this is a good opportunity for the district to display its work and to show the importance of conservation on the land. It was also noted that while the district should not be a partner in the meet & greet that they should attend to talk with more legislators in a more relaxed and casual environment. She asked for travel funds to attend them both which would mean travel to Helena on the 23rd and coming home on the 25th. Craig Iverson moved to allow Carie to attend and Ralph Corbett seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Announcements:

Next board meeting January 30, 2017 @ 5 pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 5:45 pm


Ralph Corbett, Chairman


Carie Hess, District Administrator