



Montana Association of Conservation Districts

# MONTANA ASSOCIATION of CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

*We're growing Montana's future.*

## MACD BOARD MEETING

DATE

## Meeting Minutes

### BOARD MEMBERS

Jim Simpson (PRES)	William Bernard ( 1)	Steve Hertel (3)	Don Youngbauer ( 4)	Mike Hansen ( 6)
Gary Giem (TREAS)	Tony Barone ( 2)	Gayla Wortman (3)	Steve Schanaman(4)	Rick VanDyken(6)
Dean Rogge ( VP)	Roddy Rost ( 2)	Mark Suta (3)	Pete Woll (5)	
Steve Wanderaas ( 1)	Bob Peterman ( 2)	Judi Knapp ( 4)	Bill Naegeli ( 5)	

**PARTNERS AND OTHERS PRESENT:** Jeff Pattison, Autumn Coleman, Tom Watson, Kyle Tackett, Steve Hedstrom, Stephanie Adamns, Rebecca Boslough, Jeff Tiberi, Mark Bostrom, Mary Hendrix

**Meeting was called to order by Jim Simpson at 7:33 AM**

### Previous Meeting Minutes:

- Motion to Approve: Judi Knapp
- Seconded: Roddy Rost
- Discussion:
- VOTE: Motion Carries

### Financials:

- Motion: Gayla Wortman
- Seconded: Roddy Rost
- Discussion:
  - Stephanie will provide a grants report for the Programs Committee.
  - This will eventually go on the 'members only part of the webpage.
- VOTE: Motion Carries

### Motion to increase Education funding to \$2000.

- Motion: Judi Knapp
- Seconded: Gayla Wortman
- Discussion: This is increasing from \$1500 to \$2000.
- VOTE: Motion Carries

### Member Approval of Combined Budget

- 30 Districts in Good Standing responded with approval. Two Districts not-in-good-standing also submitted approval. One District submitted an abstention.
- Jeff Pattison - Valley CD was concerned that if HB 374 doesn't come through that MACD should consider having a budget with a 10% cut.

- Jim Simpson - Could we wait to see what happens with the legislative session and then revise the budget at the Spring Board Meeting if necessary?

## **Partner Reports**

### Department of Natural Resources (DNRC) - Mark Bostrom and Autumn Coleman

- If everything gets passed and we have success on 374, it would be the first time in three biennia that DNRC would be assured that they would have money to spend for what they have been allocated and budgeted for.
- Mary Hendrix sent out the Admins grants applications. There is Q and A scheduled for folks with questions on admin grants.
- There were 13 requests for 223 grants for pollinator projects
- Stacey Barta is working on an administrative rule for rangeland improvement loans.
- There is a State Technical Advisory Committee meeting tomorrow at 9am. Mike Hansen will be participating on behalf of MACD. Rebecca Boslough will be on part of the time as well.

### Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) - Tom Watson and Kyle Tackett

- There are new directives from USDA leadership about the number of staff (partners and NRCS staff) allowed in the office. It is no more than 25% in any office regardless of what is happening locally with covid.

### Milk River Watershed Alliance - Jeff Pattison

- Amanda Kaster called into the meeting. Got a lot of work done, moving forward with HJ7 which will come up in Committee tomorrow.

### National Association of Conservation Districts - Steve Hedstrom

- Aubrey Evens from Manhattan, Kansas, will be the new Northern Plains Regional Representative
- Summer Board Meeting will be the third week of July (and the Northern Plains region meeting may be combined with that).
- Steve Wanderaas will potentially be giving a presentaiton. Steve Wanderaas and Steve Hedstrom will strategize on this.

## **Standing Committee Reports**

### Soil and Land Use - Steve Wanderaas (Chair)

- Going back to review resolutions

### Education - Rebecca Boslough

- Going back to review resolutions
- Strategic communications planning discussion is underway

### District Operations - Steve Hertel and Rebecca Boslough

- Going back to review resolutions
- Working on Area Meeting Guide

## Water - Jeff Pattison (Chair)

- Going back to review resolutions

## Standing Committee Chair Meeting

- What about resolutions that don't pass? Could we add this to the library? This will be one the agenda for the Standing Committee Chair Meeting

## **Legislative Report** - Jeff Tiberi

- We sent out a red-alert on HB 374 because we have been hearing that there is some opposition to this. This is an important bill. Jim Simpson is writing postcards to each of the members of the senate finance and claims committee. All districts were sent postcards.
- NRCS has started joining the Friday updates.
- We will try to get an Amendment on HB 374 to remove the two-year sunset.
- We have a draft of a study bill on CD funding. This has been sent to the sponsor and LAHC. It needs to be introduced within the next several weeks.
- The Budget Director Kurt Alme would like a 'Return on Investment' document for conservation districts in regards to our conversation with him about increasing state funding for CDs. There is a whole team of folks working on getting this completed and back to the director as quickly as possible.
- Some bills that have come up deal with CD members on county planning boards. What if there was an ad hoc committee with members who are on county planning boards so they can discuss and bring up issues to MACD
- HB 373 deals with the natural resource account.

## **Public Comment on BLM Purchase of Lands** - Dean Rogge

- BLM is trying to purchase 11k acres in Garfield. This relates to our resolution regarding zero-net-gain of public lands. <https://macdnet.org/resolutions/12-06-zero-net-growth-of-public-lands/>
- Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) money does not go to CDs.
- Steve Wanderaas is concerned about inadvertently making it easier for APR to acquire land. This is a really complicated issue.
- Dean is meeting with the BLM later. He will print out the resolution and bring it to the meeting.
- The comment period is open March 1st to 31st.

## **Operation Outreach**

- There is a document that outlines what Operation Outreach is about.

## **February 26th Meeting with Agency Directors and other State Leadership**

President Jim Simpson and Vice President Dean Rogge travelled to Helena for meetings with agency directors on Friday, February 26th. Along with Executive Director Rebecca Boslough and Governance Affairs Advisor, Jim and Dean met with Budget Director Kurt Alme, DNRC Director Amanda Kaster, FWP Director Hank Warsech, Agriculture Director Mike Foster, and the Governor's Natural Resource Advisor Michael Freeman. MACD also hosted a small reception that evening for the Directors, which Policy Director Glenn Oppel and Lt. Governor Kristin Juras also attended. Jim and Dean had a packed schedule, but it was well worth the drive and their time, as the MACD Leadership were able to build relationships

with agency leadership, have one-on-one conversations with key decision makers for conservation district programs and funding, and more broadly represent conservation district messages and interests.

### **Spring Board Meeting Agenda**

- BLM Purchase of Lands and PILT
- Operation Outreach - What has been done by each Board Member in their Areas.
- Question - Who should run the Area Directors elections? This can be discussed at the Spring Board Meeting
- Strategic Planning Process
- Invite to the Governor

### **Annual timing of Employee Review and any compensation changes**

- Compensation discussions will take place before the November Meeting, and all compensation changes will take place at the start of the year, with the exception of bonuses which will become effective immediately.

### **Area Meetings**

- Q: What happens if identical resolutions come to Area Meetings - what if it passes in one Area and fails in another?
- A: They are two separate entities and will be treated as such.

### **Creation of Development/Fundraising Ad Hoc Committee**

- Assembling an Ad Hoc Committee to fundraise for MACD with the purpose of reducing member dues.
- Add to agenda for next meeting
- Start committee now.

### **Open Mic**

- Gayla Wortman - Convention Planning is on track. There are a lot of good ideas coming out of it. There will be a preliminary report for the Board in the next few weeks.
- Gayla Wortman - Districts are working on Personnel Policies and legislative changes may affect this.
  - Mark has kicked this to the attorney and should have an answer shortly.
- Gayla Wortman- Should Districts develop a social media policy?
  - Linda Brander distributed a Personnel Policy. There are additional pieces of this that are still being added (like social media). Mary Hendrix said this was sent in August. Mary will re-send this.
- Gayla Wortman - Hill County has a new administrator.
- Gayla Wortman - Cascade has moved into a new office.

### **Meeting adjourned at: 9:07AM**

Motion: Bob Peterman

Second: Steve Wanderaas

Discussion: none

VOTE: Motion Adjourned