

# **Custer County Weed and Pest Board**

## **Meeting Minutes – May 10, 2022**

The May 10, 2022 meeting of the Custer County Weed and Pest Board was called to order at 1:04 PM by Rittberger.

In attendance were Klinton Rittberger, June Johnston, Marci O'Connell, Jim Lintz, Bob Smith, and Mike Baldwin.

All motions were approved unanimously unless otherwise noted.

### **Approve Minutes/Agenda:**

- Today's agenda and the meeting minutes from the March 8 and March 22 meetings were approved with a motion from Johnston and a second by O'Connell.

### **Old Business:**

- Previous prairie dog complaint, compliance update:
  - Baldwin updated the Board on the status of prairie dog control on the property off of Lower Spring Creek Road. To date, no control methods have been implemented and the property is now up for sale.
  - Board discussed actions. A motion was made by O'Connell, seconded by Lintz, to follow through with enforcement unless confirmed action is taken by the landowners, motion carried. Baldwin will update the Board after communicating with the landowners.

### **New Business:**

- Seasonal weed sprayer:
  - One person has been hired with a start date of May 9. Baldwin is still looking for a second sprayer. The position has been advertised for nearly two months with minimal response.
- Grant application to SD Dept. of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Resource Conservation and Forestry Division:
  - Our grant application has been awarded for \$5,000. Funds will be used as chemical cost-share funding for private landowners with property adjacent to the Black Hills National Forest.

### **Other Business:**

- Public notice:
  - The public notice of landowner responsibility to control noxious weeds was published in the Custer Chronicle for two weeks during April. This notice satisfies the requirement of SDCL 38-22-23.12.

- Newsletter:
  - The spring newsletter was sent to Custer County property owners during the last week of April. Public response to the newsletter has been positive. Several calls and emails were received in regards to the newsletter.
- Forest Service agreements:
  - All agreements are executed and ready for work to begin. The agreements include 23 acres on the Buffalo Gap National Grassland and 48.5 acres on the Black Hills National Forest. These agreements are intended to address landowner complaints about noxious weeds on Forest Service land that are spreading to adjacent private land.
- Black Hills NF – Forest Plan Revision;
  - Baldwin updated the Board on his involvement with the Forest Plan Revision. He plans on attending an upcoming meeting in Sturgis that will include representatives from all seven counties that encompass the Black Hills.
- No-spray agreements updates:
  - There are currently four agreements in place. One is a new agreement, three are renewals of past agreements. No response has been received from the other landowners with past no-spray agreements. A third and final letter was recently sent to these landowners. If no response is received, existing no-spray signs adjacent to their property will be removed.
- State grant:
  - The SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resource, Weed and Pest Commission notified the Board that we were awarded \$5,100 this year for our grant, an increase from the \$4,000 received last year.
- Upcoming meetings/training:
  - Baldwin reviewed his schedule with the Board for upcoming meetings and training during May and June.
- New prairie dog complaint:
  - Baldwin notified the Board of two new prairie dog complaints that were filed with the State. Copies of those complaints were forwarded to the County. These complaints were from different landowner and were both filed against the same landowner. Baldwin has not had a chance to inspect the property since the complaints were received the previous day.
  - Baldwin will schedule an inspection of the property soon. If upon inspection it is determined that prairie dogs are encroaching onto neighboring properties, the Board asked that Baldwin notify the landowner of the need to apply treatment by November 1. If no action is taken by this date, the Board will consider whether to take enforcement actions.
- Prairie dog cost-share:
  - The Board discussed whether to consider supporting a cost-share grant for prairie dog control. Funding would have to come from the County since the State does not offer a grant for this purpose. Lintz stated that County funds could not support

this effort and the Commissioners would likely need to make future budget cuts due to property tax increases. The County is considering steps to reduce the tax burden on landowners. A request for additional funds would not be supported at this time.

**Adjournment:**

- Motion by Lintz, seconded by O'Connell to set next meeting for July 12 and to adjourn today's meeting at 1:48 PM; motion carried.

**Next meeting:**

- Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at 1:00 PM.