



Custer County Conservation District Meeting Minutes – November 9, 2023

The November 9, 2023 meeting of the Custer County Conservation District was called to order in the Commissioner's Conference Room at the Custer County Courthouse, at 9:10 AM by Dave Thom.

Board members in attendance were Dave Thom, Paul Nettinga, Tamarah Caster, Greg Neugebauer (call-in), and Stuart Adrian. Others in attendance were Micheal Bordelon (SD DANR-RCF), Mike Linde (County Commission), and Mike Baldwin (District Manager).

All motions were approved unanimously unless otherwise noted. For the purpose of continuity, these minutes are not necessarily in chronological order.

Motion to approve today's agenda and the revised meeting minutes from October 12, 2023 was made by Paul, seconded by Tamarah, motion carried.

Partnership/Guest Reports:

- County Commission: Mike Linde –
 - Mentioned the upcoming DSAF symposium and encouraged someone to attend. Dave and Mike are already registered to attend.
- SD DANR RCF: Michael Bordelon –
 - Thinning project on the Wood property is complete. Need to visit property and certify work.

Financial Report:

- Account balances:
 - Main Checking = \$13,522.13,
 - Grant Checking = \$1,633.41,
 - Savings = \$35,813.52 (\$12.55 interest earned in October).
- Bills to pay and/or approve:
 - SDACD Convention food expenses for Mike (\$49.00)
 - Credit card purchases:
 - USPS – mail package to Hughes family (\$6.15)
 - Checks:
 - Fall River Conservation District – trees for Arbor Day (\$200.00)
- Deposits:
 - None
- Investment of funds in Development account:
 - Mike reviewed information collected by Oonagh on options for investing funds currently in the savings account. She was planning on getting additional details and will share them with Mike.

- 2024 budget planning:
 - Scholarships: Mike asked the Board to determine the dollar amount and number of scholarships to be awarded for high school graduates in 2024. Board discussed awarding two scholarships for \$1,000.
 - Mike will work with Oonagh on a budget plan for 2024.
- A motion by Tamarah to approve financial report as presented and approve offering two \$1,000 scholarships in 2024, seconded by Paul, motion carried.

Correspondence:

- SD Grassland Coalition: annual meeting and grassland video:
 - Annual Meeting to be held December 5, Rapid City at the Ramkota – Best Western. Free for members, \$35 for non-members (includes 1-year membership).
 - Recent Amazing Grasslands video featured Riley Kammerer's family.
- New SD Grassland Initiative:
 - Mike reviewed new initiative, recent quarterly meeting, and scheduled partner meetings during the week of January 15.
- SD Soil Health Coalition:
 - Soil Health Conference to be held January 23-24, Rapid City.
- UN World Soil Day, December 5:
 - United Nations World Soil Day (WSD). This year's campaign, "Soil and water: a source of life" highlights the interconnectedness of soil and water and the need for integrated management in addressing global soil and water challenges
- NACD grant – Friends of NACD program:
 - Application deadline November 30, maximum award of \$2,500.
 - Paul would like to get school kids (4-H, FFA) involved in a soil health clinic or similar event. Possibly hold meeting in Hermosa next year. Paul will work on proposal idea for grant and share with Mike.
- US Census Bureau - 2023 Annual Survey of Local Government Finances:
 - Mike will complete survey.

Old Business:

- Discussion on purchasing a no-till drill:
 - Dave, Tamarah, and Paul are working on a project proposal. Still working out details (e.g., maintenance, storage, availability). Linde suggested considering a smaller drill (4'-5' wide) that can be pulled behind an ATV. Smaller drills are useful for food plots and maneuverability around rocks.
- Buffalo Gap National Grassland field tour:
 - Reviewed tour from Monday.

New Business:

- Conservation thinning grants:
 - 2021-23 grant update:
 - Clarke project expected to be completed this month. No other updates.

- 2022-24 grant landowner applications:
 - Wood project complete, discussed in Bordelon's report above. No other updates.
- Forest Health thinning grant:
 - Application received and applicant is anxious to begin work. Waiting on a prescription. Board will consider the application via email once the prescription is complete. No other updates.
- State Conservation Commission meeting, November 14:
 - Commission will discuss changes to the 2024 State Docket at upcoming meeting. Among considerations will be the request to increase cost-share for thinning and slash disposal.
- Newsletter:
 - Mike shared draft newsletter with the Board and asked for comments on the listing of partners on the last page of the newsletter. Board agreed it was Mike's decision whether to expand on partner list without individual contact names or keep contact names.
- Goals/ideas for 2024 – Annual Work Plan:
 - Board discussed changes to the plan. Mike will incorporate changes.
 - Supervisor modules – board members are encouraged to take the training on their own as opposed to the group completing modules during board meetings.

Other Business:

- Miscellaneous office manager updates:
 - Black Hills Invasive Plant Partnership meeting: Mike attended the meeting on November 2.
 - Weed and Pest District meeting, Mike attended the meeting in Rapid City on November 8.
 - Yellow bluestem: Mike reviewed additional information on the yellow bluestem discovered in the county.
- Outreach idea:
 - Dave shared his observation from Minnesota where a conservation district used beer coasters as advertisement for their district. Dave will look more into how that idea/similar ideas could be used by us.

Next meeting: Thursday, December 14 @ 9:00 AM – Commissioner's Conference Room, Custer County Courthouse.

Critique:

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:40 AM.