



Stillwater Conservation District

Po Box 48 \* 334 North 9<sup>th</sup> Street Columbus MT

406-322-5359 ext 101 \* sharon.flemetis@mt.nacdn.net

## February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Meeting Minutes

**Location:** USDA Service Center Conference Room (334 N. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Columbus, MT)

**Meeting called to order by:** **Robert Van Oosten at 6:06 pm.**

**Supervisors Present:** Robert Van Oosten (*Chairman*), Noel Keogh (*Vice Chairman*), Butch Behrent (*Treasurer*), Ben Walker (*Urban Supervisor*), Nathan Jones (*Urban Supervisor*)

**Supervisors Approved Absent** Steve Story (*Secretary*), Darryl Thompson (*Associate Member*)

**Others Present:** Sharon Flemetis (*Admin Director*), Celeste Barnett (*310/Volunteer Coordinator*), Garret Larson, Raymond Lien

### UNAPPROVED MINUTES

**Motion to approve minutes from 01/29/2024 Special Meeting:** Ben

**Seconded:** Nate

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** Approved

**Motion to approve minutes from 01/09/2024 Meeting:** Nate

**Seconded:** Ben

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** Approved

### Public Comment (3 Minute Limit)

Raymond Lien stated he was here to further discuss the Mendenhall Ditch grant funding. Sharon clarified that Drop 1 had been approved and was just waiting on contractor completion.

## REPORTS

**Robert “Bob” Van Oosten** – Read a letter from Montana Salinity. There will be a planning board meeting 2/7/24 to discuss a new subdivision in Molt.

**Butch Behrent** – No Report

**Steve Story** – Approved Absent

**Darryl Thompson** – Approved Absent

**Noel Keogh**– Watershed Meeting 2/14/24

**Ben Walker**– No Report

**Nate Jones** – No Report

**Sharon Flemetis** – Requested travel to Basic Hands-on Floodplain Mapping Workshop 2/27-28 in Helena, no hotel needed.

**Motion to Approve: Butch**      **Second: Nate**      **Discussion: None**      **Vote: Approved**

**Celeste Barnett** – No Report

## FINANCIAL REPORTS

**Motion to approve Financial Report & Pay Warrants presented by Sharon: Noel**

Seconded: **Nate**

Discussion: None

Vote: **Approved**

## GRANT UPDATES

**Forestry Tree Planting Grant**- (Formerly Arbor Day Grants) \$350 to plant trees. Will be planting trees with the Columbus Middle Schoolers on May 7<sup>th</sup> at the Coleman Property.

**Motion to approve: Ben**

**Seconded: Nate**

**Discussion:** Concern over planting the same trees we cut down for fire mitigation. The kids raise money for this project, and we could use the grant money for another project. We would like to plant fruit trees in the community garden also.

**Noel amended the motion to use the grant money to not plant Ponderosa but plant fruit trees in the community garden.**

**Seconded: Nate**

**Vote: Approved**

**FY24 CD ECD Admin Grant**- Approve for the District Administrator to apply for the Admin Grant in the amount of \$31,500.00

**Motion to approve: Nate**

**Seconded:** Butch

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** Approved

**FY24 Education Mini Grant-** Up to \$5,000.00 Will be using this money to host the Rain Barrel Workshop & Promote the Urban Ag Program.

**Motion to approve:** Noel

**Seconded:** Nate

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** Approved

**EWP** – Need Check Signed for Fromberg Mitigation, Used EC monies to lessen costs to the town.

**Should the Biel Project go back out to bid?**

This project has been engineered 3 times due to being denied by FWP. It is different than others, for example the J. Andrew project where the engineer changed some designs from the original project, or the Black Butte project where one line item was left out. In these instances, Sharon was able to allow contractors to adjust their bids but keep the quantity rates the same. This project now requires new materials that were not in the original line items. We could allow previous bidders to amend their bids but that wouldn't be fair to all. On other projects we do get change orders and not send out for re-bid, for example the Orchard project added a road to fix, but we used the same rate for materials in the winning bid and did a change order to add the extra road distance. In this instance the rates could not be required to stay the same because FWP would not approve the originally bid on plan.

**Motion to open to Re-Bid for any interested bidders:** Noel **Seconded:** Butch

**Vote:** Approved

**Mendenhall** – Discussed during Public Comment. We have the signed invoice for reimbursement for phase 1, phase 2 construction is starting soon.

**Forrest Service/ERLA** – July thru December bills have been submitted we are waiting on the reimbursement to pay invoices. Sharon has billed the Forestry for half of the district cell phone bill from July through December and would like the District to reimburse her the other half. The Forestry will pay half the bill for the lifetime of the Forestry contract.

**Motion for the SCD to reimburse the district's cellphone number, currently being billed to Sharon's plan so she can have the number on her personal cellular device. If Sharon ever leaves the District's employment the District will retain the number 406-780-0285.**

**Moved by:** Nate **Seconded:** Noel **Further Discussion:** None **Vote:** Approved

EC – Working on Debris Removal project with the watershed. Currently researching landowners at debris sites. We used the remainder of the Carbon monies to help fund the Town of Fromberg project and we still have \$33,500.00 to use for a Stillwater County project by December 2024

## NEW BUSINESS

### **Elect Chairman**

- **Motion to Elect Robert Van Oosten as Chairman:** Nate
- **Second:** Ben
- **Discussion:** We need a new Board Member from area 2 to be elected by March. We will place a notice in the paper and on Facebook to try to find someone.
- **Vote:** Approved

Need to elect a new Vice Chairman as Bob will fill the role of Chairman.

- **Motion to Elect Noel Keogh as Vice Chairman:** Butch
- **Second:** Nate
- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** Approved
  
- **Motion to add Noel Keogh as second authorized signer on all grants and other contracts:** Nate
- **Seconded:** Butch
- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** Approved

### **Bank Account Changes**

- **Motion to Remove Will Downs from all Bank Accounts at Yellowstone Bank and First Interstate Bank:** Butch
- **Seconded:** Noel
- **Discussion:** Current signers on accounts are – Sharon, Bob, Noel, Butch, Steve, and Will. We need to change signature cards to include – Sharon Flemetis, Robert Van Oosten, Noel Keogh, Butch Behrent, and Steve Story. Everyone will have to re-sign the cards. Sharon will request new signature cards from the bank to bring to the next meeting or board members can go into the bank and sign.
- **Vote:** Approved

### **Address Previous Chairman's Letter of Resignation**

- **Motion to accept:** Butch
- **Seconded:** Noel
- **Discussion:** none
- **Vote:** Approved

**Consider Stillwater County News offer of an article or us writing something for them to publish.**

The board would like to write a guest column about what the CD does and has been doing in the wake of the flood. Celeste will write an article for the board to edit and contact the newspaper about a deadline.

**DNRC Technical Assistance for #23-088 D4 Properties – need letter signed**

- **Motion:** Nate
- **Second:** Noel
- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** Approved

**Public Information Request Form – Revision 1 (See attached)**

- **Motion:** Ben
- **Second:** Nate
- **Discussion:** Attorney suggested this verbiage.
- **Vote:** Approved

**SCD Permit Letter – Revision 1 (See attached)**

- **Motion:** Ben
- **Second:** Nate
- **Discussion:** Revision to clarify our liability and what happens if the land changes ownership once the permit is issued.
- **Vote:** Approved

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**New Logo Design** – Logo 1 is the favorite but change the river to end in a point instead of a dogleg.

- **Motion to use logo one as our logo going forward:** Ben
- **Second:** Nate
- **Discussion:** possibly move county shape to actual location but decided it will block the wording too much. Get costs on adding vinyl to the tree trailer.
- **Vote:** Approved

**New File Cabinets Update-** Still working on deciding.

**Address issues with Carbon Conservation District:** Sharon had let Carbon CD know at the beginning of January that she had found more documents belonging to the Carbon CD and she would let them know when she had finished going through all the filing cabinets. Carbon Cd Admin and Board Chair showed up at the office without notice demanding documents that Sharon has from her time working for the CCD. They have also been holding Sharon's last paycheck until she gives them the documents. Previous SCD Admin Assistant had mixed files together and Sharon was going through them piece by piece to be

sure she could give them everything at once. Sharon asked Carbon Admin to leave several times and so did Garret. Carbon CD Chair wanted to just get this resolved. They agreed that Sharon would provide all the documents for pickup on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>, but CCD Admin was not welcome to come retrieve them. CCD Admin emailed the morning of Feb 6<sup>th</sup> asking for several documents that Sharon does not have and threatening legal action if she did not receive them. Garret confirmed that there was no way Sharon would've had access to previous CCD Admin's computer after her passing as she did not have her government ID or passwords. Sharon and Celeste put together the box, along with an inventory list of the files contained and Sharon plans on having CCD Chair sign that he received them when he comes to pick up the box. Sharon may need to hire an attorney if they do not accept that these are all the documents that she has. We had co-mingled some projects such as tree sales and Conservation Days in the past, but we will not work with Carbon CD at all going forward. We do still have EWP & Forestry projects in Carbon County, but Carbon CD has no jurisdiction over them.

### 310 APPLICATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

APPL. #	Name	Stream	Project	Rec'd	Decision
#23-081	Greg & Vickie Langford	Yellowstone	Riprap	11/20/23 Tabled 1/9	Motion: To Deny due to time limit & new permit pending - Nate Second: Ben Vote: Approved
#22-181	Eaton/Ritter *note name change	Stillwater	extension	1/5/24 Approved 1/9	NEED Decision letter (forgot to sign last meeting)
#23-088	D4 Properties	Rosebud	Bank Stabilization Riprap	12/15/2023 Tabled 1/9	Motion: To table for Inspection - Butch Second: Noel Vote: Approved Tabled for Inspection

### UNRESOLVED COMPLAINTS & VIOLATIONS

#21-024V – Old Mill & Italian Ditch - Past complaint, they are in compliance now, but should they be assessed a fine?

**Motion to close the complaint with no fine:** Nate      **Seconded:** Noel

**Discussion:** none **Vote:** Approved

**John Simmons Agency Ditch-** Will, Bob, and Noel visited with him Noel feels like we have diffused the situation for now.

#23-052V **Judy Krone** – Yellowstone River – Attorney is writing a letter to have her served by the Sheriff.

#23-064V Montana Rail Link – Yellowstone River River – Need Caitlyn to update us.  
#23-070V Montana Rail Link – Yellowstone River River – No Action taken tonight.

## Save The Dates

February 19, 2024 – Presidents Day

February 29, 2024 -Site Inspections 9 am at SCD office

March 5, 2024 – Monthly Board Meeting 6pm

March 11 – 18, 2024 – Sharon on Vacation

March 28, 2024 – Site Inspections

April 2, 2024 – Monthly Board Meeting 6pm

May 2, 2024 - Site Inspections

May 7, 2024 – TREE PLANTING WITH THE MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

May 7, 2024 - Monthly Board Meeting 6pm

May 14, 2024 – CONSERVATION DAY

May 27, 2024 – Memorial Day

May 30, 2024 - Site Inspections

June 4, 2024 - Monthly Board Meeting 6pm

**MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Bob**

**SECONDED: Nate**

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT: 9:08 pm**

**Minutes Approved on:**

Minutes Approved By \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

310 Applications must be received by 12pm seven days prior to the meeting and have been inspected to be reviewed.

Agenda items must be submitted to the CD Office by Noon the Monday before the scheduled meeting.

Agendas are available at the CD Office upon request and at [stillwatercd.org](http://stillwatercd.org) once finalized.

All meetings of the CD are open to the public. Once approved the minutes will be available at [stillwatercd.org](http://stillwatercd.org) and the County Clerk and Records Office.