



Stillwater Conservation District

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

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## March 20<sup>th</sup> 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 4:02 pm.**

**Supervisors Present:** Robert Van Oosten (*Chairman*), Noel Keogh (*Vice Chairman*), Butch Behrent (*Treasurer*), Steve Story (*Secretary*), Ben Walker (*Urban Supervisor*), Nathan Jones (*Urban Supervisor*), Darryl Thompson (*Associate Member*)

**Supervisors Approved Absent**

**Others Present:** Sharon Flemetis (*Administrative Director*), Celeste Barnett (*310/Volunteer Coordinator*), Robyn Jacks from Honor Coin Law, William Downs

### NEW BUSINESS

**Agenda Policy** – Send Draft Agenda to entire Board 2-7 days prior to meeting; Approved by Sharon & Bob by 11 am day before the meeting; posted to the website at noon day before meeting, no additions, items that come up will be for discussion only.

**Admin Grant**– We were awarded \$25,258.00 which brings our operating budget up to \$60,000.00 but does not include the \$4,000.00 for MACD dues that we expected to be awarded. Will make a decision on MACD dues in next meeting.

### OLD BUSINESS

**Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Meeting Minutes** – Discussed changes suggested by DNRC CD Specialist, sample of the March 5<sup>th</sup> minutes in the new format; discussed “Conservation District Meeting Minutes” instructional sheet from DNRC (2019);

**Motion to Strike discussion paragraphs under “Address Previous Chairman’s Letter of Resignation” and “Address issues with Carbon Conservation District” from Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 minutes and edit to exclude names and place facts into bullet points:** **Ben**

**Seconded:** **Nate**

**Discussion:** Will Downs states his name is in the minutes in way that makes it appear he made a statement that he did not make under “John Simmons Agency Ditch” Complaint. The statement “Board is unsure of conflict” under the letter of resignation discussion is also unclear to him and is prepared to make the board aware of the conflict, his side of the

story is not properly represented. Noel felt the John Simmons Situation was resolved but Will does not agree.

**Motion to strike Will's Name from the Agency Ditch Discussion: Noel**

**Discussion:** Will did not attend the Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting but he did attend the John Simmons Meeting.

**Noel withdraws motion**

**Ben amends his motion to edit the entire February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, minutes following the new format and approve at the next meeting.**

**Seconded: Nate**

**Discussion:** None

**Vote: Approved**

**Motion to state under the John Simmons Agency Ditch Complaint "Will, Bob, and Noel visited with him. Noel feels like we have diffused the situation for now": Noel**

**Seconded: Ben**

**Discussion:** None

**Vote: Approved**

**Resignation Letter** – Sharon asked for the letter to be kept on file but not released as an attachment to the public minutes. Will states he has never asked for the letter to be included but his side of the story is not represented in the Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 minutes and he has been asked about it. He did not know it would be discussed at that meeting or he would've attended. He is still unclear on the statement "The Board is unsure of the conflict" as he walked out he stated he would send them an email explanation.

**After consideration and discussion Noel moves to strike the entire discussion paragraph under "Address Previous Chairman's Letter of Resignation" in the February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024 minutes. And would like to record in the March 20<sup>th</sup> minutes a Thank You to both Sharon and Will for their hard work.**

**Seconded: Nate**

**Discussion:** None

**Vote: Approved**

**NRCS TA**– Sharon is compiling the numbers. We have T/A bills from Stillwater projects that need to be paid. We do have the amount in our account from the landowner's admin fees. She will have the details at the next meeting and hopefully an agreement with NRCS but wanted the board to be aware and have a possible backup plan.

**Noel moves that the right to privacy exceeds the right to know and motions to close the meeting at 5:07pm.**

**Seconded: Nate**

**Discussion:** None

**Vote: Approved**

**Guests are asked to leave.**

**Noel moves to reopen the meeting to the public at 5:59pm**

**Seconded: Nate**  
**Discussion: None**  
**Vote: Approved**

**Noel** moves to authorize Bob to sign the letter on behalf of the board and mail it return receipt requested to Honor Coin Law

**Seconded: Nate**  
**Discussion: None**  
**Vote: Approved**

**Steve** moves to increase the 310/Volunteer Coordinator's pay by \$2.00 an hour beginning the current pay period.

**Seconded: Nate**  
**Discussion: None**  
**Vote: Approved**

**Nate** moves to increase the District Administrator's pay by \$5.00 an hour beginning the next pay period for all duties.

**Seconded: Steve**  
**Discussion:** If grant writing duties are included in this increase, will it hinder grant approval? No, it will not.  
**Vote: Approved**

## **SAVE THE DATES**

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

June 19, 2024 – Juneteenth

July 2, 2024 - Monthly Board Meeting 6pm

**MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING: Noel SECONDED: Nate**

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT: 6:11 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 once finalized. All meetings of the CD are open to the public. Once approved the minutes will be available at stillwatercd.org and the County Clerk and Records Office.