



Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

MASWCD MINUTES Regular Meeting USDA Service Center Jefferson City, Missouri June 26, 2013

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Present

Kenny Lovelace, President
Bruce Biermann, Area I
Tom Lambert, Area II
Ryan Britt, Area III
Beverly Dometrorch, Area IV
George Engelbach, Area V
Ben Gorden, Area VI
Dan Greeson, Area VII
Mike Kelley, Area VIII
Henry Heinze, Treasurer
Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

J. R. Flores, NRCS State Conservationist
Karen Brinkman, NRCS Area Conservationist
Colleen Meredith, DNR Soil & Water
Bill Wilson, DNR Soil & Water Program
Kelly Smith, MO Farm Bureau
Sandy Stratman, Employees Assn. Pres.
David Hale, Area VI Alternate
Richard Hoelscher, Area V Alternate

Not Present

Steve Radcliff, Past President

President Kenny Lovelace welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Introductions were made around the room. Quorum established by roll call. No revisions to the agenda.

The minutes from the 3-27-2013 meeting were approved as printed and presented. Motion for approval made by George Engelbach, Tom Lambert seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

A treasurer report was given by Henry Heinze. All funds have now been transferred from David Dix. Henry asked for direction on the \$32,000 from the last CD David had that matured. Bruce Biermann made a motion to put it in a 6-month CD. Beverly Dometrorch seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). Bruce Biermann motioned to approve the treasurer report. Mike Kelley seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

NRCS Report: J.R. Flores stated he had finished his detail and was back in Columbia full time. He stated they had just finished the CSP sign-up with approximately 175,000 acres being approved. The EQIP funds have been 98% obligated. Last year Missouri received \$29 million in EQIP funds, this year will be \$31.4 million hopefully. Missouri has 3 approved watersheds in the National Water Quality Initiative. The Bridge Loan Program through MO Dept of Agriculture will be helpful to landowners that cannot pay for the full cost of a conservation practice when it is completed. This applies to state cost-share practices as well as federal practices such as EQIP and CSP. The next state technical committee meeting will be July 26 in Columbia at the Bradford Research Farm. The Senate passed the Farm Bill but the House voted it down. The sequestration requires a 7.3% cut across the board which could mean for NRCS a cut of 40-50 positions in Missouri. This will be through attrition and cutting back on travel, there is no plan for any office closings at this time but they will have to look at everything. When asked about the National Blueway designation in southern Missouri, J.R. responded that it is being spearheaded out of Arkansas with the Department of the Interior. NRCS has not allocated any funding to this. There is quite a bit of negativity on this. None of the organizations involved with the nomination for the Blueway designation were landowner organizations. There is a meeting today in Arkansas on this and the hope is that the nomination will be withdrawn.

Commission Report: Colleen Meredith reported that this year there was \$17.5 million paid in regular cost-share and \$22 million paid for the drought assistance. The Legislature did approve a \$5 million supplemental and they did use about half of that. Since there was no quorum for the June 19 Commission meeting there will be a Commission conference call this Friday to take care of business. She stated that Kurt Boeckman has been hired as the new ag liaison for DNR and they will be looking at hiring a replacement for him. The district offices are receiving new computers except for the one used for the accounting program. After the accounting program is replaced with a web-based program these computers will be replaced. The current accounting program will not work with Windows 7 which is what comes on the new computers. MOSWIMS is too complex for incorporating the accounting into it. The Governor approved a \$500 increase for state employees and they do intend to pass this on to the district employees as well starting in January. Beverly Dometorch asked about the issue of employee turnover and the replacements offered are part-time positions at only 900 hours so there is no health insurance or retirement. Colleen stated when there is employee turnover they look at the amount of cost-share, the number of staff and also at the surrounding districts. In response to a question about potential changes to the health insurance, Colleen stated that the health insurance has to be bid every year so they don't know if there will be any changes next year. The sales tax revenue is up about 2.6% from last year. They do expect to offer a supplemental cost-share allocation. In the past the level of 70% obligated and pending has been used in order to qualify for the supplemental funds. Beverly relayed a question about no-till cost share practices due to the cover crop emphasis. Colleen stated that the Area Meetings will include a discussion on conservation practices. George Engelbach asked who was involved with developing the Plan for the Future. Colleen explained the meetings and individuals that had been involved with the development of the plan. There was some discussion about the Tech II certification testing that is needed. The new MOU deadline to sign is July 1. So far 96 have been turned in. The new MOU updates 3 major items --transportation, civil rights, and the Privacy Act requirements. When asked about water monitoring and who was in charge of it, Colleen responded that the Our Missouri Waters initiative is DNR's initiative to combine all resources on a watershed basis.

Employee Association Report: Sandy Stratman reported she attended the National Employees meeting in Michigan recently. She said 4 districts from Michigan talked about the programs they have. There are scholarships available through the National Employee's Association and she said that 2 of the recipients this year are from Missouri. The scholarships are \$41,000 each. Sandy stated that they discussed the devastation in Oklahoma and questioned if NRCS has a disaster plan, does DNR has a plan and what about back-ups of all comp0utr information and district owned equipment. The NACD annual meeting for 2014 will be in Anaheim. Sandy said that there will be elections this year at the Area Meetings in all areas. They recently changed their by-laws so that one rep will be elected each year starting next year forward.

MDC Report: Clint Dalbom was not able to attend.

Old Business: President Lovelace discussed the idea of re-scheduling the Education Seminar for this fall. The Legislative session in the fall normally only lasts one week so it would be difficult to schedule the time for a seminar.

A draft agenda for the Area Meetings was reviewed. Each meeting should last about 3 ½ to 4 hours. All arrangements have been made, a few rsvp's have been received already.

Peggy gave an update on the potential of Missouri hosting the 2015 North American Envirothon.

It looks like everything is falling in place. The bid to host will be presented to the North American Envirothon Board in August at their meeting in Montana. The campus being looked at is Missouri State in Springfield, which is where it was held in 2005.

New Business: A request was received from the committee planning the 2013 Missouri Women in Ag meeting for a donation to the cost of the meeting. A motion was made by Tom Lambert to send \$450.00. Beverly Dometrorch seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

The 2013 Training Conference was discussed. It was decided to have the MASWCD board meeting on Monday morning, the Commission meeting on Monday afternoon and the Opening Session Monday evening. Possible banquet speakers/entertainment was discussed. A motion was made by Tom Lambert to have LaDonna Gatlin at her proposed cost of \$3500. Dan Greeson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). Opening session speaker will potentially be Acting Chief of NRCS Jason Weller. The request has been made and he has put it on his calendar. The question is will he still be Acting Chief or will someone be appointed as Chief of NRCS then. Suggested themes and logos were distributed for the Board to consider. A motion was made by Ben Gorden to use the theme "Share the Vision". Beverly Dometrorch seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). The next item discussed was the type and size of conference bags to provide. After discussion a motion was made by Bruce Biermann to have the same type as last year with a medium size width. Mike Kelley seconded. The motion carried unanimously (8-0).

The NACD Legislative Meeting in Washington, DC will be attended by Kenny Lovelace, Beverly Dometrorch, Ben Gorden and Ryan Britt. All travel arrangements have been made.

AREA Reports: Area 1 – Bruce Biermann said the planting in his area has been delayed but most of the crops have now been planted. Some beans had to be re-planted due to the

rainy weather but the corn looks exceptional. His district is concerned about the contract process, looking at speeding it up. Contractor layout, how do you convince landowners to pay for it? His district was one of those selected for the recent NRCS Civil Rights Review. Only a few minor things found. He thanked the Board for their contribution to his family following the fire at his daughter's home.

Area 2 – Tom Lambert said the crops in his area are about the same as Area 1. He said there is a need for some kind of brochure, etc. to give out to landowners that outlines the process.

Area 3 – Ryan said his district had been experiencing some changes. They have a new District Conservationist and have experienced some Board issues with their Chairman experiencing serious medical issues after being shot. Their new DC has re-trained some long-term employees which have put them a little behind but they are moving forward now and getting jobs done more quickly. The weather has been pretty much the same as the other areas.

Area 4 – Beverly Dometorch said some are still re-planting corn and are behind on hay. Her own district has started a poster contest for high school grades. They are also doing a tree planting activity on Arbor Day.

Area 5 – George Engelbach said the hay situation is pretty fair, the beans are coming up now but it is still pretty wet. George also commented on the site of the recent Commission meeting and the tour they took.

Area 6 – Ben Gorden said the hay is about as good as it has ever been, though they are challenged with the weather. Still planting corn and beans. They are seeing dormant seed of muck thistle. His district has received some local paper coverage of their poster contest and backpack program. His district was also one selected for the NRCS Civil Rights Review.

Area 7 – Dan Greeson said everything is looking good, pasture rotation is good.

Area 8 – Mike Kelley said his area had plenty of rain but it didn't do any damage. They have not had any rain in the last 10 days and the creeks have receded exceptionally fast but the ponds are full.

Correspondence: None

Other Business: Beverly presented the resolution she was asked to prepare for submitting to NACD on the subject of the resolutions they handle. The resolutions says the resolutions for NACD should concern soil and water issues. George Engelbach made a motion to approve this resolution and send it on to NACD. Bruce Biermann seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

Kenny Lovelace appointed Beverly Dometorch and Steve Radcliff to look and the by-laws and see if anything needed to be cleaned up or updated.

Dan Greeson stated he felt there needed to be more open communication with the Corps of Engineers. He suggested we look into the possibility of a workshop or meeting at the Training Conference on the coordination with the Corps on waters both organizations work with.

Kenny Lovelace appointed Ben Gorden as resolutions chair again. The request for resolutions will be sent to the districts with the due date back to MASWCD by September 1. The next meeting for the MASWCD Board will be September 11 at 1:00 pm at the USDA Service Center in Jefferson City.

At 4:50 pm a motion was made by Beverly Dometrorch to go into closed session to discuss legal matters. Mike Kelley seconded the motion which passed unanimously with the following roll call: Bruce Biermann – yes, Tom Lambert – yes, Ryan Britt – yes, Beverly Dometrorch – yes, George Engelbach – yes, Ben Gorden – yes, Dan Greeson – yes, Mike Kelley – yes.

A motion was made by Bruce Biermann to come out of closed session at 5:34 pm. Mike Kelley seconded the motion which passed unanimously with the following roll call: Bruce Biermann – yes, Tom Lambert – yes, Ryan Britt – yes, Beverly Dometrorch – yes, George Engelbach – yes, Ben Gorden – yes, Dan Greeson – yes, Mike Kelley – yes.

Motion for adjournment was made by George Engelbach. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

Kenny Lovelace, President