

BUTTE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Board Meeting Minutes for February 22nd, 2023
USDA Service Center, Arco, Idaho

Board Present: Walt Johnson, Randy Purser, Todd Perkes

Staff Present: Stephanie Barnes, Timothy Barnes, Mindy Hawley

Guests Present: Jesse Fullmer – NRCS, Tricia Rogers – NRCS, George Hitz – ISWCC, David Callister – UI Extension

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Randy Purser at 12:45 p.m.

Approve Minutes: A motion was made by Walt Johnson to approve the January minutes as written. A second was made by Todd Perkes. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

Todd Perkes presented the treasurer’s report and checks to be signed. A motion was made by Todd Perkes to sign the checks and accept the treasurer’s reports from December, January, and February. A second was made by Walt Johnson. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

Partner Reports:

Butte SWCD Employees and Board:

Mindy Hawley gave an update on the Envirothon team. She and Timothy Barnes will be volunteering at the state competition in April. The 6th grade poster contest is coming up. The national theme is “May the Forest be with you always.” She attended the IASCD annual conference planning meeting and let the board know we will need a door prize to donate. Mindy also had the final draft of the senior scholarship application form available. She will share the form with the school counselors and it will be posted on our webpage.

Stephanie Barnes gave an update on the RCPP agreements. She also provided an update on all the open grants. Stephanie provided a copy of the budget vs. actuals form for the board to review. Discussion was made on applying for another Idaho DEQ grant this year.

A motion was made by Walt Johnson with a second from Todd Perkes to submit an Idaho DEQ BMP grant application for the McAfee pipeline in the Little Lost River Valley. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

Timothy Barnes has been working on engineering designs for a spring development and doing energy calculations for the IRA funding pool. Discussion was made on the purchase of a survey grade GPS unit and it was tabled until next month. Discussion was made on taking unpaid leave to conduct sage grouse surveying from late March through April. It was agreed that he could

take up to 10 hours of unpaid leave to conduct the monitoring. His attendance to an engineering training in Boise on March 5-7 was discussed.

A motion was made by Walt Johnson to send Timothy to the engineering training in Boise and pay for his hotel and meals. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

Walt Johnson attended the IASCD annual conference planning meeting and will continue to be involved and provide updates to the board.

NRCS: Tricia Rogers introduced herself to the board. Jesse Fullmer provided an update on NRCS activities. They have been having issues with their ranking software and it is causing delays. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Classic CSP funding sign-ups are ongoing. Our state conservationist Curtis Elke took another position and is now the central regional conservationist. The Arco office should have a soil conservationist, range conservationist and administrative assistant positions opening soon. Jesse provided updates on current pipeline projects and the PL-566 project. The big game fence retrofit project applications total over \$2 million.

UI Extension: David Callister gave an update on the hemp meeting. He will be hosting a Zoom meeting at the BCBC on March 13th for people to attend a pesticide certification class. He has been attending farm succession planning courses.

ISWCC: George Hitz provided an update on the WQPA funding. One million dollars has been secured for the project. He provided an overview of the Commission's proposed timeline and changes to the WQPA program. The ISWCC staff have been providing information and presentations to the legislatures during this session. He provided an update on the CREP program.

Old Business:

High School Scholarship: Discussed above.

Annual Plan of Work: A motion was made by Walt Johnson to approve the annual plan of work and submit it to the ISWCC. A second was made by Todd Perkes. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

New Business:

Beverly Beach: Beverly presented a program called "Farms of Eden" to the board and invited them to a Zoom call at 8am Saturday morning to learn more. Todd Perkes will attend.

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Grant: A motion was made by Todd Perkes, with a second from Walt Johnson to submit the application requesting funding for fence retrofit projects. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

TA Grant MOA: A motion was made by Walt Johnson with a second from Todd Perkes to sign the MOA with the National Association of Conservation Districts for another year of technical assistance grant funding. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

IDEA Dues and Donation Request: A motion was made by Todd Perkes to pay the annual dues and to make a \$40 donation. A second was made by Walt Johnson. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

A motion was made by Todd Perkes with a second from Walt Johnson to enter executive session at 2:34 p.m. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

A motion was made by Todd Perkes with a second from Walt Johnson to leave executive session at 2:58p.m. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting will be March 21st at noon in the NRCS office.

A motion was made by Walt Johnson to adjourn at 3:00 p.m., a second was made by Todd Perkes. Voting Aye: Randy Purser, Walt Johnson, and Todd Perkes. Voting Nay: None. **Motion Approved.**