



DAKOTA PRAIRIES RC&D COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Jan. 17, 2017 10 a.m. (CDT)

Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck, ND

RC&D Council attendance was recorded as follows :

<u>RC&D Representative:</u>	<u>Organization Represented:</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>Unable to Attend</u>
Cindy Makedonski	Burleigh County SCD	X	
Doug Schonert	Burleigh County Commission	X	
Rod Beck	Burleigh County WRB	X	
Rhonda Kelsch	Emmons County SCD	X	
Wes Frederick	Grant County SCD		X
Bill Koch	Grant County Commission	X	
Cortney Kartes	Kidder County SCD	X	
Penny Nester	Kidder County Commission	X	
Doug Krebsbach	McLean County Commission		X
Richard Perkerewicz	South McLean SCD		X
Richard White Bear	West McLean SCD	X	
Dawn Martin	Mercer County SCD		X
Gary Murray	Mercer County Commission	X	
Duane Olsen	Morton County SCD		X
Ron Leingang	Morton County Commission	X	
Mike Bauer	Oliver County SCD		X
Blake Wilkens	Oliver County Commission		X
Darci Gahner	Sheridan County SCD	X	
Cynthia Wahl	Sheridan County Commission		X
Sue Isbell	Sioux County Commission		X
Deborah Vollmuth	Cedar SCD		X
Fawn Wasin Zi	Standing Rock Land Management		X
<u>RC&D Staff</u>			
Susan Davis, ED	Dakota Prairies RC&D	X	

Call to order

President Cindy Makedonski called the annual meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Attending were Rod Beck, Darci Gahner, Cortney Kartes, Rhonda Kelsch, Bill Koch, Ron Leingang, Cindy Makedonski, Gary Murray, Penny Nester, Doug Schonert and Richard White Bear. Also attending was Susan Davis, executive director of Dakota Prairies RC&D.

Agenda and minutes

The agenda was reviewed.

Bill Koch moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Rhonda Kelsch and approved.

Minutes of the Oct. 18, 2016, quarterly meeting were reviewed by Penny Nester, secretary.

Rhonda Kelsch moved to approve the Oct. 18, 2016, quarterly meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Richard White Bear and approved.

Financial report

Susan Davis presented the profit and loss statement for 2016. Income totaled \$178,150, which includes \$153,872 in grant contributions; \$8,899 from Dakota West RC&D for services/expenses; \$9,700 in dues; \$4,784 from Burleigh County SCD for administration of the 319 Menoken Farm grant; \$825 from the National Association of RC&D Councils for an annual convention stipend; and \$70 in interest.

Expenses totaled \$187,441, which includes \$120,663 for grant program expenses; \$48,000 for executive director consulting services; \$8,280 for office rent; \$3,663 for operations (including phone/Internet); \$2,773 for council expenses; \$2,258 for training/education; \$1,224 for final copier payments; and \$580 for dues/subscriptions.

The net loss for 2016 was \$9,290.

Also presented was a listing of all checks written and deposits made in 2016. Account balances include \$12,904 in the 319 checking account at Dakota Community Bank (DCB); \$7,564 in the main checking account at DCB; \$44,985 in the special project account at Kirkwood Bank & Trust; and \$13,007 in the two certificates of deposit at Kirkwood Bank & Trust. Accounts receivable total \$1,725.

Rhonda Kelsch moved to approve the financial report. The motion was seconded by Richard White Bear and approved.

Executive director report

Susan Davis reviewed a written report of her activities since the Oct. 18, 2016, meeting. Highlights include: 1) Prepared and submitted the fourth Water Wisdom 319 grant reimbursement request; 2) worked with 319 Granting Committee on new local project requests; 3) planned and prepared for the Dakota Prairies and Dakota West annual meetings, including 2017 budgets; 4) purchased 47 soil health books from Jon Stika for directors of Dakota Prairies and Dakota West; 5) worked with Cindy Makedonski to prepare and submit a 319 Menoken Farm reimbursement request; 6) attended planning meetings and performed work under "Healing the Land," the Burleigh County SCD grant for expanded training and education at Menoken Farm; 7) performed outreach and activities under the Specialty Crop Block Grant for Standing Rock Reservation; 8) participated in Western RC&D Association teleconferences; 9) attended several events, including the NRCS/USDA Rural Development food conference in Bismarck and the annual convention of the North Dakota Association of SCDs; and 10) participated in teleconferences with other RC&D executive directors.

Water Wisdom 319 grant report

Davis reported \$22,367 has been dispersed to date and \$4,871 is pending from the \$145,000 Water Wisdom 319 grant. Of the \$60,000 available for member water quality training and education, only \$7,070 has been reimbursed to members and \$7,700 has been approved for two projects.

Davis distributed copies of Jon Stika's book, "*A Soil Owner's Manual: How to Restore and Maintain Soil Health.*" She purchased 47 of the books directly from Stika, for \$12 each for Dakota Prairies and Dakota West director/members.

The balance in the 319 grant checking account is \$12,904. On Dec. 15, 2016, the North Dakota Department of Agriculture make an electronic payment of \$17,150.85 into this account by mistake. It was for the Specialty Crop Block Grant and should have been deposited into the main account. Davis issued a check for this amount from the 319 account to the main account to rectify this error. President Cindy Makedonski co-signed the check.

Davis also reported she involved the executive committees on deciding the best way to handle Dakota Prairies covering all the upfront costs related to the 319 grant. Opinions varied, with some recommending that Dakota West should be invoiced for half of the expenses of \$15,297 and some recommending Dakota Prairies reimburse itself out of the 319 account. With no clear consensus, Davis and Makedonski issued a check to Dakota Prairies from the 319 account to cover its 319 costs to date of \$15,297.

Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG)

Davis briefly reviewed the final report for the SCBG that ended Sept. 30, 2016. The two main goals were: 1) To provide training and education to K-12 students and others on the Standing Rock Reservation to increase nutritional and gardening knowledge; and 2) to provide more access to fresh, nutritious fruits and vegetables on the Standing Rock Reservation. All 120 100,500eir own specialty crops at the Cannon Ball Elementary School garden. In addition, about 1,000 tribal members gained access to fresh produce at the weekly farmers markets, where they also received nutritional and gardening information. This project resulted in two new gardens at Cannon Ball, where most of the produce was distributed at no cost due to poverty levels.

The new SCBG for \$199,351 began Oct. 1, 2016. It expands the previous work.

Menoken Farm

Cindy Makedonski, district clerk for Burleigh County SCD, reviewed the Menoken Farm Soil Foodweb Project II under the 319 grant program. The three-year \$155,000 grant began July 1, 2015, and ends June 30, 2018. Dakota Prairies RC&D administers the grant. The project is ahead of schedule, with more than \$115,000 of the available grant funds already drawn down.

As of the end of August 2016, a total of 39 tours of Menoken Farm have been held, with more than 900 receiving training and education. Bismarck State College brings tour groups twice a year from its ag classes and some of the high schools brings students to the soil health demonstration site.

Some remaining work to complete this spring and summer includes some additional fencing and fixing several things in the high tunnel greenhouse. Cattle brought in during 2016 for grazing included 19 cows and 12 sheep. A chicken house may be added.

Makedonski also reported on the work being conducted under a special grant from NRCS. The two-year \$500,000 grant will help Burleigh County SCD/Menoken Farm fund 32 new conservation-related educational events under a "Healing the Land" program. In addition, a new Menoken Farm brochure and

Web site are being developed. Through the work of Davis, Dakota Prairies RC&D is providing consulting services to Burleigh County SCD under this NRCS grant.

The 32 new events, which will be held during 2017 and 2018, include 20 soil health workshops; 2 leadership/local work group workshops; 2 cropping systems workshops; 2 grazing systems workshops; 2 cover crops workshops; 2 soil-health based gardening workshops; and 2 holistic management training events.

The first cropping systems workshop was held Jan. 16 at Menoken Farm with 42 in attendance. The speaker was Johann Zietsman, a renowned grazer and livestock breeder from Zimbabwe. The second event is scheduled for March 1 and is a grazing systems workshop. Paul Jasa, Lincoln, Neb., will talk about cropping systems to improve soil health. It will be held at the Career Academy on the campus of Bismarck State College, as more than 100 are expected to attend.

Morton County SCD helped sponsor the Zietsman event and will likely to help sponsor other workshops.

A future grazing systems workshop may feature Allan Savory, formerly of Zimbabwe.

Davis told the group that rather than plan and hold its three workshops (two soil health and one advanced grazing) under the 319 Water Wisdom grant, it may be beneficial to partner with Burleigh County SCD and other sponsors such as Morton County SCD for these events. In place of the statewide advanced grazing workshop under the 319 grant, Dakota Prairies RC&D could collaborate with Burleigh County SCD and other sponsors to bring Savory to North Dakota and hold one large workshop.

During a short discussion on this, there was consensus by the board that rather than plan redundant workshops with less money, it makes sense to collaborate and get more exposure on these events. Davis said she has mentioned this possibility to Greg Sandness at the North Dakota Department of Health/Water Quality and she will now get a formal meeting set up with him.

2017 budget

The board reviewed and discussed the proposed 2017 budget as presented by Davis. As presented, total income is estimated at \$61,989 and total expenses is estimated at \$49,731.

The discussion included the need to increase the executive director consulting fees from \$14,400 to \$27,708 under expenses so the full total of \$48,000 is accounted for. Davis said the NRCS/Burleigh County SCD work will likely bring in \$20,000 rather than \$18,000 so that can income line item can be increased.

With these two changes, estimated income increased to \$63,989 and estimated expenses increased to \$62,731.*

Doug Schonert moved to approve the 2017 calendar budget with these changes. The motion was seconded by Richard White Bear and approved.

**Following the meeting, Davis found two additional changes that needed to be made to the 2017 budget. One was to add the Dakota West RC&D contract income of \$600 per month, for a total of \$7,200. The second was to eliminate the expense of \$1,650 as the Western RC&D Association canceled its annual meeting and the National Association of RC&D Councils will meet in 2018. With these two additional changes, 2017 total income is \$71,189 and total expenses are \$61,081.*

Other business

A brief discussion was held on how many SCDs got new grass planters through funding from the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. This number was estimated at nine. To help with upkeep and maintenance, it was recommended a deposit be charged for members using the planters. Darci Gahner said her SCD requires a \$750 deposit.

Member/director reports

■ *Rod Beck, Burleigh County WRD:* Beck reported there are a number of projects being worked on and the concern is enough funding will be available for all of them. Two of the projects are flood protection/mitigation for Fox Island and the Missouri River Correctional Center area.

■ *Darci Gahner, Sheridan County SCD:* Gahner said she is working on a soil health initiative and has applied for a 319 Water Wisdom grant. The grant awarded is not sufficient to carry out the work and will ask the 319 Granting Committee to reconsider its award.

■ *Cortney Kartes, Kidder County SCD:* Kartes reported she is planning a Women in Agriculture event and Tom Gibson will come to the school.

■ *Ron Leingang, Morton County Commission:* Leingang reported a feedlot tour will be held this fall.

■ *Gary Murray, Mercer County Commission:* Murray said an \$11 million courthouse/law enforcement building expansion will add more than 64 beds.

■ *Penny Nester, Kidder County Commission:* Nester said she completed a winter bale grazing study that included Kidder, Logan, Morton and Burleigh counties. The results showed that the wider apart the bales are placed, the quicker and better the new growth is. Clippings showed higher levels of protein. Soil sampling was also conducted.

■ *Doug Schonert, Burleigh County Commission:* Schonert reported a 485-bed jail expansion is under way.

■ *Richard White Bear, West McLean County SCD:* White Bear said the district conservationist left to work for Stark County SCD. A part-time person was hired from Minnesota. Bill and Jessica Miller won the SCD's conservation award during the recent awards banquet. White Bear is the new president of the board.

Next meeting date and adjournment

The directors set Tuesday, April 11, 2017, as the next quarterly meeting date. The meeting will be held at 10 a.m. at the Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.