

Minutes
Dakota West RC&D
Dickinson Research Extension Center
Dickinson, N.D.
Oct. 14, 2015

Call to order and attendance

Jim Odermann, president of Dakota West RC&D Council, called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. (MDT).

Those attending and the organizational member they represent were:

- Frank Hatzenbuehler, director at large
- Pam Meier, Slope/Hettinger Soil Conservation District
- Chad Njos, Bowman/Slope Soil Conservation District
- Ron Obritsch, Western Soil Conservation District
- Jim Odermann, Southwest Water Authority
- Dr. Kris Ringwall, Dickinson Extension Research Center
- Bonnie Twogood, Central Stark Soil Conservation District
- Don Urlacher, Hettinger County Water Resource District
- Duane Urlacher, Stark County Water Resource District
- Shari Wick, Adams County Soil Conservation District

Also attending was Susan Davis, executive director, and Randy Gaebe, Bowman County Weed Board.

Odermann declared a quorum as 10 of the 15 (13 organizational and two at-large) board members were present. (The bylaws state one-third of the members need to be present for a quorum.)

Introduction and agenda

Self-introductions were made.

The group reviewed the agenda. Odermann recommended agenda item 7 (vote on Bowman County Weed Board becoming a new member) be moved to the top of the agenda, right before the review of the minutes.

Bonnie Twogood moved to approve the agenda with this change. The motion was seconded by Ron Obritsch and approved without dissent.

New membership application

President Odermann noted that the Bowman County Weed Board has notified Dakota West RC&D that it wants to become a member of Dakota West. Don Urlacher said that weed boards are a good fit with the new work plan.

Don Urlacher moved to approve the membership of the Bowman County Weed Board. The motion was seconded by Chad Njos and approved without dissent.

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the July 20, 2015, Dakota West RC&D quarterly meeting were reviewed. Duane Urlacher noted that under the report by Bonnie Twogood, the Diversity, Direction and Dollars Agriculture Forum is in January 2016 (rather than January 2015). President Odermann requested adding the name of Don Urlacher, secretary, to these and any future minutes.

Duane Urlacher moved to approve the July 20, 2015, minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Don Urlacher and approved without dissent.

The minutes from the Oct. 1, 2015, conference call of the executive committees of Dakota West RC&D and Dakota Prairies RC&D were reviewed.

Chad Njos moved to approve the Oct. 1, 2015, minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ron Obritsch and approved without dissent.

Treasurer's report

Treasurer Frank Hatzenbuhler reported the Dakota West checking account balance is \$41,241.62, but does not reflect a check written to Dakota Prairies RC&D for \$1,200. He reviewed the check detail, which includes payments to Consolidated Telcom, Mulligans Catering, Dakota Prairies RC&D and FJH.

For future financials, the board agreed they would like to see a balance sheet for a quarterly period. For example, this financial report would have begun July 1, 2015, and ended Sept. 30, 2015.

Dr. Kris Ringwall moved to accept the treasurer's report with the balance of \$41,241.62 on 10-14-15 and file for audit. The motion was seconded by Shari Wick and approved without dissent.

Sharing Water Wisdom expenses and income

The board reviewed and discussed the draft three-year budget provided by Davis for sharing all expenses and income under the Water Wisdom 319 grant. The \$145,000 grant began July 1, 2015, and ends June 30, 2018. The three-year operating budget shows total income of \$160,000 and total expenses at \$202,938.

Most of the income is from Davis conducting much of the Water Wisdom project work. There is also some estimated income from the two soil health workshops and the one statewide advanced grazing workshop.

Davis reported that the executive committees of Dakota West RC&D and Dakota Prairies RC&D held a teleconference Oct. 1, 2015, and approved moving forward with the two councils sharing expenses and income under the Water Wisdom 319 project. Then, at its Oct. 13, 2015, meeting

the Dakota Prairies RC&D board voted in favor of this and recommended each council contribute a like amount between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to start a separate checking account for the new Water Wisdom 319 project.

The expenses include 40 percent of the operations costs, including the program director salary, office rent, travel and telephone/Internet. There are also costs to plan and hold the three workshops. The \$145,000 grant requires a 40 percent match, for a total of \$96,667.

The board discussed that the expenses of \$42,938 not covered under the Water Wisdom project should be considered part of the match. Davis reported that Greg Sandness at the North Dakota Department of Health has indicated these costs cannot be used at match. Instead, match will need to come from time and expenses incurred from the two councils' boards and members. Davis distributed a draft match form for directors to complete and submit to track mileage and time.

Pam Meier will forward to Davis a universal form that can be used for all meetings and time.

Don Urlacher moved to accept the draft Water Wisdom 319 grant budget. The motion was seconded by Duane Urlacher and approved without dissent.

The board held a discussion on the amount that each council should contribute to begin the separate checking account for the Water Wisdom project.

Duane Urlacher moved for Dakota West RC&D to contribute \$6,500 for the Water Wisdom project with Dakota Prairies RC&D also contributing \$6,500 and to get clarity from Greg Sandness on whether the budget deficit can be used as cash match. The motion was seconded by Randy Gaebe and approved without dissent.

Davis will schedule a meeting between Sandness and the executive committees of both councils. President Odermann clarified that for Dakota West, the executive committee also includes the past president and up to three other representatives.

Further discussion was held on the Water Wisdom budget deficit and that if this could not be counted as cash match it would be tough to sustain the individual budgets of both councils.

Don Urlacher moved to accept the draft Water Wisdom 319 grant budget. The motion was seconded by Duane Urlacher and approved without dissent.

Dr. Kris Ringwall moved to have the executive director bring a document to the January 2016 annual meeting that shows how the Water Wisdom grant will be executed and a Water Wisdom project budget that shows a neutral balance at the end. The motion was seconded by Bonnie Twogood and approved without dissent.

2016 dues

The board discussed whether the yearly dues for Dakota West membership should be raised for 2016 or kept at the current level of \$200. It was noted the dues have not been raised for many

years. With the addition of the Bowman County Weed Board, there are now 14 organizational members that will be invoiced for 2016 dues.

Ron Obritsch moved to raise the dues from \$200 to \$350 for 2016. The motion was seconded by Duane Urlacher and approved without dissent.

Frank Hatzenbuhler and Susan Davis will work on mailing out dues invoices for 2016.

Executive director report

Susan Davis reviewed her written report on activities performed since July 20, 2015. Highlights include the following:

- Submitted 319 grant monthly reimbursement requests to the North Dakota Department of Health/Water Quality. The request in August was for \$10,234.74 and included \$7,803.97 for Bowman County Weed Board and \$2,430.77 for Dakota Prairies RC&D. The request in September was for \$2,036.71 for Dakota Prairies. The request for work performed in September has not yet been submitted

- Made telephone calls to Ad Hoc Granting Committee members on several project requests
- Followed up on member projects
- Researched rainfall simulators
- Created a 319 order form and sent out to all Dakota West and Dakota Prairies members.

Order form included rainfall simulator, water/soil demo kit and Solvita soil test kit

- Created a draft budget for Dakota Prairies and Dakota West sharing all income and expenses under the new Water Wisdom 319 grant

- Participated in the Western RC&D Association monthly conference calls
- Participated in Aug. 27 partnership meeting with NRCS led by Mary Podoll
- Attended Oct. 6 conference call on RC&D sustainability

Pam Meier moved to accept the executive director's report. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kris Ringwall and approved without dissent.

319 grant funding through North Dakota Department of Health

- *Old 319 grant balance:* Davis reviewed the approved projects and project reimbursements to date that show a total of \$294,329 of the \$325,000 2012-2015 grant has been used. Of the remaining balance of \$30,671, the Granting Committee has approved projects totaling \$8,287. Another \$8,143 has been reserved to cover 40 percent of Dakota Prairies RC&D expenses. The grant has been extended to Dec. 31, 2015

- *Orders and final project requests:* Davis presented a spreadsheet of final project orders and projects under the 2012-2015 water quality grant. Order for tabletop rainfall simulators, soil/water demo kits and Solvita soil test kits total \$23,827. Final project requests received total \$2,988 and are from four soil conservation districts—Adams, Bowman/Slope, Burleigh and Sheridan.

Davis said the Ad Hoc Granting Committee will make the final decision, but she recommends just funding the \$999 Solvita soil testing kit for those members that have not yet received any

grant funding under this 2012 grant. This would include Dickinson Research Extension Center, Grant County SCD, Sioux County Commission and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Land Management. This would reduce the order requests almost \$9,000. The board discussed this and agreed to offer this recommendation to the Granting Committee.

Project/activity reports from members

■ *Randy Gaebe*: Gaebe, weed officer for the Bowman County Weed Board, reported the conservation grazing project conducted at the Bowman-Haley Dam land was a success. The purpose was to show noxious weeds such as Canada thistle could be reduced without using chemicals. A solar pump was used to pump water out of the stream so cattle could drink out of a tank instead. The cattle preferred to drink out of the tank so an added benefit was protecting the stream bank. A total of 45 head of cattle were at the site for 45 days. The project did not eliminate all the Canada thistle but showed grazing it can be used as an integrated management practice. A tour was held in June at the site. Gaebe also reported there is an initiative with FSA, NRCS and the North Dakota Game & Fish Department to deal with the extreme weed problem (especially Canada thistle) on CRP land. He said the FSA Technical Committee needs practices and management input on this issue.

■ *Dr. Kris Ringwall*: Ringwall, director of the Dickinson Extension Research Center, showed a large thank you poster from students who participated in this summer's tree planting event in Dickinson. About 220 students participated. Ringwall said he did not send in a 319 reimbursement request for this approved project as expenses were lower than expected.

■ *Ron Obristch and Bonnie Twogood*: Obristch, a board member for Western SCD, and Twogood, district manager for Western SCD and Central Stark SCD, reported these two SCDs may consolidate into one entity. A vote to consolidate will be held in the 2016 primary election. The director election will take place, if the consolidation is approved, in the 2016 general election. Obristch also reported he farms and ranches southwest of Dickinson and near Belfield with his brother.

■ *Shari Wick*: Wick, the district technician for Adams County SCD, has been with this SCD for 17 years. She has been working on the Outdoor Heritage tree planting project. This SCD held a conservation appreciation workshop for the first time. The event featured a rainfall simulator, soil salinity information and a self-guided cover crops tour.

■ *Chad Njos*: Njos, a board member for Bowman-Slope SCD and the vice president for Dakota West RC&D, reported he is going to resign from his SCD board so will need to also step down from the Dakota West RC&D board.

Next meeting and officer elections

The annual meeting was scheduled for Monday, Jan. 11, 2016. It will be held at 9:30 a.m. (MST) at the Dickinson Extension Research Center.

Officer elections will be held during the annual meeting. All offices are for two-year terms.

Adjournment

President Odermann adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m. (MDT).