

Minutes
Dakota West RC&D
Dickinson Research Extension Center
Dickinson, N.D.
July 20, 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 Hatzenbuhler, director at large
- Pam Meier, Slope/Hettinger Soil Conservation District
- Jim Odermann, Southwest Water Authority
- Audrey Schieffer, Golden Valley Soil Conservation District
- Kaylee Stein, Dunn County Soil Conservation Service
- Bonnie Twogood, Central Stark and Western Soil Conservation District

Also attending was Susan Davis, contracted executive director.

Odermann declared a quorum as six 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. One item was added: The trade name registration under the treasurer's report.

Pam Meier moved to approve the agenda with this addition. The motion was seconded by Kaylee Stein and approved without dissent.

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the April 20, 2015, Dakota West RC&D quarterly meeting were reviewed.

Bonnie Twogood moved to approve the April 20, 2015, minutes. The motion was seconded by Audrey Schieffer and approved without dissent.

Treasurer's report

Treasurer Frank Hatzenbuhler reported the Dakota West certificate of deposit was renewed May 12, 2015. The balance is \$5,900.54. It matures Feb. 12, 2016.

■ *Profit and loss:* All 13 organizational members have paid \$200 dues, for a total of \$2,600. Interest income to date for 2015 is \$2.82, resulting in total income of \$2,602.83. Expenses to date in 2015 total \$11,239.15. This includes \$40 for accounting fees; \$205 for dues; \$25 for

license fees; \$305.95 for meeting expenses; \$10,386.35 for contract labor; and \$276.85 for telephone.

■ *Check detail:* Hatzenbuhler reported the checking account balance is \$51,094.68 and reviewed the check detail.

■ *Trade name:* The Dakota West RC&D Area trade name was renewed June 22, 2015, and is valid until 2020.

Pam Meier moved to accept the treasurer's report and file for audit. The motion was seconded by Bonnie Twogood and approved without dissent.

Executive director report

Susan Davis reviewed a two-page report on activities performed since the last meeting.

Highlights include the following:

■ Submitted 319 grant monthly reimbursement requests to the North Dakota Department of Health/Water Quality. The request in May was for \$15,490.59; the request in June was for \$8,024.67; and the request in July was for \$2,036.75. Of these amounts, Dakota Prairies RC&D received \$2,921.38, \$2,024.67 and \$2,036.77

■ Sent out current 319 spending ideas to members of Dakota Prairies and Dakota West

■ Scheduled and attended April 23 Ad Hoc Granting Committee meeting April 23 in Hebron

■ Researched other funding sources, including the Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grant and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program

■ Worked with Greg Sandness to extend current 319 grant to Dec. 31, 2015

■ Conducted 319 project follow-up work, including Bowman County Weed Board, Dickinson Research Extension Center, Morton County SCD and Manitoba/North Dakota Zero Tillage Farmers Association

■ Participated in the Western RC&D Association monthly conference calls

Davis reported that since Dakota Prairies RC&D learned of the reduction in 319 funding under the new grant, she has reduced her monthly hours from 125 to 100. The board held a discussion on the existing contract between Dakota Prairies RC&D and Dakota West RC&D to pay Dakota Prairies for 42 hours per month for executive director services. Odermann recommended that because the monthly hours of Davis have been reduced, the hours billed to Dakota West should be reduced accordingly. He suggested 34 hours per month, or about one-third of the total hours.

Davis reported the Dakota Prairies RC&D board meets July 21 at Bismarck and she will bring this recommendation to that board meeting.

The reimbursement amounts Dakota Prairies RC&D receives were discussed. Davis explained that Dakota Prairies receives 40 percent of expenses, including the consulting fee, rent, telephone/Internet and the copier payment. The project reimbursement amounts are pass-through only. Odermann recommended Dakota West RC&D get 34 percent of the reimbursement for contracted labor. Davis explained that at 100 hours per month, her contracted fee is \$4,000 per month. The 40 percent reimbursement of this amount is \$1,600. The 34 percent reimbursement to Dakota West would be \$544 per month.

Davis will bring this recommendation to the Dakota Prairies RC&D board July 21.

The board discussed what topics need to be addressed under possible new grant funding. Four areas were identified. They are: 1) Soil health; 2) noxious weeds; 3) water quality; and 4) waterway washouts. Soil health would include cover crops. Noxious weeds have become a large problem partly due to the wet season and absentee landowners. They include Canada thistle, wormwood, houndstongue, black henbane and water hemlock.

Kaylee Stein moved to accept the executive director's report. The motion was seconded by Audrey Schieffer and approved without dissent.

319 grant funding through North Dakota Department of Health

■ *Current 319 grant balance:* Davis reviewed the approved projects and project reimbursements to date. Of the remaining balance of \$42,942, a total of \$30,446 has been obligated for Dakota Prairies and project proposals. This leaves a balance of \$12,496 for new project activities. This grant was successfully extended from June 30, 2015, to Dec. 31, 2015.

■ *New 319 grant award:* Davis reviewed the signed grant award of \$145,000 for the new 319 grant that runs from July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2018. The board also reviewed the work plan and budget for this new grant award. Work will begin soon on Objective 2 to conduct organizational work on a comprehensive ag-related water quality training module and toolbox publication. Under the workshops under objective 3, Davis needs to begin work on one of the soil health workshops, which is targeted for 2015 or 2016. The other soil health workshop will be held in 2017 or 2018. One soil health workshop will be held in the Dakota West RC&D counties. Kaylee Stein suggested using the High Plains Cultural Center at Killdeer.

The one statewide grazing workshop is scheduled for the third year of the grant (2017/18). Odermann recommended using local experts for these workshops, including Lee Manske, an NDSU range scientist at the Dickinson Research Extension Center.

Davis pointed out that the budget still allows for grants to partner/members to help fund local water quality projects. A total of \$60,000, or \$20,000 per grant year, is allocated for this activity.

■ *Joint meeting with Dakota Prairies RC&D on sharing expenses/income under new grant:* This meeting was delayed due to tree planting activities. Odermann recommended this meeting be held during September, perhaps Sept. 21 or 22 and have it a joint meeting of the two executive committees. The full boards will also be invited. Davis will report this to the Dakota Prairies board.

Project/activity reports from members

■ *James Odermann:* Odermann, a board member for the Southwest Water Authority and a cattle rancher, reported the student tree planting event held at the water tower hill in Dickinson was a big success. A total of about 220 students participated during the three-day event that was led by the Dickinson Research Extension Center.

■ *Bonnie Twogood*: Twogood, who has worked for Central Stark and Western SCD for 29 years, is working on the achievement program. The awards are announced at the statewide SCD convention in November. She is also working on the January 2015 Diversity, Direction and Dollars Agriculture Forum.

■ *Kaylee Stein*: Stein, who has been a technician with Dunn County SCD for two years, has been conducting soil tests for several large farmers. Dunn SCD has also been doing tree plantings.

■ *Pam Meier*: Meier, who has been the manager at Slope/Hettinger SCD for 15 years, reported the SCD has finished tree planting and is now working on new tree plans through the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF). The OHF tree planting grant helps those who cannot qualify for EQIP. The North Dakota Forest Service also recently received a grant to help fund tree plantings.

■ *Audrey Schieffer*: Schieffer, a rancher and two-year director on the Golden Valley SCD board, reported the board recently approved a high-density grazing demonstration program on three-quarters of land that was donated to the SCD. The solar well system has had some problems. (Davis will check with Sheila Stedman on a possible 319 grant for this project.)

■ *Frank Hatzenbuhler*: Hatzenbuhler, a longtime Dakota West RC&D board member, reported he formerly represented the Dickinson Rural Fire Department before becoming a member at large.

Next meeting

The next quarterly meeting was scheduled for Monday, Oct. 19, 2015. It will be held at 9:30 a.m. (MDT) at the Dickinson Extension Research Center.

Adjournment

President Odermann adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m. (MDT).