

MRCDC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

June 24, 2025 at 7:30am via Zoom

At 7:31am, Chair Karl Christians called the MRCDC Executive Committee meeting to order.

Council members present were **Karl Christians, Lewis & Clark CD; Laura Kiehl, Petroleum CD; Jeff Ryan, Lewis & Clark CD; Dick Iversen, Richland CD; John Chase, High Plains CD; Dana Berwick, Roosevelt CD;** and Greg Jergeson, Blaine CD. Others present were Katie Lund, MRCDC/PCCD Fiscal Manager; Kari Woods, Chouteau CD; Brent Smith, CEMIST Coordinator; Molly Masters, MRCDC Coordinator; and Trish Smith, MRCDC/PCCD. **Executive Committee Members in BOLD.*

APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes were reviewed from the April 22, 2025 MRCDC executive committee meeting. John Chase moved to approve the minutes; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

FINANCIAL REPORT

Katie reported that the budget versus actual total income stands at \$75,000. She has requested the remaining \$37,000 from Steph, which will leave \$20,000 in the grant. They aim to finalize their fiscal year soon. Currently, expenses are at 68% of the budget, with approximately two weeks left in the fiscal year, although spending can continue until September 30. Discussed profit and loss; most receiving reimbursements. The statement of accounts shows a balance of \$9,900 in checking and \$47,000 in savings. Went over unpaid bills. Laura Kiehl moved to approve the financial report and unpaid bills; John Chase seconded. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

MRCDC Coordinator pay and living stipend increase – Molly mentioned a positive review, which includes a committee recommendation of a 4% pay raise and an additional increase of \$300 to the living stipend, bringing it to a total of \$400. However, she is uncertain if the budget can accommodate this increase, as it may require sticking to the original \$100 living stipend. Karl suggested adjusting the budget in the DNRC grant request, and will have to revisit it if it falls through. Dana Berwick moved to give Molly a 4% pay increase and additional \$300 increased living stipend/mth to make a total of \$400 living stipend total, starting July 1, pending approval of the new budget; Dick Iversen seconded. Motion passed.

MT Biocontrol Program donation – Molly discussed the letter and presentation from the MT Biocontrol Program; they are requesting a donation. Laura Kiehl moved to donate \$100 to the MT Biocontrol Program; John Chase seconded. Motion passed.

DNRC Grant Application for MRCDC – Molly went over the application. She is hoping to include letters of support from CDs later on. Dick Iversen moved to approve the DNRC Grant Application for MRCDC; John Chase seconded. Motion passed.

FY 2026 Budget – Molly discussed the FY2026 budget and possible changes/edits, supplies, her computer issues, subscriptions, travel, vehicle maintenance and the River Rendezvous. John Chase moved to approve the proposed FY 2026 Budget; Dick Iversen seconded. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

MRCDC-PCCD MOA: Molly discussed the MOA. It has an end date of June 30 to align with budget. Once she has the next grant number, it can be added to the MOA. Mostly just updated dates. John Chase moved to approve the MRCDC-PCCD MOA as amended; Dick Iversen seconded. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fort Peck Test Flows – Molly stated that Cameron, herself and Dana went to the Froid Research Center Field Day event; they were able to get around to seven additional pump sites while there. Dana gave a tour.

CMR Community Working Group – Molly stated that we need to convene soon and look at having a meeting this fall.

Living on the Bank – No update.

Woody Invasive Species Working Group – Molly stated that the core committee is reviewing the full draft of the MT State Plan right now and will be scheduling another working group meeting in late August or early September, so there is time to finish their grant out that is due Sept 30.

MRWA (Milk River Watershed Alliance) – Greg stated that the water might be flowing now, but the irrigators will be shut off August 15. They are stopping the flow of the water so they can begin other work; want to be ready to irrigate next spring. Running ahead of schedule. Greg complimented everyone that is working on the project. Deferred maintenance has built up since land owners couldn't afford the match. Holding a meeting right after this meeting.

River Rendezvous – Molly discussed the last planning meeting and registration flyer. Eventbrite will be open July 1. Council members will have a code so they don't have to pay, but the Council still needs to register for grant needs. The draft agenda will be available on the website. Trish, Cora and Shane are working on finding door prizes. Trish will put a notice in the next July/Aug Winnett Times newsletter.

PARTNER REPORTS:

MACD – Karl stated that the NACD Northern Plains Regional meeting in South Dakota right now; he will be listening in on the meetings.

DNRC – No report.

NRCS – Dick stated that they might have a new acting State Conservationist, Gayle Barry. Once she is set up in Bozeman, might be good for the Council to go meet her.

CEMIST – Brent reported that the Watercraft Inspection Stations (WIS) have inspected over 28,000 watercraft to date. There have been 18 mussel-fouled boats and over 175 with aquatic weeds. Judith Basin CD, along with CEMIST, MISC, and MDA is hosting an EHS workshop in Raynesford, MT on July 16th from 10-330. There are 4 credits available for private applicators and a free lunch. CEMIST has begun the review and updates, if needed, of our strategic and work plans.

REACH REPORTS

Lower Reach – Dick discussed oil and fracking; steady 10-11K CFS on the Missouri for irrigating.

Reservoir Reach – Laura reported that Petrolia's first irrigating is complete and it is refilling from rain. Thought there was a delay in FEMA funding, but got word that by Monday, PID needs to send letter of commitment for the next 50 years. It is congressionally directed funding. This is for getting the washout

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repaired and headgates replaced. The moderation project to stop sluffing continues as well. Laura and Trish went on a 310 inspection last week. There were a lot of different species of fish in the creek. Trish discussed their CD's June events, the new Water Conservation Program Coordinator who was hired and will be starting in August, and the Petrolia feature article in the July/Aug Winnett Times.

Middle Reach – Kari Woods started her CD Admin position a few weeks ago with Choteau CD, so no updates at this time but she will have updates in the future.

Upper Reach – Karl stated that they have started haying. John discussed the Muddy Creek meeting tomorrow and will have an update later on that. He also mentioned their Pollinator Workshop going on today. Karl stated that Dallas will be willing to serve as the MRCDC Vice Chair.

Individual CD Reports (voluntary/as needed) – None.

COORDINATOR UPDATE – Molly stated that EQC and WPIC will be July 29-30; both meetings in Helena and Zoom. Discussed the stakeholder process for MRRIC; it is in the works for Molly to be the primary and Dick the alternate, with the application due July 31 to re-up their involvement in MRRIC.

June

24: MRCDC Exec. Committee (7:30am)

24: MRWA meeting (9:30am)
25: PCCD meeting
25: CEMIST meeting
TBD: CMR CWG planning committee

July

1: RR Registration opens
4: Happy 4th of July! Office closed
10: Molly out
18: Molly out pm
29: MRCDC Exec. Committee (7:30am)
29: MRWA meeting (9:30am)
30: PCCD meeting
30: CEMIST meeting
TBD: RR Planning Meeting

Other

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:07am.

Approved on: 7/29/2025

Submitted by:

Trish Smith, MRCDC Secretary

Karl Christians, Chairman