

## MRCDC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes April 24, 2023 at 8:30am via Zoom

At 8:32am, Laura Kiehl called the MRCDC Executive Committee meeting to order.

Council members present were Laura Kiehl, Petroleum County CD; Karl Christians, Lewis & Clark CD; Steve Wanderaas, McCone County CD; Jeff Ryan, Lewis & Clark CD; Dick Iversen, Richland County CD; Greg Jergeson, Blaine County CD; Dana Berwick, Roosevelt CD; Lorri Schafer, Fergus CD; and Dean Rogge, Garfield County CD. Others present were Veronica Grigaltchik, DNRC CDB Specialist; Katie Lund, MRCDC Fiscal Manager; Molly Masters, MRCDC Coordinator; Brent Smith, CEMIST Manager and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator.

### Approve Minutes

Minutes were reviewed from March 28, 2023. Karl Christians moved to approve the March minutes; Dick Iversen seconded. Motion passed.

### Public Comment

Molly discussed the BLM Greater-Sage Grouse Planning email update she received. The MRCDC had submitted a comment letter prior. The email just stated they are still working on it and hopefully the draft EIS will be out later this fall.

### Financial Report

Katie stated that the budget committee met and tweaked/moved a few things around on the budget. Fuel is now under the travel category. We are about 3 quarters into the year and right on track with budget; 78.6% of the budget used. Just using the 656 Admin. Grant right now. NACD grant will also be used for some of Molly's time and travel. The SSA grant is done. Moved the vehicle to Statement of Accounts. There was discussion about the depreciation of the vehicle. Karl Christians moved to approve the April financial report and pay unpaid bills; Lorri seconded. Motion passed.

### Old Business

*MRCDC vehicle – fix hail damage* – Nothing to report.

*Approve DNRC 2024-2025 Work Plan and Proposed Budget* - Laura asked if we should replace Bruce Anderson under the second task in the workplan and Greg said he is an alternate, so can leave his name. Dean moved to approve the DNRC 2024-2025 Work Plan; Dick Iversen seconded. Motion passed.

There was discussion on the proposed budget. Laura stated that we removed line 310 that used to be Vehicle Expenses. It is now in 373 and 376 under travel; split those out to show fuel cost and repairs/maintenance separately. Capital improvement is for vehicle depreciation account. Advertising

& Marketing was increased. Event/Registration is about the same. Administration budget is always 10% of the entire budget. This is a 2-year grant so will essentially double but only focusing on the current fiscal year and can evaluate later. Laura asked if we can divide Professional Fees to show a breakdown between MRCDC secretary, MRCDC Fiscal manager and Other (BSWS Corp member/more admin time, etc.). Approximately 70% is for secretary/other and 30% is for finance. Updated *Program and Project Support* that was previously named *Program Match Money* so if we paid a CD for their time/support it would come out of that line item (also for Living on the Bank/CEMIST/Ranching for Rivers, etc.). Education (workshops) was increased slightly. Increased utilities to include a phone stipend potentially. Payroll increased slightly and added workmans compensation into *Payroll Expense*. Insurance has significantly increased, around double since being dropped by MACO. Molly stated working with NRCS to have River Rendezvous costs covered by them. Purchasing a new laptop that is covered under *Council Equipment*. The *Termination Account* was discussed and putting more into that account by June 30<sup>th</sup> when we know how much we can do with the remainder of the budget. Katie stated that the \$14K should be enough in the *Termination Account*. Laura and Steve didn't think we need to change the amount and can decide later if we have excess funds to put more into that account. Lorri stated should remove the 141 *Termination Account* in the grant request. Steve said to leave the \$2000 in the *Termination Account* and if the DNRC doesn't like it they can let us know.

Dean Rogge moved to keep the *Termination Account* active with \$2000 in it; Dick Iversen seconded. Motion passed. Dick Iversen moved to approve the 656 proposed budget; Lorri Schafer seconded. Motion passed.

#### New Business

*BLM proposed rule changes, due 6/20/23* – Molly stated that we should make comments on the BLM proposed rule changes since there is a lot of grey area. Molly, Dean & Steve suggested getting a committee together and bring a comment letter to the May Council meeting for MRCDC approval. Molly will reach out to the entire Council by email to get a committee together.

*Missouri River system communications* - Molly stated that MRRIC's focus is endangered species in the Missouri River system. Dick stated that there used to be some form of a Missouri Commission. Possibly should entertain some sort of group or commission for all to work together in regarding the entire Missouri River system. Steve stated that organizing that group would be quite an effort. Laura suggested to do something smaller to at least protect our Montana section. Dick suggested bouncing the idea off at the Governors office and Steve mentioned to bring it up at the Core Partners Meeting in June; great place to start the conversation to figure out how to proceed. Molly hopes to go to a Missouri River Natural Resource Committee Conference June 14-16 in Helena; might be another avenue to introduce the idea.

*RR/CMR CWG tour congressional delegate representative fee waiver* – Dean Rogge moved to waive RR/CMR CWG registration fees to congressional representatives; Jeff Ryan seconded. Motion passed.

*Helena-Lewis and Clark Forest burn proposal, due 5/8/23* - Lorri stated that we could use a template from another letter from Cascade County and customize it. The council decided that due to the short turn around, the MRCDC will not work on a comment letter for this proposal.

*Executive Committee, member at large election* - Laura stated that since Jeff Ryan was elected as the Upper Reach representative, the member at large election is open. Dick Iversen nominated Dana Berwick. There were no other nominations. Dana Berwick was elected by acclamation.

### Committee Reports

*Fort Peck Test Flows* – Dana stated that they had their annual operating plan meeting in Poplar with around 30-40 in attendance. They said there will not be a test flow this year. The Tribe was upset since the Corp would not listen to them. The Tribe and irrigators had a lot of good comments. There was a comment that they do not manage reservoirs for management of species endangerment.

*CMR Community Working Group* – Molly stated that the next meeting is May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Fort Peck interpretive Center. No agenda yet but hoping to have Farm Bill discussion. Hopefully applying for the Public Land Council grant that is due June 9<sup>th</sup>. Will have an application ready by the May meeting for approval.

*Living on the Bank* – No update.

*Woody Invasive Species Task Force* – Molly stated that the YRCDC is having a meeting May 11<sup>th</sup> in Billings. They received a \$65K planning grant through the Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant for hiring a Coordinator.

*River Rendezvous* – Molly stated that she has received two registrations so far. Will get agendas and reminders sent out mid-May. The Planning Committee is meeting May 8<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. Waiting for NRCS funding. Motels have been reserved in Jordan; email Molly to get on that list. Trish stated we only have two donations so far. Laura asked the Council members if they have any ideas for door prize or door prizes to let Molly or Trish know.

*Work Plan/Budget Committee* – Took care of in Old Business.

### Partner Reports

*MACD* – Dean stated that the 321 bill was tabled on Friday. If it doesn't come back to life will have to look at HB669. It is important for CDs to send out a letter to legislators/senators (no specific bill) to let them know that CDs absolutely require additional funding. Should know more about what is going on later today. He is pretty certain going to get funding from one source or another.

*DNRC* – Veronica Grigaltchik stated that the DNRC is moving forward with a Funding Forum May 23<sup>rd</sup> in Glendive at 5pm; one of three throughout the state, there might be one in Lewistown the end of June. The Administration grant is open and the deadline for applications has been extended to the end of May. Hailey Graf is the new 310 stream permit coordinator; she is having 310 zoom trainings every Monday and Wednesday.

*NRCS* – Molly reported Tom Watson has been assigned to a detail at the regional office for awhile and Kyle Tackett will be the Acting State Conservationist during that time.

*MRWA* – Greg stated that the Saint Mary Milk River Working Group has a Coordinator and will be working with the MRWA. They had their first meeting in a long time and ready to work on implantation of the \$100 million that Senator Tester achieved for the project and looking at getting additional resources for the Milk River. The Saint Mary Milk River Working Group unanimously adopted support for the Fort Belnap Indian Water Compact. There is \$250 million in that bill that Senator Gaines has agreed to Co-sponsor.

*CEMIST* – Brent Smith stated they had their CEMIST quarterly meeting last week. MISC will be coordinating a Feral Pig Highline Tour this coming fall. All of the Eastern MT watercraft inspection stations are open. There have been 4 fouled boats with Mussels on them. These were out of state boats and FWP had received a heads up about these boats coming. The EHS meeting will be tomorrow in Stanford MT from 1-3. This meeting is a tester for the planning of a Webinar based EHS meeting later this year. Laura Nowlin is stepping down as the MWC coordinator and Allison Martin is her replacement. Laura is also stepping down as the CEMIST chair and Steve Wanderaas and Steve Tyrrel have agreed to step in as Co-chairs starting May 1st. April 27th there is a BLM coordinated Invasive Annual Grasses meeting in Belle Fourche SD; Molly has the flier.

#### Reach Reports

*Lower Reach* – Dick Iversen stated that the ice is off the river and they have talked about the Annual Operating Plan and spring rise.

*Reservoir Reach* – Dean mentioned that there was a mussel detection in Wibaux that they caught. Been working on fine tuning their CMR pilot project presentation for June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Technical Advisory Committee is meeting once a month. Speakers will be Veronica Grigaltchik; Kaitlin; Karl Christians & Dean Rogge for the CMR presentation.

*Middle Reach* – No Report.

*Upper Reach* – Jeff Ryan stated they have made good progress on the two willow projects they've been working on. One is assisting FWP at Black Sandy State Park – they have had a lot of erosion coming in from wake boats. Willow will be placed this week. Able to muster a lot of local media response. There was a willow cutting event at Spring Meadow State Park March 31<sup>st</sup> with 30-40 volunteers showing up. Will start excavating on the Lake Helena project this Friday, and hope to have completed in the next couple weeks.

*Individual CD Reports (voluntary/as needed)* – Trish mentioned that the PCCD is having a Kid's Ag. Conservation Educational Day in Winnett July 19<sup>th</sup> that will include the Rollings Rivers trailer, CEMIST, FWP, BLM, NRCS, etc.

#### Coordinator Update

No report other than the schedule below.

#### Upcoming Events/Important Dates

##### **April**

25-26: MRRIC, Fort Peck Tribe Tour  
27: Molly out

##### **May**

1: Molly out  
8: RR/CMR CWG Planning Meeting  
11: YRCDC Meeting, Billings  
16-18: MRRIC AM Workshops

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- 18: CMR CWG, Glasgow
- 23: MRCDC Executive Committee Meeting**
- 24: CEMIST Meeting
- 25: PCCD Board Meeting

#### **June**

- 5: CORE Partners, Helena
- 6-8: MACD Spring Board
- 9: River Rendezvous/CMR CWG Tours registration Due
- 12-14: Missouri River Natural Resource Conference, Helena
- 21: River Rendezvous, Jordan
- 21: MRCDC Quarterly Meeting, Jordan**
- 22: CMR CWG, Jordan
- 28: CEMIST Meeting
- 29: PCCD Board Meeting

#### Other

With no further business, Dean Rogge moved to adjourn the meeting; Dick Iversen seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:54am.

Approved on: 5/23/2023

Submitted by:

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Trish Smith, MRCDC Secretary

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Laura Kiehl, Chairman