

MRCDC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2023 at 1:00pm via Zoom

At 1:04pm, Chair Karl Christians called the MRCDC Executive Committee meeting to order.

Council members present were Karl Christians, Lewis & Clark CD; Greg Jergeson, Blaine County CD; John Chase, Cascade County CD; Dana Berwick, Roosevelt CD; Lorri Schafer, Fergus CD; Dean Rogge, Garfield CD; and Laura Kiehl, Petroleum County CD. Others present were Robbie Savelkoul, Roosevelt CD Administrator; Molly Masters, MRCDC Coordinator; Brent Smith, CEMIST Manager; Katie Lund, PCCD/MRCDC Fiscal Manager; and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator/MRCDC Secretary.

Approve Minutes

Minutes were reviewed from August 29, 2023. John Chase moved to approve the August minutes as corrected; Dean Rogge seconded. Motion passed.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Financial Report

Katie stated that she visited with Stephanie Criswell (DNRC) and MRCDC will have an additional \$21,720 from carry over from last year's grant. This is not showing in the current budget until it is approved by the DNRC. Will be putting all that money into *travel*. Budget vs actual – 1st advance off the new 707 grant was \$35K and should be getting that soon. Most of the expenses have been Molly's wage for the 1st quarter. Stephanie said to note Trish & Katie's time (\$11,040) as "Sponsorship fee" under the professional fees category. Currently funds include the new 707 DNRC grant, the new SSA and a NACD TA grant. The Savings has around \$47K; \$16,400 in the termination account and approximately \$24K in the *Vehicle Depreciation* account. The checking has around \$20K. Katie went over the unpaid bills. Molly asked about Dean's MRCDC/CMR CWG travel reimbursement and Katie will get a check cut at the PCCD meeting tomorrow. The hotel receipt will be paid next month. Dean Rogge moved to approve the October and September financial reports; John Chase seconded. Motion passed. John Chase moved to pay outstanding bills; Dean Rogge seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business

PCCD/MRCDC MOU – Karl just needs to sign and Molly will sign his signature electronically.

Coordinator Telework Agreement – John Chase moved to approve the Coordinator Telework Agreement; Lorri Schafer seconded. Motion passed.

New Business

USFWS proposed Missouri Headwaters Conservation Area – There was extensive discussion and good input regarding this comment letter. Consensus was that conservation easements are a good thing but some have turned dormant and have had no weed control so the MRCDC need to have a comment to address that conservation easements need to include verbiage about weed management so it can be good habitat for wildlife. John said he has a conservation easement on his forest land and there is a yearly inspection. Lorrie stated that it is too vague and need to be very specific on the scope of conservation easements to ensure the health of the

landscape. Dean agreed it needs to be kept in production, a continuous working land, for landscape health. Lorri stated that easements are constantly changing, aside from not being able to subdivide. Karl stated that Molly can update the letter based on comments and send out the letter to the council for additional comments and the letter can be approved at the MRCDC Quarterly Meeting at MACD Convention in November.

Coordinator Phone Stipend – John Chase moved to pay ½ of Molly’s current phone bill (\$40); Dana Berwick seconded. Motion passed.

Pickup fix – Molly discussed issues with her pickup. The check engine light has been on so she took it to the dealership mechanic. They found rodent damage and the O² sensor and also the wires. Quote from the dealership mechanic for replacing the O² sensor and wires was just under \$1000. Molly will check with a local mechanic to get another quote. Dana Berwick moved that Molly get a 2nd quote and Karl Christians can approve it via email; John Chase seconded. Motion passed.

Committee Reports

Fort Peck Test Flows – Dana stated the river is as low as he has ever seen it. October 31st is the Fish Working Group Fall Science Meeting with MRRIC. December 5-7th is the MRRIC in Omaha. Joe Bonneau postponed his October trip for a tour. The flow of the river is at 3500cfs currently and has usually been closer to 6000cfs.

CMR Community Working Group – Molly said the next CMR CWG meeting will be in Circle November 9th. The focus is going to be on BLM and will have presentations on the current funding bill and inflation reduction act. Christina Stewart will be discussing Low Tech Process Based Restoration on Pumpkin Creek. Hoping to have someone discuss their outcome based grazing pilot projects.

Living on the Bank – John Chase stated there hasn’t been any input so he has no updates. Karl stated that Chris Evans hasn’t had a chance to look at the website analytics yet. Dana was impressed with the website; needs some updating but it is a good tool for those that will take the time to use it. Molly stated that Dona Stafford created rack cards for the website and she ordered some additional rack cards and will have them at convention and will be sending to CDs.

Woody Invasive Species Working Group – Molly stated they are planning a Science Advisory Panel for November 20-21 in Billings.

Partner Reports

MACD – Dean stated that the main thing they are working on right now is getting ready for the MACD Convention in November. They have a lot of different topics and will be discussing MACD dues and hoping all the CDs will be in support. Dean briefly discussed the dues proposal, the funding that is coming down, and stated that Rebecca Boslough deserves a big pat on the back -since she went above and beyond during the legislative sessions fighting for CD funding.

DNRC – No report but Molly stated Veronica’s monthly update report is in the packet.

NRCS – No report.

MRWA – No report.

CEMIST – Brent Smith stated that they had their quarterly meeting earlier in the day, as well as our Executive Council meeting discussing our updated budget and work plan. They are attending the MACD Convention and gearing up for the show season.

Reach Reports

Lower Reach – Dana stated that they just had a meeting with tribal partners, where the intake is at for the Dry Prairie Rural Water System. Slush jams up screen at the intake, causing issues with the low flows coming out of Fort Peck.

Reservoir Reach – Laura thanked everyone who attended the Area 1 meeting and to all who put it together, and mentioned folks have been busy with all their fall work and have been renting out the No-Till Drill from

the CD. Ramping up on where to go with our Area 1 Resolution submitted by the PCCD.

Middle Reach – No Report.

Upper Reach – Karl stated that they are starting to think about this floodplain regulation issue that is going on. People are required to do a full-blown engineering analysis on even grading the parking lot on the edge of the floodplain. As soon as they get time in the next couple months, going to approach Kristen Juras (hoping still continuing with the Red Tape Relief Initiative) and see if can get some help out of the Governor shop to maybe mitigate this a bit. Have had a few 310s and Administrator has been busy with Employee/Admin training.

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

Coordinator Update

Molly stated that we are not having a virtual option for the quarterly meeting that is November 14th 2-5 in Billings during Convention. She will be making up packets for CDs that include the MRCDC annual report and Living on the Bank rack cards. The December MRCDC Executive Committee meeting has been bumped up to December 19th due to the holidays.

Upcoming Events/Important Dates

October

- 24: CEMIST Quarterly meeting, Lewistown
- 24: MRCDC Executive Committee meeting**
- 25: PCCD meeting
- 26: MRRIC Agenda Work Group
- 31: MRRIC Upper Basin Fish Work Group

November

- 1: Molly out pm
- 6: Molly out am
- 6: MRRIC HC Work Group
- 9: CMR Community Working Group, Circle**
- 10: Holiday, Closed
- 14: MT Comprehensive Water Review
- 14: MRCDC Quarterly in-person meeting, Billings**
- 15-16: MACD Convention, Billings
- 23: Thanksgiving, Closed
- 29: CEMIST meeting
- 29: PCCD meeting

December

- 5-7: MRRIC Plenary Meeting
- 14: MT Comprehensive Water Review
- 19: MRCDC Executive Committee meeting**
- 25: Christmas, Closed
- 27: CEMIST meeting
- 27: PCCD meeting

Other

With no further business, Dana Berwick moved to adjourn the meeting; John Chase seconded. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 2:47pm.

Approved on: December 19, 2023

Submitted by:



Trish Smith, MRCDC Secretary



Karl Christians, Chairman