

MRCDC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2024 at 7:30am via Zoom

At 7:34am, Chair Karl Christians called the MRCDC Executive Committee meeting to order.

Council members present were **Karl Christians, Lewis & Clark CD**; **John Chase, Cascade County CD**; **Dick Iversen, Richland CD**; **Lorri Schafer, Fergus CD**; and **Dana Berwick, Roosevelt CD**. Others present were Robbie Savelkoul, Roosevelt CD; Dona Stafford, Fergus CD; Molly Masters, MRCDC Coordinator; Brent Smith, CEMIST Manager; Katie Lund, PCCD/MRCDC Fiscal Manager; and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator/MRCDC Secretary. **Executive Committee Members in BOLD.*

APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes were reviewed from the April 23, 2024 meeting. John Chase moved to approve the minutes as presented; Dana Berwick seconded. Motion passed. Minutes were reviewed from the June 12, 2024 meeting. Dana Berwick moved to approve the minutes as presented; John Chase seconded. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

FINANCIAL REPORT

Katie discussed the MRCDC budget verses actual; this week will be the end of fiscal year. Currently we are sitting at 82% of income and 75% of the expenses spent out. Quarter 4 reimbursements will be coming of the \$109K. There is \$34K left of projected budget; part of that is the \$21K travel moved over (\$27K total), since didn't spend any of that. This is a 2-year grant, doesn't expire until next year, so it can still be used. Karl suggested using some of it for hiring a test flow employee this summer. Molly suggested paying Bill Milton for his travel stipend of \$1,250, and a CMR CWG/River Rendezvous canopy for events. She could pick up in Billings on her way through this week. Katie discussed the Profit/Loss by class and the Statement of Accounts; the checking has around \$31K. Discussed advance/reimbursement request options; will discuss with DNRC. John Chase moved to approve the MRCDC financial report and approve the MRCDC unpaid bills; Dick Iversen seconded. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Coordinator salary increase recommendation – Karl stated it was recommended to give Molly a 4% pay raise after Molly's annual performance review during the May Quarterly meeting. Dana Berwick moved to give Molly a 4% pay raise start of the beginning of the fiscal year 2025, July 1; John Chase seconded. Motion passed. Katie stated that the CD will be submitting the CDA grant this week and it was discussed at the CD Budget Meeting to offer a health stipend to all CD employees with the CD budget initially. If get our full ask, will be \$400/mth stipend to Molly. Will need to start looking into working into partner budgets for the future. Karl stated that we can factor that in to the MRCDC grant application. Katie stated that MRCDC can try to work it into their current budget now, or rely on what the CD receives later this year.

MACD Sponsor/Registration for Convention- Molly stated that Madi with MACD asked if MRCDC wanted sponsor and get a MRCDC table again; cost around \$200. Dick Iversen moved to sponsor the MACD event and get a table; Dana Berwick seconded. Motion passed.

PCCD letter – Discussed the letter from Petroleum County CD informing partners that the PCCD Board increased the CD Administrator, Trish Smith's wage. Katie stated that this pay increase still keeps under the admin fee currently paid out and won't affect Trish's hours with MRCDC.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fort Peck Test Flows – Dick stated that Don Steinbeiser went to DC in June, met with Senator Steve Daines and he feels they showed a lot of interest and support; step in the right direction. Need to keep calling him every other week to push the issue. Dana stated doesn't know anyone that isn't able to irrigate right now. Complaints about the trash. The last tracking report at their weekly meeting stated they brought 3 reproductive fish in. Dick stated they decided to go with the same test flow schedule (Mid-July) but going with 20K CFU instead of the original 22.5K CFU. Karl stated that the irrigators should give Molly photos with a one-page summary of the challenges and what we are up against, and send to Tester/Daines. Discussed putting Dana's video on the MRCDC website. Karl asked if any progress on getting funding for gathering data afterwards. Robbie stated that Roosevelt CD adding 10K to their CDA grant that can go towards that if received. Molly mentioned that we should get a committee together to get a job description done so that is ready to post when funding is secured. Dick asked if it was possible to have a point of contact in Roosevelt CD. Robbie said she could possible be that person, or someone with the Roosevelt County NRCS.

CMR Community Working Group – Molly stated that we are having the CMR CWG meeting this Thursday in Winnett at the PCCC, with the range tour at the King Ranch in the afternoon. Twenty-four have RSVP'd; includes five presenters. PCCD sponsored some of the food cost (\$200); \$5/participant to help cover the rest. Also have a small grant through Garfield CD that paid for some expenses, including monitoring kits.

Living on the Bank – Molly stated there have been a lot of hits on the website; due to the Facebook ad.

Woody Invasive Species Working Group – Molly stated there was a planning meeting and will potentially be having a science advisory panel the week of Oct 15th in Helena.

MT Water Review – Molly discussed their draft legislative bills; outreach on those later this fall and hoping to include CDs in outreach efforts.

River Rendezvous – Molly stated that everything is on track for the River Rendezvous; registration is open, sending an email next week to Council with the non-pay code. Few rooms available at the hotel.

PARTNER REPORTS:

MACD – No report.

DNRC – Molly stated that Mark Bostrom, at the MACD state board meeting, is looking into a different funding mechanism, working with NRCS and river councils. Maybe Mark can join our August Quarterly meeting in Townsend to discuss further. Dick stated that he was on with the CDAC a year and a half and found out they will be dissolving CDAC. They are now looking at ideas on how to handle project grants. Karl discussed the main purpose of this ground level group was to help and give grassroots level knowledge and feedback to the CD Bureau, particularly grants. Dick stated its good to have help for CDs at the local level. Robbie discussed issues with their grant to get a no-till drill; without the CDAC, their grant might not have been approved. Karl stated putting together a letter to DNRC-CDB stating we need grassroots knowledge, and we are in support of the continuation of something similar or a committee that approves grants. Dick stated to also send to other DNRC folks so everyone is on the same message. John Chase moved to put together a letter for CDAC continuation, or something similar; Dana Berwick seconded. Motion passed.

NRCS – Karl stated that he visited with Tom Watson and Kyle Tackett. It would be good to have someone in the CD/MRCDC to be part of the hiring process for the new Montana NRCS State Conservationist; someone that will work with CDs and Councils. Dick stated we should send a letter to the NRCS chief; state we need NRCS in our programs, list a few projects/programs we have worked together on, and that we would like to participate in the hiring process. Molly stated that MACD has had the same discussion, we should support them, but let them take the lead. Dick Iversen moved to move forward with a letter to the NRCS chief; Dana Berwick. Motion passed.

MRWA – Karl discussed that their system is down for now but will be getting funding to do a full repair, passed at the House. He suggested to write a letter of support to get expedited funding. Dana Berwick moved to send a support letter; John Chase seconded. Motion passed.

CEMIST – Brent stated that they had their AIS Early Detection Class in Fort Peck last week; it was well attended. Having their CEMIST monthly call today and the Quarterly Meeting will be in July. There have been 15 fouled watercrafts found at the watercraft inspection stations, of the 16K boats inspected.

REACH REPORTS

Lower Reach – No report.

Reservoir Reach – Trish stated they had a successful Ladies Day on the Range event June 6th, and will be having a Kid's Ag & Conservation Education Day September 4th and Applicators Class September 11th.

Middle Reach – Lorri stated that they did submit a comment letter for the BLM Sage Grouse Conservation Plan. Their RAC Committee members represent many different groups. Discussed their meetings, and their comments to the BLM rules. Went to the Fergus CD meeting and talked to NRCS on their RCPP funds, got a response but it wasn't a warm welcome. RCPP applications are due July 2nd. Molly spoke briefly with Kyle Tackett at MACD Spring Board and he stated that RCPPs are a lot of work. It might be a better fit for TIP proposals to go through other groups; using the local work group meetings put on by CDs. Locals are in favor of the projects. Lorri stated they would also have to come up with ½ match for the RCPP. It was decided for now to make recommendations to CDs to pursue through EQIP or TIPs. Dick stated that we should also not use the verbiage "cleaning reservoirs" but "helping and improving habitat areas" instead.

Upper Reach – Karl stated that they have had a lot of 310 permits.

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

COORDINATOR UPDATE – Molly stated that there wasn't a vote on the canopy purchase. John Chase moved to purchase a canopy, with the upper limit of \$250; Dana Berwick seconded. Motion passed.

UPCOMING EVENTS/IMPORTANT DATES

June

25: MRRIC – Fish Draft AM Report

25: MRCDC Executive Committee meeting

26: CEMIST meeting

26: PCCD meeting

27: CMR CWG Rangeland Monitoring Training

Every Wednesday at 12:00 (mtn. time): USACE Test Flow update meeting

July

2: Molly out

9: MISC meeting, Billings

9: MT Comprehensive Water Review

12: MRRIC Fish/HC Work Group call

19: Molly out

25: MRRIC HC Work Group call

30: MRCDC Exec. Committee meeting, 7:30am

30-8/1: MRRIC AM Workshop, Omaha

31: CEMIST meeting

31: PCCD meeting

Every Wednesday at 12:00 (mtn. time): USACE Test Flow update meeting

August

19: MT Comprehensive Water Review

21: MRCDC Quarterly meeting

22: River Rendezvous

28: CEMIST meeting

28: PCCD meeting

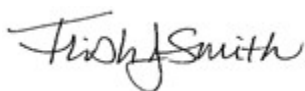
Every Wednesday at 12:00 (mtn. time): USACE Test Flow update meeting

Other

With no further business, John Chase moved to adjourn the meeting; Lorri Schafer seconded. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20am.

Approved on: 07/30/2024

Submitted by:



Trish Smith, MRCDC Secretary



Karl Christians, Chairman