



Montana Conservation District Employee Organization

EO Meeting

Time: June 12, 2024, 2:30-5:30

Montana Conference Room, DNRC, 1539 11th Ave. Helena MT & Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88697812186?pwd=akZGSFhBTk5tS08ycmVmazFIRi9DUT09>

2:30 pm Call to order

Chris Evans called the meeting to order at 2:36pm

- Roll Call
- Brief Introductions-Name, District, Favorite part about being part of a district

Board Directors Present:

Chris Evans (Area VI);

Kay Webb (Area V);

Samantha Tappenbeck (Area V);

Julie Goss (Area II);

Tenlee Atchison (Area III);

Wendy Jones (Area IV);

Robbie Savelkoul (Area I);

Angie Stahl (Area IV);

Jess Fields (Area VI);

Board Directors Absent:

Jackson Bramlette (Area III);

Diane Black (Area I);

Caitlen Wolff (Area II);

Also Present:

Macy Fogle – Garfield CD

Emily Baker – E Sanders County CD

Dona Stafford – Fergus CD

Caroline McDonald – Lake County CD
Kaysie Steele – Pondera County CD
Morgan Owens – Green Mountain CD
Becky Clements – Gallatin CD
Trish Smith – Petroleum County CD
Teresa Wilhelms – Cascade CD
Denise Donnelly – Broadwater CD
Barb Martin – Big Sandy CD
Madi Larson – MACD
Stephanie Criswell – DNRC
Mark Bostrom – DNRC

- Review [Governance Calendar](#)
- Consent Agenda
 - Board Meeting Minutes
 - [2024 0515 Board meeting](#)
 - Any Committee Meeting minutes
 - Any Recent Area Employee Meetings

Amendment to the 5/15/24 meeting minutes: Need to add who made the motion to table the approval of the Exec Com policies.

Julie Goss made a motion “to approve the consent agenda with the amendment to the 5/15/2024 meeting minutes.” Seconded by Becky Clements. All in favor.

3:00 pm Financial

- Financial report

Chris updated on where the EO stands with the books. Need to do something with our QuickBooks account by Monday. We can purchase QB Online from Tech Soup for \$80/yr to use until we can get something else figured out.

Robbie noted we have received some recent additional dues payments.

Kay Webb motioned “to move the financials of the EO to QB online software. Samantha seconded. Chris noted we are going to go backwards, close out as of December 2023 and start from January 1 with a new company, new chart of accounts, and new books. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

Julie Goss motioned "since we are now a nonprofit, to start clean with new books starting January 1." Seconded by Becky Clements. None opposed. Motion carried.

Chris reviewed the 2023 Profit & Loss and 2024 Balance Sheet. Discussion about the "other" category. There are no sub-accounts that cover those things. It's important to do a good chart of accounts and classes.

Discussion about the 50/50 ticket sales and whether or not this constitutes gambling. Madi noted she had done a bit of research into that and could share a document that explains it.

Wendy noted we have paid out scholarships using EO funding, and these are listed as outgoing on, but nothing saying that we transferred \$4000 to cover those convention scholarships and it is making the totals look off. Chris said that could be solved by creating separate accounts. Chris would like input on how to set up the chart of accounts, but will take a first cut at it and share it. All agreed we should use classes.

Reviewed tracking spreadsheet for the EO Grant that Lewis & Clark CD is holding. \$33,782.93 remaining. Grant contract expires December 2024 but we can do an extension. Some of that has been spent with the Shannon Stober strategic framework development, training, etc. We have met the requirements from DNRC and are able to spend from this grant now. Possibly use funds to help pay for travel to the NCDEA meeting.

Jess motioned "to accept the financial statement as presented." Wendy seconded. None opposed. Motion carried.

- Bookkeeper solicitation-Review of interested person-**Robbie Savelkoul**

The applicant sent Robbie some references and she will forward those. There has only been one applicant. It is a role that could also be filled by a CD if someone was interested.

3:20 pm Agenda Items

- Treasurer resignation

Samantha motioned "to accept Robbie Savelkoul's resignation as Treasurer." Jess seconded. None opposed. Motion carried.

- Treasurer position opening-Anyone currently on the board interested in being appointed?

The responsibilities of the treasurer were reviewed. The Treasurer serves as checks and balances – e.g., review reconciled accounts, present financial reports (provided by the bookkeeper). The treasurer is the chair of the finance committee which reviews draft policies and makes a recommendation to the Board. Reviewed additional duties of the finance committee in the Committee Charters 2024.

If anyone is interested in serving as the Treasurer, email or get in contact with Chris Evans.

- Update the membership on structure development with Terry
 - [Board Manual](#)
 - [Policies for Committees](#)
 - [Governance Calendar](#)
 - Board Commitment and other documents
 - [Updated Area Director Responsibilities](#)
- [The Mini Library So Far](#)

Chris reviewed the draft webpage and links to programs that were submitted by districts so far. Discussion about the format of the website. Ideas for formatting based on Washington State Conservation Commission's website. Districts can still contribute information and participate.

- Why we are part of the Employee Organization-**Wendy Jones**

After we did the training with Shannon and got the framework, it became clear that it remains a struggle to communicate why we are part of the EO and what the larger intentions are for the EO. We are developing into an organization that wants to be a bigger partner with MACD, DNRC, NRCS. Wendy thinks we could take the framework and create a marketing tool for the EO. We could have employees do snippets that could be compiled to tell the story of the EO, why we want to be a partner, and our value as administrators. Possibly present at Convention. Chris noted we should start with the board members and have them tell the story of why they are on the board and why they stay. Discussion about the focus on opening the door to opportunities for the EO,

how it ultimately benefits everyone, help explain to the employees what the value and role of the EO is. Caroline thought that the Area Reps might take the opportunity to visit other CDs to share updates on the EO, what the goals are for the EO, promote the benefits of the EO. Reach out to a few of the newer employees around the state for testimonials that have seen the value of the EO and what the EO has shifted to provide to employees. Madi noted that CDB is planning a "listening session" at Convention and is imagining it would be pretty open ended, probably questions to solicit feedback, open period to come in and ask questions and be heard. It would be good to have a creative person on the outside help put a video together. Could form a working group that could take this on. Trish said she has lots of videography experiences and would be happy to help put it together; would be willing to get involved with a working group.

- NCDEA Mid Year Meeting in Billings

Chris has room block information and will send it out to the group. Four or five districts have been lined up to present on their programs. Need to decide how the EO will offer travel scholarships to the NCDEA meeting. Ultimately need the finance committee to work on how to structure this and what the priorities for funds are.

Wendy motioned "to set a \$5000 budget for travel expenses to the NCDEA training". Kay seconded. None opposed. Motion carried.

- Area Meetings/Convention update

See MACD report, below.

- [Strategic Framework](#) with Shannon Stober
 - Review of the strategic framework

Chris would like everyone to look at lines 1-11 and disregard the information below. Would like people to think about line #7 under each category and what the goals are. Chris will modify and resend to the group for review. Take up the conversation again around the time of Area Meetings.

- Take comments/ideas from membership
- Start brainstorming vision/values/mission wording

4:45 pm Partner Reports

- DNRC

Mark Bostrom provided a copy of the financials for the Conservation Districts Account including Annual Cash Flow for the Conservation Districts Account through April 30th. Estimated earnings from Coal Severance Trust were \$285K, actuals for FY24 haven't come in yet. Office of Budget and Program Planning took back \$940K from \$2.3M beginning cash balance. Expenditures are appropriations, Org 3039 is \$1.5M in spending authority, but Mark has scratched that for now because they do not currently have the cash to spend. Org 3029 is \$750K in spending authority, have already spent \$459K on CDA grants.

DNRC-CDB did not factor in latency of payments and resulting lag in deposits. Thankfully they had an end of year balance.

There is change in our state. Mark seeks the guidance and counsel of all the districts about how to move forward. For example, they can go directly to MACD and ask to review project applications instead of convening CDAC. DNRC-CDB plans to solicit input from districts by doing another funding forum, through Area meetings, and at Convention.

First option for legal assistance for districts is through the county attorney's office, followed by Agency Legal Services through Department of Justice, and finally contracted legal services from DNRC. Personnel management training and HR issues is another matter. Supervisors need to reach out to CDB for assistance with those matters. MACD is going to offer HR Basics training. MACD is in the early stages of conversations about how to offer personnel management services to districts statewide.

Discussed the discrepancy that occurs between submitting the previous FY Annual Financial Report when applying for CDA grants. There can be quite a bit of fluctuation between that previous AFR and the coming FY budget and expenditures.

Discussed the difficulties with review of program and project grant applications through CDAC. Stephanie noted there have been a lot of challenges with the CDAC. MCDEO noted that the last application review was hostile. Stephanie said that would not be happening again, moving forward CDAC will be dismantled and instead applications would be reviewed by a group of peers, or other solutions to be discussed with the MACD Board.

- MACD

Convention update: Tenlee reported there has been a lot of discussion around the EO at Convention Planning Meetings. Discussed an idea to bring forth to the board. Came up with an

idea for an event throughout the whole event – kind of like a poker run using conservation cards with a \$15 registration fee that you would culminate with your card and periodically throughout convention you would purchase a card at various events along the way, at the end have a social where we would give away prizes. Talked about doing a 50/50. Talked about an auction and sharing items. Possibly having the social event on Thursday possibly from 4-5pm before the banquet, but that is not possible due to programming time limitations. MACD is not scheduling programming over meals and social hours. Also talked about scavenger hunt, amazing race type event, possibly a motivational speaker that might entice people to stay, possibly a pub crawl. Landed on the poker run idea. Discussed the timing of the EO event, the pros and cons of Thursday vs. Wednesday vs. Tuesday. There is a welcome social planned on Tuesday, but that could possibly be replaced with the EO event if that is what the EO wants, and Madi will check with Becca on this. Discussed the all-space hold that was charged by MACD to partners at 50% of the hotel rate.

- NRCS

Not present to provide report.

5:15 pm Open Mic/other business

Kay provided an update on the advisory role for the MCDEO representative on the MACD board and that so far she has felt it is a good thing, she has a seat and voice at the table, she is asked direct questions and for input. MACD is also picking up her travel for the Spring Board and Convention in-person meetings. Kay has been taking notes at the Spring Board meeting and will provide a synopsis relative to the EO.

Chris suggested we do not ask MACD for scholarship money this year so we do not have to deal with the issues we have experienced with the EO staffing the registration table. MCDEO just pay for travel scholarships.

Tenlee asked if we are including a registration within the full registration to pay for awards. We need to have a work group to deal with the awards. Julie and Trish will form this work group. Julie will head that work group.

5:30 pm Adjournment

Samantha motioned "to adjourn". Tenlee seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:59pm.