

**Minutes**  
**Natrona County Conservation District**  
**March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**Supervisors:** Tom Walters – Chairman, Tyrone Fittje - Vice Chairman, John Bentley, Kelly Burch

**Others Present:** Tom Watson – NRCS Area Conservationist, Mary Schrader – NRCS, Maggie Myers – NCCD, Larry Bentley – Natrona County CRM, Renee Taylor – Natrona County CRM, Brian Connelly – Natrona County Weed and Pest

Chairman Tom Walters called the meeting order at 7:10 pm.

**1. Announcements:** Chairman Walters introduced Maggie Myers as the new District Manager for the Natrona County Conservation District. She began work for the NCCD on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009.

**2. Introductions of special guests:** Chairman Walters introduced the following guests: Tom Watson from the NRCS, Larry Bentley and Renee Taylor from the Natrona County Rangeland Monitoring CRM (specifically the prairie dog CRM). He also introduced Brian Connelly, the Natrona County Weed and Pest Supervisor.

**Mr. Larry Bentley, Mrs. Taylor, and Mr. Connelly updated the Board about the Prairie Dog CRM meeting that was held March 9<sup>th</sup> with the Natrona County Weed and Pest:**

Discussion was held and it was noted that the main questions and concerns for the CRM stem from development issues surrounding BLM and deeded lands. The risk with small acreage development and crossover between BLM and deeded acres that cannot be treated for prairie dogs is important to consider. It was noted that Natrona County Commissioners will still commit monies yearly to the project, and left over funds can be used for weed CRM's. Mr. Bentley stated he would like to have a large meeting involving all CRM's in the county within the next six weeks. Mrs. Taylor added that Deena McDaniels administrative help with the landowners was immeasurable, and expressed that she hopes Mrs. Myers could continue to play a role in the project on behalf of the NCCD. Mr. Connelly added that there are 95 to 100 landowners spanning approximately 33,000 acres in the county and the missing components to landowner participation are after care, rotation, and pre-treatment of noxious weeds and prairie dogs. Board member Burch added that the possibility of a CRM Coordinator as a full or part-time position would be a step in the right direction for helping keep landowners aware of their options and how to avoid re-infestation of the prairie dogs. This position was discussed as a potential contract labor employee and if created could facilitate communication between CRM, Weed and Pest, and landowners creating synergy and more success in prairie dog control. Mr. Bentley, Mrs. Taylor, and Mr. Connelly thanks the Board for allowing them to attend the meeting and present their thoughts and ideas.

**3. Chairman Walters called for approval of the February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 minutes.** Motion made by Board Member Burch and seconded by Board Member John Bentley to approve the minutes as read. Motion put and carried.

#### **4. Chairman Walters and Mrs. Myers gave the financial update:**

Given that the NCCD was without a District Manager for the month of February, there were several vouchers that needed to be approved as well as the upcoming accounts payable for March. Mrs. Myers asked the Board to reference the voucher listing handed out this date. Chairman Walters asked the Board to reference vouchers numbered 1893, 1895, and 1896 for reimbursement to the Central Wyoming Fairgrounds project. Chairman Walters explained to the Board that these checks will not be mailed until the District Manager is able to have access to the WGIF account in order to transfer funds for these payables. Mrs. Myers added that the previous District Manger, Deena McDaniels, had sent a letter this date to the Natrona County Commissioners requesting disbursement of the last of three installments in matching funds towards this project.

Mrs. Myers explained to the Board that payroll for the month will not be exact until she is granted security clearance and access to the NRCS computer system. Chairman Walters explained that Mrs. Myers first paycheck would be for \$1000, which is an estimate of her bi-weekly salary less taxes until she is able to access QuickBooks in the computer to update federal withholding, social security, and other taxes. Mrs. Myers noted that once she is able to update this information in QuickBooks, she will provide the Board with the adjusted amount for this first paycheck. Similarly, Mrs. Myers noted that her payroll for March 14<sup>th</sup> thru March 27<sup>th</sup> would face the same computer concern until access is granted, illustrating why her paycheck for that pay period does not have an amount listed on the voucher listing. Motion made by Board member Burch and seconded by Vice Chairman Fittje to approve the vouchers as presented. Motion put and carried. Motion made by Board member Burch and seconded by Board member Bentley to pre-approve payroll, consulting and tax vouchers. Motion put and carried.

#### **5. Mary Schrader gave the District Conservationist update:**

##### *Farm Bill Programs*

- She stated that on March 17<sup>th</sup> NRCS would rank and attach an estimate of cost for the EQIP applications
- On Mary 12<sup>th</sup> she will be writing contracts for all applications that can be funded and June 1<sup>st</sup> is the day contracts funded.

##### *Emergency Watershed Program-Flood Plain Easement*

- Sign ups for the program are March 9<sup>th</sup> to March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and their purpose is to restore and protect flood plain and increase flood protection; also to assist in restoring floodplain functions and values to natural condition.
- She noted that the easement value is based on the WRP market analysis and geographic rate cap for FY 2009

#### **6. Tom Watson gave the Area Conservationist update:**

Mr. Watson explained the challenges NRCS is facing with staffing across the state. He noted that he was waiting on approval from the state for job funding for technician positions, but said he was unsure what the future would hold for filling these positions.

## **7. Chairman Walters gave the grants update.**

- Mrs. McDaniels sent documentation regarding the Central Wyoming Fairgrounds Animal Waste Management Improvement Project and Chairman Walters asked the Board to reference the document. It was summarized as follows:
  - Cement work on the bunkers is complete and the Fairgrounds paid for the work at a value of \$19,710 in-kind to the project.
  - Sheet metal for the sides of the bunkers has been ordered and tin for the roofs still need to be ordered. The fairgrounds staff will complete the construction on these bunkers and all signs have been installed.
  - Board member John Bentley can begin grading anytime, but the weather has prohibited this during March.
  - Brian will do the soil test for the Nutrient Management Plan on the infield, and the next meeting is scheduled for 3-20-2009 to discuss a tree line to be installed along the Northern boundary.
  - The I&E Committee met on 3-6-2009 where a final newsletter is being drafted to be completed by May.
  - The project completion celebration day is being planned for July or early August. Mrs. McDaniels has sent a letter to the Mayor's office in hopes for a proclamation as "Central Wyoming Fairgrounds" day.

Chairman Walters stated that he attended the meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 for the project. He noted the City of Casper wants to add a new storm water drain in the future, plus another larger, pipeline to go around the fairgrounds. Additionally, Mrs. Myers passed out the copy of the letter from Mrs. McDaniels to the County Commissioners which requested the third and final installment for the \$100,000 in kind cash for the project.

## **8. District Manager Update:**

Mrs. Myers expressed her appreciation to the Board for the assistance she had received thus far as the new District Manager.

- *Seedling Tree Program:* Approx. 1,225 trees sold as of March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Taking many more orders and there should be an influx of orders after the Home and Garden Show.
- *Home and Garden Show:* Mrs. Myers asked the Board to volunteer if possible for a three to four hour shift in working the NCCD booth and selling polymer.
- Mrs. Myers noted she has made many phone calls and introductions during her first week and is looking forward to starting the myriad of projects the District is involved in coordinating.

## **9. Old Business:**

- The Central Wyoming Home Builders Home and Garden Show is scheduled for March 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009. Board and staff made arrangements to run the booth for the weekend and help Mrs. Myers with set-up and take-down.

- In other old business, there was discussion about whether or not to keep the resume's of District Manager applicants on file. It was decided that only those applicants who were selected to interview would be kept in a "Personnel" file in the District office.

**10. New Business:**

- Board member Burch suggested that Mrs. Myers keep track of the time that Mrs. McDaniels helps her in acclimating to the position so that the Board can compensate her for her time and effort. Some discussion was held on whether or not to provide Mrs. McDaniels with a lump sum for her time or if she should be paid hourly.
- In other new business, the Board planned to take Mrs. McDaniel's and her husband to dinner on Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 at Poor Boys Steakhouse as a gesture of appreciation for her hard work. Mrs. Myers will make the reservations for 6:30pm so please RSVP if you are unable to attend.
- There was no other new business.

11. The next NCCD meeting was set for **Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 7:00pm**. The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Minutes approved as read.

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor