

Harney Soil & Water Conservation District

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**Meeting Minutes for April 22, 2021**

**Meeting Content**

3:30 p.m. Welcome and Introductions

• Dial in guests will be asked to identify themselves and anyone in the room with them

Board: Jeff Hussey, Scott Franklin, Susan Doverspike, Ryan Peila

Staff: Jason Kesling, Danielle Reynolds, Carlton Strough\*, Sarah Mundy\*

Public: No public in attendance

Partners: NRCS: Zola Ryan \*Present via teleconference **New Items:**

# March monthly financials – Budget vs. actual (1.a.) Rangeland Biologist Interviews – Appoint board member (5.a.) NACD 2021 Grant Update -$52,000 (7.a.)

3:35 p.m. Action Item: Approval

1. Monthly financials – March

Ryan requested more information on what Janae’s role in the financials is. DM updated everyone on how the audit and Oster’s play a role in the monthly financials. Susan requested a meeting with DM to get a better handle on the financials. DM gave a “brief” overview of process and some of the details about the financials. Dm handed out a “funds requested by not received as of 4/22/21” print-out to board members that will be added to the record. Zola also explained that some jobs can at times fit multiple grant requirements, so jobs can be billed how it is seen fit or where the funding is available.

Chair request a motion to approve March monthly financials.

Scott made motion to approve, Ryan 2nd, motion carries (roll call attached).

*a. Budget vs actual*

DM gave overview of the spreadsheet.

Chair requests motion to approve profit loss.

Scott moves, 2nd Ryan Peila, motion carries (roll call attached)

1. March Board Meeting Minutes

Chair requests a motion to approve the March Board Meeting Minutes.

Scott makes motion to approve, 2nd by Ryan Peila, motion carries (roll call attached)

3:45 p.m. Old Business

1. District emails

DM updated board on need for a secured email system and the ability to have administrative control for District email accounts, including recommendations made by Eric Nusbaum. Danielle Reynolds gave specifics about the google account and features. A discussion was had among board members.

Chair requests a motion to approve the Google Workspace $18 plan

Scott motions to approve $18 plan for Google Workspace, 2nd by Ryan Peila, motion carries (roll call attached)

3:55 p.m. New Business

3. Zola Ryan- NRCS Review Civil Right and MOU’s

Zola Ryan with NRCS stated that HSWCD needs to follow same civil rights policies and memorandums as USDA/NRCS as we fall under the same umbrella and gave more detail into each.

Zola gave the annual review of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between HSWCD and the US Department of Agriculture with an overview of the agreement including; the annual work plan, annual report submissions, and that it was signed into effect in 1972 and is open ended.

She then moved on to the supplemental MOU between NRCS the agency and ODA that was signed in 1990. Some key notes from the MOU included: annual employee reviews can request NRCS and/or ODA input, any SWCD engineers are required to get NRCS job approval, District responsible for all phone billing not associated with NRCS business, conservation planning course is recommended for SWCD employees, review of ODA’s role in this agreement, and that NRCS has written agreement to provide office space and services for up to 2 district employees – clerk/technician/reception type position and DM. This led into more discussion on office configuration and teleworking agreements. Zola said that rent should be charged for space used for more than 2 District employees, but in the most recent agreement 3 extra spaces were approved with the agreement of “labor trade” instead of a rent “charge”. In 2017 the agreement expired and has not been amended. Control of making agreements has gone national, no longer at the “local”/state level, so it may be more difficult to draft a new contract without having the 2017 contract in hand.

Zola presented the “Civil Rights Review” and went through the checklist. Added county census data print-outs to the meeting records to be filed with meeting materials. Zola then passed around a new agreement form for the board members to sign, it will also be added to the meeting records.

Public notification list of what needs to be posted is handled by NRCS since we are in the same building, but if we were not, we would need to be sure that everything on the list is displayed properly. Injustice for all poster located in lobby, if someone comes in with a complaint of injustice, they are to be directed to that contact information and say nothing more so no implications can be made.

Chair asked Zola if we need to draft a new agreement/ where we are at on that now. Zola said it was essentially currently a “hand-shake” agreement and that her superiors have not shown any concern with the current situation.

Zola brought up the District phone situation. With the new online phone system that NRCS uses there is no such thing as “long-distance” and our calls are already going through their system when calls come in to our office. Essentially, we are paying a phone bill just to have the current 541-573-5010 phone number since we get calls through the NRCS line as well and should not be paying any long-distance charges. The board requested we looked into this more and possibly do away with our current phone plan and review/potential update the MOU with NRCS, SWCD and ODA date 1990 (Item 13 within the agreement).

4:25 p.m. 5. Ag/CWMA Position Update

DM updated interview process – Tyler Goss was hired and starts May 3rd. He is from Bonanza and has already found housing.

# a. Rangeland Biologist interviews – appoint board member to interview committee

Dm updated on hiring process, 3 applications received. Jason, Sarah, Zola Ryan already on the hiring panel, 2 applicants will be interviewed. Susan volunteered to be on the hiring panel as well. Interviews are planned to occur the week of April 26th.

4:40 p.m. 6. 2021 SDIS Renewal

Informational presentation from DM, highlighted that there is an average10.5% renewal increase based on demographics for employers for 2021. The increase has the potential to affect our budget.

5:00 p.m. 7. Sage Grouse Addressing the Gaps funding update

DM- SWCD was awarded the grant that Shannon and Sarah put together to fund SSP development in areas outside the FIP boundary.

# a. NACD 2021 Grant Update - $52,701

DM- NRCS received a grant from NACD for 2021 to continue the work related to the range technician position and any conservation planning work including SSPs, grant projects to implement conservation measures.

5:10 p.m. 8. Public comment may be requested at this time No public comment.

 9. Future agenda items

Chair comment – “there are a lot of misconstrued thoughts of what we do vs what NRCS does.” Asked if Jason and Zola would be willing to go on the radio and let people know who we are and what we actually do.

The Chair asked if other NRCS/SWCD offices are run like ours with shared office space and employees. Zola said each have their own MOU and most tend to operate similarly, but not always.

5:30 p.m. Meeting adjourns

The Chair requests a motion to adjourn meeting.

Scott made motion to adjourn meeting, 2nd by Susan Doverspike

\*\*Tabled Items:\*\*

Board Officer Policy (staff still need to review SDAO guidelines)

District Operations Training for Board (What we do, grants/grant Management)

OT/CT exemptions for SWCD staff

Records requests for chat and text messages/ records retention policy