

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY
WATER QUALITY PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING

Zoom
May 26, 2020

Members Present

Jeff Ryan, vice-chair
Amanda Harrow
Kammy Johnson
Catherine Scott
Ryan Leland

Staff

Kathy Moore
Jennifer McBroom
Peter Schade
James Swierc
Jolene Helgerson
Valerie Stacey

Members Absent

Commissioner Susan Good Geise
Mayor Jamie Schell, chair
Stan Frasier

Guests Present

Conner Mertz, Healthy Watershed Association
Arnold Jackson

Jeff Ryan, vice-chair, called the 245th meeting of the Lewis and Clark County Water Quality Protection District (WQPD) Board of Directors to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum was established. Introduction of Board members were made.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Kathy Moore, Environmental Services Division Administrator, recommended adding a commission budget update after agenda item 3.

MINUTES

Mr. Ryan asked if there were any corrections or additions to the April 28, 2020, minutes. Amanda Harrow made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Catherine Scott seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0. No public comment was given.

COMMISSION BUDGET UPDATE

Ms. Moore announced that the L&C Public Health presented their budget along with WQPD's budget to the County Commissioners for review. Ms. Moore noted that the commissioners did ask the department if they had any interests in the upcoming legislature. Ms. Moore discussed the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Grizzly Gulch Reclamation Project and flood plain permitting. Ms. Moore suggested having a discussion on flood plain permitting at a future board meeting. Mr. Ryan announced that the Lewis and Clark Conservation District is working on a joint resolution regarding flood plain permitting to present at the next legislative session. Mr. Ryan asked for Board and staff assistance with the wording of the resolution. No public comment was given.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Ms. Moore said that Governor is reducing COVID-19 restrictions throughout the state. Surrounding states are seeing an increase in cases. The health department is asking the community to remember to do their part in preventing the passing of the virus by keeping 6 feet distance, increasing proper hygiene care and wearing a facemask. Ryan Leland announced that the City of Helena is continuing to sample their wastewater for the presence of COVID-19. At this time, no detection has been found. Mr. Leland also remarked that the sampling of the wastewater would continue into the summer possible, possibly fall. The Helena City Commissioners are looking to use local labs like Carroll College and Montana State University to provide COVID-19 sampling results. No public comment was given.

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Jennifer McBroom, Water Quality Protection District Program Supervisor, gave an update on the WQPD Strategic Plan (see Attachment “A”). Valerie Stacey, Environmental Technician, presented the draft online WQPD Program Story Maps showing groundwater, surface water, Tenmile flooding and East North Hills data. No public comment was given.

UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flood: Mr. Schade announced that staff is providing a weekly hydrological flooding update for Tenmile Creek and Elk Creek. Those updates are sent to the disaster emergency services, public information officers and to public works. Stream peaks occurred on May 1 and May 21 due to an increase of precipitation. In answer to a question from Mr. Ryan, Mr. Schade said that Elk Creek might see some flooding this year due to last year’s flooding that caused channel capacity changes within the stream.

DEQ: Mr. Schade announced that staff is working with Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to complete a reanalysis of Prickly Pear Creek using the last ten years of data collected by the WQPD. DEQ is required to conduct an analysis of Prickly Pear Creek every three years as a component of their Triennial Review. .

BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION

Mr. Ryan announced that the Lewis and Clark Conservation District is working with the forest service to sponsor a grant for phase 2 work on Beaver Creek. A complete rehab of the stream for spawning will be completed. Phase 1 is to begin this summer or fall. Mr. Ryan suggested the district should tour phase 1 and phase 2.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Conner Mertz with Healthy Watershed Association announced that he and Chris Evans, with the Lewis and Clark Conservation District, are hosting a riparian management workshop on July 21. There is a possibility that the workshop may be canceled due to COVID-19.

The meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Jeff Ryan, Vice-Chair