

Noxious Weed Board Meeting

Minutes Outline

Lewis & Clark County

Regular Monthly Meeting

August 2, 2023

1:00 p.m. In person(only)



Noxious Weed Conference Room

Public Works Complex

3402 Cooney Drive Helena, MT 59602

Members Present

Dave Burch – Board Member, Chair

Judith Anne Vincent – Board Member, Vice-Chair

Rob McDonough - Board Member

Dave Lewis – Board Member

Pete Christensen – Board Member

Stacy Baertsch – Board Member

Staff Present

Christian Lehnert – Lewis & Clark Weed Coordinator

Jenny Chambers – Lewis & Clark County Public Works Director

Jade Wills – Lewis & Clark County Weed, Admin II

Guests Present

406 4H Club

- William Bushnell, Member-Presenter
 - Braden Johnson, Member-Presenter
 - Jessica Bushnell, Advisor/Club Leader
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***Zoom option was not available due to location**

Call Meeting to Order: (00:00:00)

Chair, Dave Burch called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Roll Call:

- Board Members:
 - Neil Snow-Absent
 - Mike Cobb-Absent
- Staff:
 - Commissioner Candace Payne-Absent

Introductions/Recognition of Visitors: (00:14:07)

- 406 4H Club Noxious Weed project presentations by Braden Johnson & William Bushnell.
 - Braden Johnson presented his pressed weeds display.
 - William Bushnell presented his noxious weed display.
 - These displays had been featured at the 2023 Last Chance Stampede & Fair.

Public Comment: (00:01:20)

- No public comment

Action Items: (00:01:29)

1. *Authorization of Fund 297 (WGSCR)*

- Staff presents 297 budget review, prior funding authorizations, fund 297 discussion.

- Staff request budget amendment for \$2,000.00 additional budget authorization for a slide in weed sprayer/rental unit. \$4,500.00 authorization granted by the board June 7, 2023- funding amendment requesting \$6,500.00 total authorization for a dual tank slide in sprayer.
 - Staff has found a more in-depth sprayer that will be beneficial to have. This will be a dual tank sprayer (w/ two separate guns) which will allow running two separate herbicides at once. This sprayer will be built/purchased from Heartland Ag.
 - Motion Brought forth for the amended funding authorization not to exceed \$6,500.00 for the purchase of a dual tank slide in sprayer, from Fund 297 (WGSCR) by Judith Anne Vincent, and 2nd by Pete Christianson, all in favor, motion Passes.

Staff Reports:

Christian Lehnert– Weed Coordinator: (00:23:05)

- Sun River partnership shows Board certificate of appreciation.
- Non Compliance (Weed Planner update):
 - 64 Cases; 33 closed, 31 active
 - 83 Inspections
 - 13 Site Visits
 - 43 Active 5 year Noxious Weed Management Plans
 - Over 1,500 Acres inspected
- Cost Share Program participation
- Biocontrol Days
 - Staff Participation, currently collected & distributed 22 Toadflax releases & 28 spurge releases.
 - Next week staff will be participating in a Spotted Knapweed biocontrol collection day; currently there are 32 landowner release requests we hope to fulfill.
- Seasonals; to date:
 - About 1,500 miles of Country Right of Ways sprayed; about 3,000 acres managed.
- Greenhouse has been ordered & should be delivered next week.
- New Spray Truck arrived and is being set up for broadcasting & rangeland.
 - This is a truck setup we do not currently have so will be beneficial for helping other entities & special projects.
- Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grants due January 6, 2024.
- Interlocal still in the works.
- MDT Butte Executed Contract for FY24 has been received, still waiting on MDT Great Falls Executed Contract for FY24.
- Current Special Projects; Beaver Creek & MDT Contracts.
- Special Project this fall; Trail run with Rejuvra/Milestone and potentially other (herbicides) on Valley, Lake Helena, and Wiley Right of Ways; goal is to prevent new weeds, have no annual weeds/cheat grass.
- Hydro seeder project turned out really well, check it a couple days ago. Learned a few things.
 - Upcoming project; seeding Landfill slope/berm of new cell. Possible program at Fairgrounds.
 - Seed seems to be most expensive part. Estimated cost for Landfill \$0.13 sq/ft, Fairgrounds \$0.15 sq/ft – not necessarily cost but rate makes a difference.
- Yesterday and today seasonal crews are out in Lincoln with the Tansy Ragwort Task Force.

- Noticing huge difference from landowners vigilance.
- Rejuvra discussion; kills annuals.
- (01:20:00) Radio ads are now playing on the mighty mo.

Jenny Chambers-Public Works Director: (00:50:50)

- Commission officially passed budget
- Update on Head Lane Bridge

Board Reports:

S. Baertsch: (00:59:40)

- Knapweed seems to be behind but is starting to bloom out.
- Interested in how Federal Land non-compliance issues are handled.
 - BLM area near empire mine; Houndstongue Hoary Alyssum, Mullen
 - Board can send a letter, staff will help draft, chair can sign, Christian can e-mail BLM and FS, knows they have no management in this area right now (BLM), and encourages the Board to send a letter.
 - Board request staff draft a letter.

D. Burch: (01:10:14)

- Glad the Board decided not to do a booth at the fair, weather.
- If anyone knows of any potential board members, let us know.

P. Christensen: (01:12:05)

- Update on wearables
 - Precision embroidery in Billings:
 - Reviewed costs which vary with size & detail of logo. More items ordered, cheaper it is.
 - Orders have a \$52 digitizing fee, will waive if another company has already produced a logo.
- Board directs staff to work on a logo.

D. Lewis: (01:17:38)

- Sold granddaughters greenhouse that was previously donated to the weed district but logistically wouldn't work so was returned.
- Would like to reach to new residents in area, so much construction.

R. McDonough: (01:22:07)

- Knapweed really showing, lots of roads in the area have it bad.

J. A. Vincent: (01:23:47)

- Impressed with the 4H kids
- Lost Horse Creek found field bindweed, first time it has been in the area.
- Thistles seem to be smaller this year.
- Knapweed is everywhere.
- Seeing yellow toadflax as well.
- Inquires on County Website progress:

- Christian (01:26:12) New website is still a work in progress. Staff is working on making sure all content and pages are set up for launch. Website will have the same domain.
- Pete already has a fillable PDF for the Weed Management Plan and will send that to staff to load on the new website.
- Cory needs the maps for the RAC grant work that was completed; staff will get that to him.
- Monture Creek did such a great job on Lost Horse Creek for the RAC grant last year. Mullen/Houndstounge was managed so well.
- Procured 6 loads/12 yards of gravel for the mess on Lost Horse Creek Road.
- Discussion on terms of the board; terms are set by the Commission and followed through in the by-laws.

D. Lewis Exits (01:38:01)

- (01:36:04) Christian provides an update provided by Mike Cobb(absent).
- (01:37:15) Christian provides an update provided by Neil Snow(absent).

Discussion: (01:40:50)

- Fund 297
 - Completed during action item: authorization of Fund 297 (WGSCR)
- Wearables Update/Discussion
 - Completed during P. Christensen update.
- No further discussion.

Items for Next Meeting: (01:27:50)

- Wednesday September 6, 2023, at 1:00p.m. Location: 3402 Cooney Drive, Noxious Weed Conference Room
 - Members would like to hold meetings at L&C County Noxious Weed Conference Room.
 - D. Burch proposes a lunch meeting; Falling into fall. Lunch at 12pm with the meeting at 1pm.
 - Staff will have to put in a authorization through purchasing as generally meals cannot be purchased with County funds. Board directs staff to do so.
 - Staff will follow up with e-mail to see interest of lunch (Jimmy Johns sandwiches) to gauge interest and amount to request for authorization and submit that to finance.

Adjournment: (01:49:02)

Meeting adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

Meeting Minute Outline:

Prepared by: Jade Wills; Lewis and Clark County Administrative Assistant II
Please note this is only an outline, **official meeting minutes are the Audio recording.**