

# Bonner Soil & Water Conservation District

## Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, June 6, 2023  
Time: 1:00 pm Meeting  
Place: 1224 Washington Ave Ste. 101, Sandpoint, ID \* Zoom Teleconference

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### Attendance:

Dale Van Stone, BSWCD; Rick Watt, BSWCD; Harry Menser, BSWCD; Brad Bluemer, BSWCD; Jim Stevens, BSWCD;  
Sarah Garcia, BSWCD; Cindy Lewis, NRCS; Kyle Lundsford, NRCS, Gail Bolin, Luke Omodt, BOCC  
Zoom: Bill Lillibridge, ISWCC, Jenna Ditzel, ISWCC

The meeting was called to order at 1pm by Chairman Dale Van Stone.

### Call to Order

**Approval of Minutes:** Harry moved, seconded by Brad to approve the May Minutes. *the motion carried.*

**Financial Reports:** Brad moved, seconded by Rick to approve the April 2023 financial reports, *the motion carried.*

### AGENCY REPORTS

**NRCS:** Cindy notified the group that her team was currently finishing contracting items. They are also completing follow ups on 2024 interest. Scattered lands joint chiefs project had previously been south of the lake & west of Hwy 95 there is potential for this to expand to include the eastside of 95 as well. There is also a proposal to create a joint chief project area in Boundary area to also address fuels reduction that has been spurred on by last years Kootenai Complex fire. Cindy had attended the Boundary District Board meeting in the morning and highlighted that there was potential that the IASCD is looking at options that would change Districts match & base funding. Discussion was had that this is information the District needs more clarification on and should have been received from our Division rep. Cindy encouraged the Board to reach out to Tom Daniels, Division I Rep & Kyle Rooks, IASCD Executive Director for more information. Jim Stevens extended his gratitude to Cindy's team for their assistance to make the Forestry Expo a success for the 165 students who attended the event over the 2-day period.

**Idaho SWC.** -Bill introduced Jenna Ditzel. Jenna provided her brief personal background growing up in Boise and her college/work experience. She will be relocating to the Coeur d'Alene area within the next 2 weeks. She has currently been working with and shadowing resource cons in that area and building a supporting network of colleagues she can reach out to for help & guidance. Approximately \$5 million in WQPA funding was requested including Bonner SWCD's submitted project. The Commission will review all submissions at their June 22<sup>nd</sup> regular meeting. There is additional floodway paperwork that will be required for the local project which could present a challenge for the very short work window of one year. Will keep the board updated. Bill also indicated that the 319-grant cycle is upcoming with a closing date of July 15<sup>th</sup> and there is potential projects he will reach out to the District admin about.

**Water Festival:** Gail informed the attendees that the Water Festival had made the front page of the Daily Bee on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. There were approximately 40 station volunteers, 20 high school student guides and 200 students each day of the event. In accordance with previous test scoring there was a 50% knowledge increase between the pre & posttest. Gail gave highlights of the festival. She informed the Board that PAFE grant had been approved for the 2024 event which covers bussing costs for schools to attend. Gail informed the board that there was a canopy top missing from the original 8 that came with the program in 2013. When questioned regarding her statements, she indicated to the group she felt this was a result of mismanagement of supplies by the District administrator. Discussion ensued and Gail was reminded by the District Administrator, Sarah that she'd had arm surgery the week after the 2022 water festival event and was not part of the take down or return to storage of the tents the year before. Further discussion was had that these specific canopies are utilized only at the Water Festival and since the only piece missing was the canopy it likely was accidentally lost out of the back of the truck in transport after the 2022 Festival. Gail requested that the District purchase a new tent as the canopy alone can not be replaced due to the age.

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Harry moved that a 10x20 tent matching the most recent tents be purchased by the District for the Water Festival from Costco. Rick seconded the motion. the motion carried.

**Boat Stations:** The group reviewed the written report provided by Glenn Kibbey on station operations for the first month. So far things are off to smooth start. The switch back to station supervisors has been very beneficial!

### DISTRICT BUSINESS

**Forestry Contest:** Sarah thanked the Board members who were in attendance and specifically Dale for accepting the honorary chair plaque on the Districts behalf. This year's event was a great success! There were 300 contestants and tough competition! Highlights and struggles of the new scoring system were reviewed and discussed. Sarah also shared a slideshow of some of the day's photos.

**Round Lake Field Trip:** Sarah provided the board with the letters of support and appreciation received from the schools who attended the Round Lake field trips in May. She also extended gratitude to the Board members who were able to attend the event and assist. A card of gratitude was also received from the Farmin classes. Sarah presented a slide show of pictures of the different stations that were done.

**Funding Meeting with County Commissioners:** Sarah thanked all the Board members who attended the meeting with the County Commissioners on June 1<sup>st</sup> as well as highlighted some of the key discussion points for those who were unable to attend.


**Farm Tour:** Harry updated the Board on the planning for the 2023 Farm Tour and reminded everyone that the farm tour would be held on June 15<sup>th</sup>. The Board reviewed the provided flyer.

**Shared Employee:** Sarah presented a proposal to enter an agreement with Kootenai-Shoshone Conservation District to hire a shared employee. The board reviewed the amount of grants that the district is unable to reach out for as there is no more capacity. The current grants being applied for including the composting grant have salary built into the program to assist with offsetting the cost of additional personnel. The board reviewed the proposal that was created by the District Admins of both districts. Rick moved, seconded by Brad for the District to begin the process of finding a shared staff member. the motion carried.

**NRCS Pilot Program – Composting:** Sarah updated the Board about the resounding response that she has received from community partners regarding the food waste reduction & composting grant. The grant deadline is June 15<sup>th</sup>. Sarah has blocked out much of the remaining 9 days to focus on completing this labor-intensive grant application which will focus on food waste reduction by redirecting to the vulnerable in our communities as well as making climate smart improvements to our community gardens and community composting program for Bonner County.

**District Report:** Sarah reminded the Board that she would be on vacation without email access from June 21-27. She also reminded them that her out of office reply would remain on through the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday as she would be setting up and attending the Homesteader Conference in Coeur d' Alene on the 29<sup>th</sup> -1<sup>st</sup> and taking a comp day the 3<sup>rd</sup> to account for the weekend conference. Sarah notified the board that a letter of gratitude had been received and was in their meeting packet from the Kootenai-Shoshone conservation district in response to the advocacy Bonner District completed for competitive boat station employee wages.

Rick moved, seconded by Harry the motion to adjourn the meeting, meeting was adjourned at 2:50pm.

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District Supervisor Signature

7/11/2023

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Date

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