**YELLOWSTONE CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**1371 RIMTOP DRIVE, BILLINGS, MT 59105 PHONE: 406.247.4420; FAX: 406.247.4416**

**YELLOWSTONE CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

March 20, 2023, **Board Meeting Minutes**

Land Design Conference Room

1670 S 48th St. W, Billings MT 59106, Billings MT 59105

10:30 a.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**: Chad Sedgwick - Chair; Clint Peck - Vice-chair; Brad Kraft, Stacey Robinson

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Leroy Gabel

**NON-BOARD PRESENT**: LaVerne Ivie, YCD Administrator; Seanna Torske, Tori Chulyak, Crystal White - NRCS

Chrissy Webb, Demi Blythe – FWP; Joe Lockwood – Yellowstone Co. Weed District

Trestin Feagler – Yellowstone Co. Extension; Joe Holzwarth - DNRC

Virtually: Ray Beck; Stephanie Criswell, - DNRC

310 Applicants: none

**Chair Sedgwick called the meeting to order at 10:42 a.m.**

**Roll Call**

After introductions, Chair Sedgwick informed attendees: All issues will be addressed to the Chair; public comments are always

welcome, but ask that you wait until the issue is addressed on the agenda, ask to be recognized by the chair and then limit comments

to 3 minutes; no action will be taken on any item, not on the agenda. Attendees were reminded to sign the attendance sheet.

**Agenda Changes:** none

**Minutes:** Peck made a motion to approve February 17, 2023, meeting Minutes as written and reviewed, second by Robinson , motion passed.

**YCD Supervisor Areas**: There was confusion at the county level with supervisor area boundaries. When YCD changed the boundaries as suggested by the election department, the new delineations were not communicated beyond the election dept. consequently the map needs to be updated. Ivie is working with the current election administrator and the GIS dept. to correct the oversight,

**FY23 Legislation discussion** – Ray Beck

* Provided a brief overview of bills that have moved forward; last day is scheduled for May 5th.
* HB821 – Peck, Lockwood and Rostad were able to testify before the committee. Committee members directed questions to Rostad and he did a great job fielding them. Beck will let YCD know if the status of the bill changes.
* HB827 is progressing and was recently transferred to the House Natural Resources Committee. Hearing is scheduled for March 27th at 3:00 p.m. Robinson will testify on behalf of the YCD and Sedgwick, Kraft & Ivie will accompany him to Helena to watch the proceedings.
* SB28 – Funding for CD’s with marijuana money has run into a few stumbling blocks with the Governor’s office. Beck will monitor.
* HB321 – Funding for CD’s within the Coal Tax account. This bill has a better chance of passing and is a much better bill for securing long-term funding for CDs.

**310’s**

* **Applications & Emergencies:**
* **Huntley Project Irrigation District –** Two (2) applications submitted to install riprap on the Yellowstone River; one on the south side, one on the north side upstream of the dam. YCD and partners will inspect the southside proposed project on March 28, 2023. North side to be inspected separately on a different date.
* **Ryan Burrows – YR** rip rap project – will be scheduled before the April YCD meeting
* **Joy Stevens, Alkali Creek –** notified YCD that the excavator is stuck in the upside bank of her pond. Supervisors discussed the situation and opted to wait for an inspection until the excavator is pulled out. Depending on what we see, her 310 permit may need to be amended.
* **Complaints & Violations:**  none

**Other 310 issues & Projects**

* **Salt Cedar monitoring project with RMC** – No activity
* **Yellowstone River CD Council** – Leroy Gabel unable to attend today’s meeting

**Agency Reports**

* **Administrator’s Report –** Report provided before today's meeting. No comments or questions were received.
* **Army Corps of Engineers –** unable to attend
* **Beartooth RC&D – vacant**
* **DNRC –**

**- Stephanie Criswell –** We had a Teams malfunction so lost contact with her.

**-** **Joe Holzwarth** - Informed the board and other participating agencies that DNRC’s process for authorizing Navigable Waterway Land Use Licenses has changed due to a direction from the DNRC legal staff.   It has come to their attention that under ARM ruling that all uses that require authorization on the navigable waterway must have the Land Board approve of the use. The process to get licenses to the Land Board can take anywhere from 15-45 days, roughly.  This rule only applies to portions of the river that have been adjudicated.  Parts that are unadjudicated are licensed and authorized on a voluntary basis.  Portions of the Yellowstone are adjudicated while other portions have not gone through the adjudication process, so they will still ask individuals to submit a 310 application to review and determine if it falls within an adjudicated portion.  His office has seen an influx of 310 applications in the area in the last month of individuals trying to do repair before spring runoff.  Due to the flooding event of 2022, the local office still has some discretion in issuing licenses underneath an emergency authorization.  The land board still must officially approve the licenses, but his office

can give temporary authorization for individuals to get in and repair before the spring runoff.

* **Fish Wildlife and Parks**

**- Chrissy Webb –** Developed the Lake Elmo video project RFP with help from others, sent to YCD, YCD sent it out to five (5) businesses with an April 18th bid submittal deadline.

**Lake Elmo** open house for partners that helped with the work the past two years at the park will be held June 21 or 22nd.

**-** **Demi Blythe** – FWP will try and have someone at every 310 inspection. Spring sampling is starting which requires most fisheries staff to be out of the office.

* **NRCS**

**- Seanna Torske –** All EWP projects from Yellowstone County submitted to national were approved for funding.

**-** **Tori Chulyak** – in addition to her Billings FO report/update, she presented details of 7 EQIP contracts for YCD board

signature.

**-** **Fly Creek Workshop** – April 6th at the Stolz ranch. The workshop committee consisting of NRCS, YCD, Salinity Control,

and Extension personnel have been developing the agenda and logistical planning. Everyone has task to do and all are

on track. The mailer will come out this week from YCD and Big Horn CD. YCD will schedule a radio interview and develop

a news release.

**- MOA between NRCS & YCD** was reviewed at the Feb. YCD meeting but not acted upon. Peck made a motion to accept

as written, second by Kraft, motion passed.

* **Yellowstone County**
* **Yellowstone Co. Extension** – Trestin Feagler started as the Ag Extension agent a few months ago. She provided an overview of her background and some of the projects she is currently working on. She thanked YCD for the invitation to be a part of the Fly Creek workshop and the Arbor Day tree giveaway.
* **Billings/Yellowstone County Planning Board and City of Laurel Planning Board-** Vacancy has not been filled.
* **Yellowstone Co. Floodplain –** Tim Miller is still the temporary contact for the county.
* **Yellowstone Co. Weed Department –** Joe Lockwood – reported the Noxious Weed Trust Fund Salt Cedar grant was fully funded for $73,340. Thanked YCD for helping with HB821.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

* **Old Business**
* **Part time employee** – Interviews will be conducted this afternoon.
* **New Business**
* **Yellowstone County Range Days** – Sedgwick presented an idea for the YCD to host an area-wide range days (9 CDs) in 2024. Kraft, Sedgwick, and Gabel have contacts with FFA chapters that could be approached to gauge interest. Ivie will present the idea to area administrators and inquire if any want to participate with YCD.
* **MACD convention planning committee participation request** – Peck made a motion for YCD to have no activity with the MACD state convention in Billings, second by Robinson, motion passed.
* **Board Meeting Absences:** Kraft made a motion to accept Gabel’s absence from today’s meeting, second by Robinson, motion passed.
* **Treasurer’s Report –** Kraft made a motion to approve the February Treasurer’s Report as presented and reviewed, second by Robinson, motion passed.
* **Travel & Meetings –** Travel is approved during the 2023 Legislative Session as required to testify on bills.
* **Standing Committee Reports**
* **City Reservoir** – covered earlier in the meeting.
* **Fly Creek drainage –** covered in NRCS report
* **Lake Elmo State Park Project** & video update– covered in FWP report
* **Unscheduled Matters** – none
* **Public comments** – none
* **Next YCD Board Meeting** – Next YCD meeting tentative date: April 11, 2023
* Kraft motion to adjourn at 12:21 pm.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Chad Sedgwick , Chair LaVerne Ivie, YCD Administrator**