 **BIG SIOUX RIVER PROJECT**

**Steering Committee Meeting Minutes**

**March 17, 2021**

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**Location:** Dell Rapids City Hall, 302 E 4th St., Dell Rapids, SD 57022

Virtual Zoom Meeting hosted by the City of Dell Rapids

**Time and Date:** 09:00-11:00 Wednesday, March 17th, 2021

**Attendees:** Barry Berg, Darrel DeBoer, Kris Dozark, Travis Entenman, Jay Gilbertson, Brett Hennings, Dean Jaycox, Chris Karr, Alexa Kruse, Dana Loseke, Barry McLaury, Holly Meier, Matt Morlock, John Parker, Carolyn Rudebusch, Jeremy Schellhaas, Brian Top, Daniel Wehmeyer, Justin Weiland

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**Meeting called to order at 9:04am by Minnehaha Conservation District Project Sponsor, John Parker.**

**Approval of December 22nd meeting minutes, one correction:**

Darrell asked for clarification on EQIP numbers, Barry will look into it.

Motion Justin Weiland, seconded Darrell DeBoer, motion carried.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Additions to Other Business: Adopting advisory procedure (from Feb meeting); Chris Karr on HB-1256.

Motion John Parker, seconded Justin Weiland, motion carried.

**NRCS Update by Dan Wehmeyer:**

EQIP has $180,444 and received 52 applications. 18 were high priority applications, and 3-4 can be funded.

CSP application deadline is March 26th. 30 applications have been received so far, and 2-3 can be funded.

CIS application deadline is April 15th. There have been 2-3 proposals so far. Possible pre and post water quality monitoring for CIS applications/sites.

**City of Sioux Falls Update by Holly Meier:**

Green infrastructure projects with water quality benefits <https://siouxfalls.org/green-improvements>

One stormwater property at Covell Ave at 36th and Duluth, working with ISG on engineering design

Project will catch and treat flows with rain gardens and bio-basins

Two rain gardens at Tuthill park and Timber Oak Trail

Sustainability master plan update process underway, community engagement sustainability survey available April 1st-30th

**Big Sioux River Project Update by Barry Berg:**

**Segment 4 Progress**

Finalizing digitizing sites so they can go to contract

**SRAM/RAM Status**

RAM: As of April, 1-4 producers and 82 acres, 1-2 new producers left to survey (30-40 more acres)

SRAM: 229 acres finished, couple more need to be surveyed this spring. Two producers (46 total acres on Skunk Creek) who were surveyed and signed applications cannot do SRAM this year due to prior grazing agreements but will put their land into SRAM next year.

Currently just over 300 acres are committed with SRAM and RAM, but will know final numbers in June, likely 400 acres or so (typical year is 300-500 acres)

**Working Lands Easement (WLE) Program**

The first BRSP WLE is in the works. Currently, the 82.4ac of marginal pastureland adjacent to Skunk Creek is enrolled in SRAM. By moving into WLE, the producer will add 27.2ac of adjacent cropland, for a total of 109.6ac in the WLE. Producer will pay back $32,960 from his 8 years remaining in SRAM, and we will pay him for the perpetual easement.

**RCPP Update**

Waiting on funding. BSRP will work on tweaking ranking and screening to get some producers in where we can get the most bang for the buck.

**Big Sioux River Project Outreach Campaign by Alexa Kruse:**

The branding has been finalized, still working on a website that lays out all the basics of the BSRP.

Marketing plans, from post cards to advertisement to content marketing (biggest effort). Scheduling content and engagement campaigns to launch in June.

Creating events and activities for education, such as scavenger hunts and trash cleanups. In-classroom education development will continue throughout the summer for fall signup for classrooms.

Update on Big Sioux Water Festival in Brookings—videos completed and 444 students signed up for “How Watersheds Work.”

**State Riparian Buffer Initiative Update by Jay Gilbertson:**

Currently, details are still minimal, but the working group will meet again next Monday. Physical requirements on the land will be similar to what is in the code to receive the tax break (50 feet min to 120 feet max, no grazing, etc), the rest will look a lot like SRAM. Priority areas are in development. RCPP could be a potential for matching funds and local resources. The biggest change in this bill is that those enrolled currently have to go fill out the paperwork once a year, but now it will only have to be filled out once every 10 years. 1042 passed with minimal/no opposition and will go into play July 1st.

**Other Business:**

**Steering committee operating procedures, adopted by the MCD board in Nov/Dec**

Cleaned up the operating procedures to be more consistent with the way the committee functions in an advisory capacity. Now any group with a vested interest in the project could come forward and be a part of the committee.

**HB-1256 Big Sioux River Emergency Declaration Update by Representative Chris Karr**

Representative Karr talked about his experience, challenges, and what he learned with executing HB-1256. For special appropriations there are 4 years to use the dollars, but it would be great to be able to go back to Pierre next year and show the outcomes, metrics, and dollars used.

**Motion to adjourn Jay Gilbertson, seconded Justin Weiland, 11:14am.**