



MINUTES

Montcalm Conservation District Board Meeting

USDA Service Center

77 S. State St., Stanton, MI 48888

March 12, 2024, 8:30 a.m.

- I. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order by Mark at 8:30 a.m.
 - I. **Directors Present:** Welder, Mark, Sabin, Noll, Wyckoff
 - II. **Absent:** Assoc. Director J. Johansen
 - III. **Staff Present:** Silveus, Hayes, MAEAP - Christensen
 - IV. **Other:** Assoc. Director S. Aagaard, NRCS – Buitenwerf, Public – Chris Johnson, Amber Snow
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Public Comment:** N/A
- IV. **Recognition of Guest(s):** Mark thanks Chris Johnson for attending.
- V. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Wyckoff to approve agenda as presented, seconded by Sabin. Ayes: All. Motion carried.
- VI. **Approval of Consent Items:**
 - **Minutes of February 13, 2024 Meeting**
 - **Minutes of February 21, 2024 Special Meeting**
 - **Minutes of February 28, 2024 Special Meeting**
 - **Staff/Agency Reports:**
 - **District Manager**
 - **FAP Forester - Vacant**
 - **Conservation Program Technician**
 - **Resource Recovery / Conservation Program Technician**
 - **MAEAP**
 - **NRCS**
 - **Produce Safety Technician**
 - **MDARD**

Silveus stated a change needed on the Produce Safety Coffee Chats flyer. The event begins at 9:00 a.m., not 7:30 a.m., on March 27 and April 10. Motion by Noll to approve consent items with changes, seconded by Wyckoff. Ayes: All. Motion carried.
- VII. **Approval of Treasurer's Report:** Motion by Sabin to approve Treasurer's Report as presented, seconded by Noll. Ayes: All. Motion carried.
- VIII. **Correspondence:** N/A
- IX. **Officer Reports:**
 - Chairman:** N/A
 - Vice Chairman:** Mark congratulated Silveus on her new position as District Manager.
 - Treasurer:** Sabin reported Pheasants Forever graduating over 150 hunter safety students in the past few months. Big L will be hosting their Seed Day on April 6 and Sabin will be presenting on soil health at the White Pine District Library on March 20.
- X. **Reports:**
 - Director Noll:** Noll congratulated Silveus on her new position as District Manager and reminded her that she represents the Montcalm Conservation District in everything she does.
 - Director Wyckoff:** Wyckoff congratulated Silveus on her new position as District Manager and reported Ducks Unlimited will be hosting a fun shoot this Saturday at 8:00 a.m. at the Flat River Conservation Club in Greenville. Wyckoff also suggested a board member attend and present at the Montcalm County Board of Commissioners monthly meeting to keep the county informed on



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district happenings. Wyckoff also reported that he, on behalf of the Flat River Watershed Council (FRWC), Silveus, Hayes and Ionia Conservation District's J Heise had a worthwhile experience at the Quiet Adventure Symposium (QAS) on March 2. Wyckoff requested board members receive business cards for them to handout at events such as QAS. Wyckoff received approximately 100 business cards; the other board members declined the offer.

Assoc. Director Johansen: N/A

Assoc. Director Aagaard: Aagaard stated she is still looking into Kayak-a-Thon liability. Aagaard also mentioned she will be attending the 100 Women Who Care event at Montcalm Community College on June 16, where she will present on her All Things That Flutter butterfly garden. Aagaard will also be attending Kent Conservation District's Conservation Showcase & Dinner on March 21.

MDARD – Jack Knorek: N/A

NRCS – Buitenwerf thanked the district for its partnership and interest in NRCS programs.

Buitenwerf reported her completion of the paperwork necessary for rehiring a soil technician. She also reported an increase in forestry needs, where at least four contracts will require the expertise of a district forester. Snow stated the potential of three SAF candidates for the forester position, and Silveus announced an application she received via email. Buitenwerf reported working on over 20 contracts in both Montcalm and Ionia County.

Friends of Montcalm Conservation District: N/A

XI. Old Business:

Review Planning Calendar: Sabin reported being on track with the planning calendar but suggested dropping Shred-it day and all other recycling requirements after June 28. Snow reported having contacted EGLE about using half of the scrap tire grant money. Snow will forward the response to Silveus.

Forest Maintenance/Projects: Sabin stated he will contact a company about installing vinyl siding on the facility in the Comden-Towle Model Forest. Water-testing the pump was also discussed. The board scheduled a Model Forest work day for clearing trails, cleaning the restrooms and other necessary tasks. The next board meeting will take place at the Comden-Towle Model Forest at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 9, with the Model Forest work day immediately following the meeting's adjournment.

Spring Tree Sale: Silveus reported 31 orders collected so far.

Flat River Watershed Council Kayak-a-Thon: Silveus reported she is still waiting to hear back from Fischer Insurance on liability concerns.

District Manager Transition: N/A

XII. New Business

Partnership Opportunity: Montcalm County 4H is looking to partner on a kid-friendly workshop promoting the butterfly garden at the fairgrounds. Activities suggested include plant identification, rock painting, orienteering and the shooting truck. Sabin noted orienteering or the shooting truck might fit better with another event. Sabin recommended checking with Pheasants Forever on acquiring grant money from their No Child Left Indoors program.

Scholarship Release: The scholarship was released on March 8 and submissions will be due on Friday, April 5. Silveus contacted the scholarship review board.



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Electronics Container: The district received the official severance letter from the county terminating Resource Recovery Services on June 28, 2024. The county paid \$1,100 for the electronics container but has not decided what to do with it yet. It was suggested that if the county does not take the container, the district should sell it to avoid continuing rental payments to the landlord, Warren Wells. Welder stated a letter should be written to Wells discussing the contract severance.

Policy Manual Updates: Silveus agreed to make comments on the current policy manual and send them to the personnel committee for review. The committee and Silveus will meet to discuss the changes, and the board will review and discuss any policy manual changes at the following meeting.

XIII. Public Comment: Christensen discussed potential cuts to conservation districts and the MAEAP program. Christensen stated that he will be sending basic, anonymous surveys to anyone interested in having their opinions recorded. Chris Johnson offered to help at the Model Forest Work Day. He suggested erecting the fallen sign on the corner of McBrides Rd. and Grow Rd. as well as continuing to expand the district's partnerships to grow support of our shared millage. Johnson also complimented the two presentations he attended put on by Silveus and Snow.

XIV. Adjournment: Motion by Wyckoff to adjourn meeting, seconded by Welder. Ayes: All. Motion carried. Vice Chairman Mark declared meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.

MINUTES APPROVED:

MCD _____

Date

4-9-24