

PENNINGTON COUNTY WEED & PEST BOARD

Pennington County Weed & Pest Office

3607 Cambell Street, Rapid City, SD

Wednesday, June 8, 2022, 12:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Jerry Hirrschoff, Chairman
Mark DiSanto, Vice Chairman
Paul Paulsen

Members Absent:

Deb Hadcock, County Commissioner Liaison
Bert Jocks

Others Present:

Scott Guffey, Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hirrschoff called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m.

Additional Items / Approve Agenda

Guffey ask that Black Hills Forest Advisory Board to be added at the end of the agenda. Motion made by DiSanto to approve the agenda with the additional item, seconded by Paulsen, motion carried. Motion made by DiSanto to approve meeting minutes for the April 8, 2022 meeting, seconded by Jocks, motion carried.

Budget Report

Scott Guffey presented Budget Report for Weed & Pest (615) and Natural Resources (616) budgets. Weed & Pest (615) has 68% remaining, Forestry budget (616) is at 72% for the remainder of the year.

OLD BUSINESS

Shaded Fuel Break

Some of the crew is finishing up working on the Norris Peak Timber Sale area, with the shade fuel break project. We have had 18 loads of saw logs hauled to the Spearfish mill at \$36/ton rate for a total of \$20,307 in revenue so far. There have been 4 loads of POL hauled to Rapid City this week, will get paid for those loads in a couple of weeks. Crew is cleaning up remaining slash, will be done this week. Guffey signed a hazardous fuels and timber stand improvement activities master agreement with the Black Hills National Forest Mystic District. There will be a participating agreement to sign for the \$20k Title II funds the county was awarded to do fuels mitigation work.

Black Hills National Forest Plan Revision

Guffey and County Commissioner Ron Rossknecht have been appointed the points of contact by the Pennington County Board of County Commmissioners to represent Pennington County on the Black Hills National Forest's forest plan revision. Guffey and Rossknecht met forest supervisor Jeff Tomac to go over the county's Cooperating Agency Status MOU with the forest service for the forest plan revision. The final agreement will go in front the county commissioner for signature. Pennington County is currently working with the other Black Hills SD counties to coordinate efforts where they agree. Looking to hire consultant/coordinator to help facilitate the joint efforts. Currently Guffey has been trying to fill that role.

2022 Weed Spraying Agreements

Still waiting on SD DOT RR from the state, should be getting it soon. Guffey met with Rapid City Parks and Rec Director Scott Anderson to go over our agreement with the city on spraying the city property, will continue as in the past. Guffey will coordinate with the city to finally get the boot brush stations in place on some city

hiking trails. Again this year will be spraying for the White River Grazing District on the Rake Creek allotment on the Buffalo Gap National Grasslands.

Japanese Beetle Maidstone Ct Landowner Meeting

Guffey ended up sending out another letter to the Maidstone Ct Landowners for control of the Japanese Beetles in the area, offering the county will pay for the treatment. Guffey didn't hear back from all the landowners, so he didn't want to take the chance of not getting all the properties treated in the area. All properties were treated with a larvicide treatment on June 2nd by Warne Chemical for total cost of \$1,450. Guffey said the funding will be paid for from the chemical grant from the state. He will place JB traps in the area next week and will be able to tell if the treatments were successful next fall looking at the trap counts.

NEW BUSINESS

2023 Budget

The board of commissioners gave 2023 budget preparation instructions in late April, that included placement of employees on the new 2023 wage scale with at least a 1.5% increase. Operations expenditures to be prepared as anticipated reflecting any increases or decreases and health care insurance with a 3% increase. Guffey froze operation costs on the Weed & Pest and Forestry (615 & 616) budgets. He reduced the vehicle replacement line item by \$12k to help reduce the budget, with wage increases the Weed & Pest budget increased by \$12,685 (3%). The Forestry (616) increased by \$14,551 (14%) due to wage increases. Guffey was able to get a \$6,618 increase in the Title III funds share for on the ground forestry work, we now have \$11,417 in that budget. The conservation districts and animal damage budgets were submitted with no increases from last year.

Department Staffing

Guffey said the department has been operating short staffed since Max Bailey left at the end of April. Guffey worked with the Human Resources Department to develop a Operations Manager job description, the position will essential be a jack of all trades job. The individual will be responsible for the department's vouchers and payroll, as well as working in the field and occasionally filling for Guffey at meetings. The Pennington County Commissioners approved the Operations Manager position at their May 17th meeting and it has been advertised for 2 weeks, we only received 8 applicants. Guffey and Foreman Craig Smith have begun interviewing applicants, hope to have someone in place by July. Guffey said they have hired two seasonal applicators, Nic Koehler and Jon DeRuyter, two college students from BHSU and so far they are working out good. Guffey hired another college student this morning, Ben Wheeler. Should be staffed for seasonal help now, Guffey said he will have DiSanto start doing some weed enforcement work.

Crew Update

Guffey said that the crew has been working hard on finishing up the Norris Peak timber cut, should be done tomorrow. Crews have also been spraying for over a month now, bare-ground work is all done, sprayed Rapid City area hoary cress and absinthe wormwood and now have started on county road side weed spraying out east. Have been waiting for the ground to dry up to start on the Buffalo Gap National Grasslands and White River Grazing District south of Wall, planning on starting down there next week.

Additional Item

Guffey was appointed to the Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board (NFAB) as the state, county, local-elected or appointed office, South Dakota or Wyoming representative. It has taken two years for the board to get their charter renewed, Guffey said it will be good to have Pennington County represented on the board.

Agency Report

None

ADJOURN

Motion made by DiSanto to adjourn the meeting at 1:45pm, seconded by Paulsen, motion carried.

Next meeting will be August 3rd, 2022.
Submitted by Scott Guffey