

PENNINGTON COUNTY WEED & PEST BOARD
Pennington County Weed & Pest Office
3607 Cambell Street, Rapid City, SD
Wednesday, May 27, 2020, 12:30 pm
Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Dell Petersen, Chairman (joined via-conference call)
Bert Jocks, Vice Chairman
Paul Paulsen
Jerry Hirrschoff
Mark DiSanto, County Commissioner (joined via-conference call)

Members Absent:

Others Present:

Scott Guffey, Director

Chairman Petersen turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Jocks, Jocks called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Additional Items / Approve Agenda

Motion made by Paulsen to approve the agenda, seconded by Hirrschoff, motion carried. Motion made by DiSanto to approve meeting minutes for the February 26, 2020 meeting, seconded by Paulsen, motion carried.

Budget Report

Scott Guffey presented Budget Report for Weed & Pest (615) and Natural Resources (616) budgets. Weed & Pest (615) has 59% left for the remainder of the year. Natural Resource budget (616) is at 55% for the remainder of the year.

OLD BUSINESS

Shaded Fuel Break Update

Crew finished up the fuels mitigation work on the 117-acre Norris Peak Rd shaded fuel break, waiting for the USFS to give us clearance to begin on merchantable removal. Plan on removing the merchantable this fall/winter with the crew and selling the decks. Sheridan Lake road re-alignment, Forest Service ended up doing a direct sale with the county for the removal of the merchantable product in the 200ft clear cut boundary. FS surveyed 940 CCF of sawtimber and sold it to the county at \$9.92/CCF. To expedite the project, Guffey direct sold it to Nieman Timber Co. at \$10/CCF. They should be finished by the first of June removing the merchantable product from the FS. The highway construction contractor will be responsible for disposing the remaining brush, slash and trees on the FS, they are also responsible for removing trees on the private property too.

Gallagher Wage Study

Guffey worked with the county Human Resources Director Jon Morrill on appealing the department's position ratings. They updated the job descriptions and changed a few job titles. The Natural Resources position was moved from an original rating of C43 to D61, on par with the other department head ratings. The Weed & Pest Crew Leader position was re-named to the Natural Resources Foreman position and was moved from a rating of B22 to B31. The Weed & Pest Tech II position was re-named to a Natural Resource Technician and was moved from a rating of A13 to B21. The Weed & Pest Tech I position was re-named into three separate positions (Weed & Pest Applicator, Weed & Pest Enforcement Tech, Natural Resources Sawyer) all three positions are rated a A12. The county commissioners approved the changes at their May 19th meeting and will be used for the 2021 budget prep.

Senate Bill 24 South Dakota Legislation

Senate Bill 24 passed despite opposition from the Association of County Commissioners and Municipal League lobbyists. Guffey testified against the legislation as well, it will remove the fee exempt status on commercial pesticide applicator licenses and the private applicator licenses will no longer be free. It will also increase the SD pesticide registration fees for use by the SD Dept of Ag.

2020 Weed Spraying Agreements & Grants

| Name | Amount |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| SD Weed & Pest Grant | \$6,300.00 |
| SD Mosquito Grant | \$20,000.00 |
| BHNF Mystic | \$81,640.00 |
| BHNF Hell Canyon | \$29,120.00 |
| SD DOT | \$25,000.00 |
| SD DOT RR | \$6,500.00 |
| RMEF Grant - Oxeye Daisy | \$2,500.00 |
| SD Youth Hunting Adventures | \$2,500.00 |
| RMEF Grant - St Johnswort | \$2,500.00 |
| State & Privat Forestry Grant | \$5,000.00 |
| BGNG Spraying | \$10,000.00 |
| BLM | \$11,000.00 |
| SD Weed & Pest Cheyenne River Grant | \$11,350.00 |
| SD Federal Properties | \$300.00 |
| TOTAL | \$213,710.00 |

NEW BUSINESS

Absinth Wormwood Listing on State Declared Noxious Weed List.

The SD Weed & Pest Commission did approve the addition of Absinth Wormwood onto the state declared noxious weed list and removed Russian Knapweed from the state list. It now has to be approved by a legislative sub-committee in June to become official. This will free up a spot on the Pennington County's locally declared list.

2020 Budget Cuts / Chemical – Cost Share Program

The county commissioners asked all departments to cut their 2020 budgets by 10% for fear the county will be short revenue and tax collections due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Guffey didn't have to cut the Weed & Pest or Natural Resources budgets due to increase in projected revenue. Chemical – Cost Share Program. DiSanto made the motion, to offer a \$50 Chemical Cost-share program this year to Pennington County private landowners, seconded by Paulsen – motion carried.

2021 Budget

The 2021 budget direction was to freeze operations portion of budgets, unless you have increase revenue projections to offset increases. Guffey increased the Weed & Pest budget by \$35,000 with \$30,000 of the increase covered by increased revenue projections. The Natural Resources Budget was increased by \$5,700 all in salaries. The department's budget hearing is scheduled for June 19th at 9:15am in the commission chambers.

BHNF Sustainable Harvest Study

The Rocky Mountain Research Station was tasked to create a report to figure out what the sustainable yield is on the Black Hills National Forest using Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) plots on the forest. From their research they produced the General Technical Report (GTR) Timber Growth and Yield in the Black Hills National Forest: A Changing Forest daft 1 published in March 2020. The GTR claims that the current harvest of 153,534 CCF in 2019 were to continue, the live sawtimber volume would be depleted in the next several decades. The GTR says in order to get the forest back to 12 million CCF standing live timber on suitable lands, the current harvest needs to be reduced to 70,000 to 115,000 CCF per year for the next 60 years. Over 300 comments were received on the GTR, with a final report expected to be published this fall. Guffey questioned the mortality rate used in the scenrios and the impact thinning will have on the future yield. Guffey prepared comments for the county commissioners to submit.

BH National Forest Advisory Board

BHNF Public Affairs Officer, Scott Jacobson asked if Guffey would be interested in applying for a position on the Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board. Guffey was granted permission from the county commissioners to apply and included a letter

of recommendation. It's long process and applicants must go to Washington DC for approval. Guffey said this is a influential board and there is only two advisory boards in the nation.

Crew Update

The two ATVs were purchased from Bauerkempers out of Chadron, NE. They still had two 2019 models left and beat Rice Honda's estimate by \$1,000 per ATV. One more seasonal employee is scheduled to start next week. All the bare-ground spraying has been completed for the state DOT and county highway dept. Crew just got done spraying some hoary cress south of Rapid City and absinth wormwood near Silver City on private land and are starting on roadside spraying. The weed enforcement tech will be used to help with spraying this year, due to work load.

Agency Report

None

ADJOURN

Motion made by Paulsen to adjourn the meeting at 2:00 pm, seconded by Hirrschoff, motion carried.

Next meeting will be July 29, 2020.

Submitted by Scott Guffey