



DRAFT
Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Land Conservation Committee

Date of Meeting: Thursday, March 7, 2019

Electronic and Hardcopy Filing Date: Monday, March 11, 2019

The regular meeting of the Land Conservation Committee was called order at 3:10 p.m. by Chairperson Nettie Rosenow. Roll call showed that Don Black and David Linse were present for all or part of the meeting. Don Hillert was absent. Others present for all or part of the meeting: Carrie Olson.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Black made a motion to approve the February 07, 2019 minutes as presented, seconded by Linse. All in favor. Carried.

Public Comments regarding posted agenda items: None

Agency Reports: Buffalo County Farm Service Agency (FSA) blizzard recovery assistance report was reviewed. Producers who suffered excessive livestock death losses or feed losses due to the recent blizzards may be eligible for disaster assistance programs through the USDA FSA. Anyone interested in the program should document losses and contact Buffalo County FSA office for more assistance.

Land Conservation Department 2018 Annual Reports: The 2018 Annual Report for Land Conservation and Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation programs was presented. Accomplishments, goals, and challenges were discussed. Olson pointed out the photos of the county flood repair cost share funding program on the front page showing one of the major accomplishments for the department. The new Farmland Preservation Program was also highlighted. Both the Land Conservation and the Non-Metallic Mining (NMM) Reclamation department program year-end budget reports were shared and discussed. Ms. Olson explained that due to less activity in mine reclamation activity, the NMM budget was under-spent, while the Conservation Department budget was over-spent.

Resolution to Amend Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation Annual Fees: Ms. Olson presented the "Resolution to Amend Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation Annual Fees". Annual fees collected are based on the un-reclaimed area of disturbance and reflects the reasonable and actual costs for administering the program, including reclamation plan review, inspection, reporting, and compliance. Previous fees adopted by resolution in 2014 were \$170 per acre, regardless of size. The proposed fees follow a flat fee schedule. Time tracking and program expense review were used to adjust fees based on the reasonable and actual program administration costs. A discussion on spending annual funds for alternative uses were discussed, including cost-sharing for reclamation. Annual fee funds, administrative costs, and justification of expenses will be reviewed. Resolution tabled.

Conservation Cost Share Projects: The February Cost Share Project Report was presented. Conservation CapX bluff prairie restoration project contractor invoices were presented for the Village of Nelson's Thrive! Park prairie project. Total project costs for the partially completed bluff prairie project is \$9,000.00 and the county CapX share is \$3,375.00. All landowner proof of payments for cost-sharing have been received. Motion by Linse, seconded by Black to approve and pay for the Cost Share Projects as presented. All in favor. Carried.

2020 Joint DATCP/DNR Grant Application: Ms. Olson presented the 2020 DATCP/DNR Grant application for review. The application includes funding for: staffing support, Bond, and SEG conservation projects. The grant application amounts are consistent with previous years' application requests. Final allocation will be based on the state budget and a funding formula.

County Conservationists Report:

- Three Nutrient Management Farmer Education sessions recently held at the courthouse were successful and will result in 8 new Nutrient Management Plans written by farmer/producers.
- Olson shared the Buffalo County Journal article on the Rose Valley watershed funding request that will be presented to the County Board.

Chairperson Report Chair Rosenow discussed information from recent reports on climate change and agricultural demands. She reported that Buffalo County is a valuable resource for agricultural production due to its' potential for resilience to climate change. Rosenow suggested local farmers have a responsibility to manage land to account for changing weather patterns, such as drought or floods.

Public Comments Not Relating to the Agenda None given.
The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, April 4 at 3:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carrie Olson
County Conservationist