

POWELL COUNTY WEED BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
April 21, 2015

Attending: Karen Laitala-Coordinator, Cheryle Wood-Administrative Assistant, Weed Board Members: Jim Stone, Sandy Graveley, Bob Burns, Scott Perkins, and Joe Dippold. Also attending were Rem Mannix, Powell County Representative and Larry Burton from Pioneer Weed Control.

Jim Stone called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. It was moved by Scott Perkins, seconded by Bob Burns, and motion carried to approve the meeting agenda. It was moved by Scott Perkins, seconded by Sandy Graveley, and motion carried to adopt the minutes as presented from the previous meeting, October 21, 2014.

Correspondence: There was no correspondence presented at the meeting.

Coordinators Report: Karen passed out copies of her report to everyone at the meeting; a copy of her report is kept with the minutes. Karen briefly went over the meetings and presentations she attended in April. She also went over the training workshop she hosted in March for the MWCA and the Annual Landowner Meetings that were also held in March and April. She also testified at the State Capital Senate hearings on the Aquatic Invasive Species bills. Karen also reported that she attended the Level 3 Noxious Weed Management Certification Workshop in Bozeman in April. She also attended the MWCA SW Area spring meeting today in Whitehall and she will be taking a short vacation the end of April.

Karen reported that she is still working with the BLM to get more funding from them for this year, since the BLM has been acquiring more land in Powell County. She will also check with the BLM about the weeds on their property on Ophir Creek in the Avon area. Sandy Graveley reported the problem to her at the meeting. There was a brief discussion about the BLM and their funding budget and it was decided that Karen should arrange a meeting with BLM for her and Jim Stone to discuss their plans for the weed funding and find out how BLM is going to be budgeting their funding for weed issues. Karen also reported that she would get the same MDT funding amounts from the three divisions for this next fiscal year as she has received in past years. She also went over the remaining MDT funding for the current fiscal year 2015 that needs to be spent by June 30th. Larry Burton was at the meeting and is aware of the remaining spraying to be completed and he will see that the Missoula division spraying gets finished too. Karen added that she has also been discussing with Keith Edge the problem everyone seems to have with getting all of their aerial spraying work completed during the season. Others on the Board agreed and another aerial sprayer who was mentioned to try contacting was John Semple in Helena. Karen will also check and see if there is anyone in Missoula available too.

Financial & Administrative Report: Cheryle Wood provided copies of the most recent financial reports to the board (list of invoices & claims for the month; 2140 and 2840 fund balances; grant & VMA fund balances; monthly budget balances). Cheryle also provided the annual equipment use summary report to the board; a copy is kept with the minutes. It was moved by Scott Perkins, seconded by Bob Burns, and motion carried to pay the claims. Jim Stone signed the approved claims.

County Commissioner Report: Rem Mannix reported that the SRS and PILT financing bills passed in the Senate and now they are just waiting to see if the President signs them. The Main Street Bridge is completed and the County thought everything was finished with that project, but now a \$139,000 bill has been received from the MDOT for their Admin costs. The County may have to pay that off over time; they are starting their budgeting for the next fiscal year and will be looking at money for that now too. They finished conducting their seminars across the County to answer questions on the law enforcement mill levy election. The mail ballots for the election are out now and will be counted the end of this month on April 28th. Rem also mentioned that Donna

Young met with Montana Rail Link personnel at a local emergency preparedness meeting to discuss what is coming through this area on the trains from the Bakken Oil Field in Montana and North Dakota. They were not sure of the routes yet or what kinds of railroad cars will be coming through Powell County.

County and State Roadside Spray Report: Larry Burton reported that he plans on spraying weeds on the County roads on the south end of the County and he also plans to finish the highways this year that weren't completed last season. He was able to get all the dumpster sites completed. Larry added that they might need to look at spraying the gravel pits in the County this year too. Larry has also started getting his crews and equipment ready for the season and he is training his son-in-law to take over the business eventually.

Sandy Graveley and Karen gave a brief overview about the Palin Subdivision. Only about one third of the lots were sold or built on and the weeds there are getting worse. Karen went through there two weeks ago and there are many empty lots and mostly camp trailers there right now. Jim recommended sending a letter to the developer about working on a spray or bio-control program together to resolve some of the weed issues. Karen might want to send a form letter to all the other VMA's too.

Karen noted that the Anaconda Deer Lodge County Weed Coordinator left his position and the County does not have anyone on board yet for this spray season. MDT discussed this problem with Karen and Larry, because they need something done with that County's State roads and highways this season and no one knows when a new Weed Coordinator will be hired or if they will be prepared in time. Larry and Karen are proposing to do the spraying for Anaconda Deer Lodge County's State highways and to their County lines this year and MDT has agreed to give us their funding and the 10% Admin to do the work. MDT wants all the adjoining Counties to do this for them this season, Butte-Silver Bow and Granite Counties will be helping too. The Board was O.K. with Karen and Larry doing this, if the money comes directly from MDT to us for doing the work. Larry added that he is fine with doing this and should have time to do our work and theirs, if the weather holds to the June 30th deadline. MDT has already let Karen know that Anaconda Deer Lodge County has \$10,600 left to use through June 30th. Karen will coordinate with Mike at MDT on exactly how much Larry is to spend. Everyone agreed to the plan and helping MDT with the spraying.

While on the subject of roads, Karen added that the Lewis & Clark County Road Dept. has complained to the State MDT about our weeds along our County roads. The subject was brought up at the MDT meeting she recently attended. This has happened with L & C County before. Karen would like to meet with the L & C County Road Dept. to go over our weed budget as compared to theirs for weed control and sort through our spraying process as compared to theirs. Karen will contact them and try to arrange for them to come to one of our meetings along with Mike from MDT and Larry. If they cannot all come to an evening meeting, she will try to arrange an afternoon time that works for everyone.

City Weed Report: Dave Austin was not at the meeting, so there was no City weed report. Karen added that she is not sure what kind of a budget the City has for weeds, so she will write them a letter for more information.

Member Reports: Scott Perkins reported that he has been seeing leafy spurge back in the places where the sheep grazing took place a few years ago. Karen is working on another grazing program for next season for the Clark Fork Coalition. They are doing some spraying right now as part of their Superfund clean-up project at their Dry Cottonwood Ranch.

Karen reported that there are some changes with the budget this next fiscal year. One change is with Capital Outlay. According to the Finance Officer, Karen needs to give an amount to her this time that Karen wants put in Outlay. In addition, any increases in expenditures have to be justified and should try to follow the increase percentage for inflation given in the budget worksheet, 0.67%. Karen would still like to request a mill levy increase when there is a good time to try it in the future. The Weed Dept. will also have to figure in the new monthly \$100.71 water and sewer line charges in their new budget.

Rem reported that the County is looking at putting in a groundwater well at the fairgrounds to save the County some money. That source of water could be used for watering all the grounds and could be used for the livestock washing stations. It is too expensive to treat the water to potable standards, but the groundwater well will still help meet those other watering needs.

Old Business: Karen reported that there has been no progress yet on funding for weeds from oil money for across the State, but she will keep working on it for the next legislative session. MCWA did get two bills signed on work towards an aquatic invasive species trust. There was no money attached to them, but it should help establish a path to funding in the future for a separate aquatic invasive species trust fund.

Board Members Election: Jim Stone and Dean Dutton are serving for another three years; Rem submitted the appointments for them.

New Business: Equipment Repair and Maintenance Position – Karen reported that Joey has moved to Idaho, so she needs to get someone new for this season. She will advertise the position and she will continue to check the equipment in and out through the office. There are now maintenance record books in the office to help keep better track of the mileage on each ATV and their scheduled maintenance times. She bought a new 2014 ATV and a new sprayer system at the end of last year to replace the older 2002 ATV. She was able to use the older 2002 ATV on the trade-in for the last new 2014 ATV the dealer had left in stock. The new sprayer system is more efficient and safer. She has already had the new sprayer system mounted on the new ATV, the welding on the trailer has been upgraded, and our attachments secured to the trailer. As we upgrade the other ATVs, we will upgrade the sprayer systems too. Rem will check on the amount limits for selling our used equipment by advertisement in case we do not want to use the older ATV as a trade-in the next time we upgrade.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 2015, at 7:00 P.M.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.