



**Gallatin County Weed Board
Regular Monthly Meeting
May 3, 2012**

Board members present were Fred Bell (Chair), Jeff Littlefield, Keith Mainwaring, Craig Morgan and Commissioner Joe Skinner. Bob Hofman was excused. **Others** present were Michelle Dammen (Conservation District), Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator) and Rosemary Perry (Secretary). John Ansley (coordinator) was excused.

Minutes. Bell brought up discussion on some items in the Minutes of the April Board Meeting. He feels that we should be able to charge for gravel pit inspections. Following the April Weed Board meeting Ansley had Bremer (Deputy County Attorney) check further regarding the ability of the Weed District to charge fees for gravel pit inspections. We cannot charge those fees. There was a lot of discussion with one idea that maybe the gravel pits looking to sell certified gravel could be processed in the same manner as Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage. Bell asked that Ansley contact the Department of Agriculture to pursue this option. Currently TMC is the only gravel pit company that is working with the gravel pit certification program in our area. Commissioner Skinner felt that it was a public benefit to have certified gravel available. Bell stated that he felt the Board needed to continue developing the written agreement between municipalities and the county. Commissioner Skinner asked that Ansley check with Blattie (MACo Executive Director) regarding this. After this discussion the Minutes of the April Meeting were approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Complaint Form.** A copy of the new complaint form was passed around for the Board to review. The form was approved by the County Attorney's office and has been posted on line. All complaints generated from this point, either by the Weed District or the public will need to be submitted on this form.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Public Comment/ Other.** Michelle Dammen stated that she is leaving the Conservation District and her last day will be May 14th. The Conservation District hopes to have a new education person on board by June 1st.
2. **Monthly Report Q&A.**
 - Bell asked about the DNRC Grant for work in the Hebgen Basin area. Commissioner Skinner informed him that the County had agreed to sponsor the grant and that it was for work on Grayling Creek.
 - Bell asked if would be possible to reapply for the Hebgen Basin grant in a year. Discussion followed regarding the NWTF grant process and administration fees. The Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grants do not pay administration fees so these have to be budgeted into our regular budget.

- There was a question regarding the purchase of water test strips. These are used to check the pH of the water when mixing herbicides as the pH level can change the effects of herbicide activity.
- Bell asked if we were getting fees for Extensions of WMPs for subdivisions. We are in the process of getting that established.
- There was a question regarding a resident on Patterson Road asking for help to spray the roadsides. The resident was told that the Weed District sprays the roadside and was offered help with cost share and sprayer rental for his own property.
- Bell asked about the Zero Spread signs. He would like to have one. They are provided by MWCA and we have some in our office.
- Bell asked about the cost of the sprayer delivery. The shipping quote was for approximately \$280, so either Ansley or Jones plan to pick it up. The value of their time was brought up.
- 3. Special County Grant.** The grant application is on line and we were unable to access it for the meeting. The application has been sent to the Grants Department for approval, prior to submitting it to the State. In order to receive State funding the Weed District needs to have an approved Weed Management Plan on file with the Department of Agriculture.
- 4. Weed Management Plan.** The Weed Management Plan had been mailed to the Board for review. There was discussion regarding the weed law, special weed management areas and municipalities. Following discussion Mainwaring moved to approve the Weed Management Plan as presented; Morgan seconded and the Weed Management Plan stands approved by the Board. It will now be submitted to the Commissioners for approval before sending the document to Helena.
- 5. Commissioner Report.** Commissioner Skinner told the Board that Ansley was at the Budget meeting on Wednesday. Funding levels will stand pretty much the same as last year. Jones brought up a number of questions regarding discrepancies in the paperwork the District received. Commissioner Skinner stated that the Commission had approved the preliminary start up budget and we need to contact Blackman and discuss the issues as soon as possible.
- 6. Coordinator Report.**
 - Crew Update. Jones reported that we had received a number of applications this year. We have two (2) returnees, and have hired four (4) others who have had experience spraying for other county weed districts.
 - Noxious Weed Management Workshop. This was an MSU program and Jones felt it was an excellent training. There are three (3) levels of this training and this was Level 1.
 - Wagner's Flower and Garden Show. Jones had the booth on his own last year and it was really busy so this year both Ansley and Jones attended. It was not as busy but they made some good contacts.
 - SW Area Meeting. This year the SW Area crew training will be in Butte and will be hosted by BLM. It will include ATV Training and First Aid training. The SW Area Committee has decided to hold a meeting in Butte for all the SW Area members. This will be an outreach to members who are not involved with government entities.
 - Meeting with Steve Saunders (DOW Agro) and Clay Williams (Park County Weed Coordinator). Ansley went with Saunders and Williams to investigate the extent of the St. Johnswort on Bozeman Pass.
 - GVLТ Weed Walk. Ansley and Jones both participated in this activity. They discussed the possibility of developing a small grant area with GVLТ to address the St. Johnswort issue in the Kelly Canyon and Story Hills area.

- Weed Manager's Meeting. FWP and MDT did not attend however the meeting was very productive and we have a number of cooperative projects planned for the upcoming season.
 - Farm and Ranch Show. Jones worked the booth on Saturday and Ansley worked Sunday. Saturday was a busy day; however Sunday was slower. Jones made a good contact with a property owner in Aspen Meadows where we are hoping to do a lot of work on the orange hawkweed infestation.
 - Farm Fair. Ansley, Jones and Mohler will work May 8th and 10th. MSU will work the booth on the 9th.
 - Budget. There were a number of discrepancies in the paperwork that was handed out in Personnel, Operations and Capital. Commissioner Skinner stated that the Commission had approved the preliminary start up budget which is pretty much the same as last year's funding. Ansley needs to meet with Blackman as soon as possible to get these issues sorted out.
7. **Round Table.** Littlefield questioned the large balance in the budget that we have not spent this year. This figure will drop dramatically when the seasonal crews start and we get our herbicide order. Bell suggested going over the balance with Blackman.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20PM.

The next meeting will be June 7th.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Perry, Secretary