

SOUTH DAKOTA SECOND CENTURY HABITAT FUND
BOARD MEETING
PIERRE, SD
FEBRUARY 20, 2020

Board Members Present: Jim Faulstich, DeLon Mork, Jim Scull, Ex Officio Board Member Kelly Hepler, GFP Department Secretary, and Legislative Advisor, Senator John Wiik. Others attending by teleconference: Steve Halverson, Larry Ness and Gary Jensen GFP Commission Chair. Others present: Colette Kessler USDA State Public Affairs Officer, Tom Kirschenmann GFP and Executive Director Lisa Weyer.

CALL TO ORDER AND CHANGES TO AGENDA

President Jim Scull called the meeting of the South Dakota Second Century Habitat Fund board to order at 10:03am CT and a quorum was present. No declarations or conflict of interest were heard. Faulstich introduced Colette Kessler USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and requested some time on the agenda for her to speak on potential opportunities for the board. Introduction was made for Legislative Advisor Senator Wiik.

APPROVE MINUTES OF JANUARY 10, 2020 AND JANUARY 30, 2020 MEETING

Faulstich moved to approve minutes as presented, seconded by Hepler and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

FINANCIAL REPORT & PAYABLES

Weyer explained the financial report and the payable to Stulken, Petersen, Lingle, Walti & Jones, LLP in the amount of \$383.40. Financials were done by the new accounting firm through year end 2019. A request was made for more detailed information on the funds at the SD Community Foundation. Weyer will check on restrictions and purpose of these accounts and report back to the board. The board would like to see a list of working lands payments along with any other payables made each meeting as part of the financial report.

Mork moved to approve the financial report and payable as presented, seconded by Hepler and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

OTHER:

Hepler asked to have a discussion around what the Legislature is asking GFP. The Legislature is questioning how the million dollars appropriated to Second Century Habitat Fund will be spent. There is a concern that if the money is coming from the Legislature, then they want to see reasonable access to hunt for the public.

It was suggested to add a checkbox to the contract to ask permission if the landowner will allow reasonable access to the enrolled land for public to hunt. Reasonable access is outlined in Statue 41.2.23.

Senator Wiik stated that he understands the role of the Working Lands Program, which is creating places for the birds to live; not creating hunting access.

FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Habitat Partner of the Year Award/Criteria postponed to the March meeting agenda.

As requested at the last meeting, a detailed task list was provided for the Precision Ag & Conservation Specialist position. This position will be the main person working on the Every Acre Counts program data.

Weyer stated that she has asked for a MOU from Pheasants Forever and a report will be given every month on the progress of the Every Acre Counts program.

GOVERNANCE

Board Vacancy –The recommendation is Curt Korzan out of Kimball. He owns Grand Slam Hunts. Hepler will get a final approval from the Governor's Office.

Legislative Advisor Appointments are Senator John Wiik and Representative Nancy York, but confirming acceptance from Representative York yet.

Meeting Schedule for 2020

March 24 – Matthews Training Center (Pierre)

April 24 – Matthews Training Center (Pierre)

May 19 – Matthews Training Center (Pierre) - This date will likely change

June 23 – Matthews Training Center (Pierre)

USDA STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS - Collette Kessler

Faulstich stated the reason for bringing Kessler to the meeting originated from a recent SD Grassland Coalition meeting. They have a CCGA Grant through Natural Resource Conservation Service that has funding to focus on communication. There is potential to partner with USDA in communication efforts to publish articles about the Working Lands Program.

Kessler explained what NRCS is about. Explained the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and stated the deadline is March 20, 2020. Kessler talked about how they can better deliver farm bill programs. People can come into their office on a voluntary basis and help them set up a conservation plan. Once they have a conservation plan to address their needs that is when it sets them up for all the other programs. Handout provided of field offices for NRCS. The District Conservationist will be reaching out in their areas looking for project proposals.

This group could coordinate with landowners and apply for funding through NRCS. Or could go back to partner with someone like Pheasants Forever. Question was brought up about having enough manpower within the Board.

Kirschenmann stated that GFP field staff are very aware of all the different conservation programs offered by the USDA, so when talking to a landowner they can share that information.

Hepler stated we are going to have some working capital. Need to find two or three things that can make a difference and when trying to do fundraising can show some success.

Kirschenmann can work with Norton and NRCS and go over the different programs to bring to the board at the next meeting.

GFP will put a presentation together that will provide ideas of possible programs that the Second Century Habitat Board can be involved.

Faulstich made a motion to partner with the SD Grassland Coalition and potentially with SD Soil Health Coalition, subject to their approval tomorrow, to do a publicity campaign on the benefits of putting some of this marginal land, especially wet areas and saline areas, into grasslands with multiple benefits; seconded by Mork and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Kessler and Weyer will work together on the communicate strategy.

Faulstich made the motion to invite NRCS staff Jeff Zimprich, Jeff Vander Wilt and Collette Kessler to our future meeting as advisors; seconded by Hepler and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Halverson stated we should also invite other organizations that has ties to matching funds.

Secretary Hepler will make a list and reach out to the non-governmental organizations to invite them to be advisors to the Second Century Habitat Board.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVE

Fundraising Efforts:

Money coming in from the Hunt for Habitat and possibly the POET donation.

We need to check with Denny Sanford to see if he has any interest in donating.

Board would like to see youth involvement in a future program and inclusion of water quality and aquatic habitat.

A subcommittee, of Jensen, Hepler and Mork, was created to review the current mission statement and bring back suggestions of new verbiage that will reflect a broader perspective.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Discussion took place about revising the Working Lands Program contract; specifically, sections 2, 3, 4 and 12.

It was decided to maintain the current contract with the following changes:

- Adding the checkbox to volunteer access to the public
- Allow fillable dates in section 3

Second Century Working Lands Habitat Program – Update provided of enrolled landowners.

Every Acre Counts Program – monthly report provided.

GFP COMMISSION UPDATE

No update

OTHER COMMENTS/UPDATES:

Request to vote to change bylaws allowing voting rights to the Legislative Advisors.

ADJOURN

Mork made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Faulstich seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Scull adjourned the meeting at 12:08PM CT

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Weyer, Executive Director

Date

Approved by,

Jim Scull, President

Date