

MINUTES

December 5, 2019

JOHNSON COUNTY WEED & PEST CONTROL DISTRICT BOARD

Members Present:

Scott Lutterman, Chairman

Tyler Benton

Nathan Williams

Others Present:

Rod Litzel, Supervisor

Katie Hepp, District Clerk

Meeting was called to order at 4:20 pm by Chairman Lutterman. Minutes for the October 31st meeting were approved with a motion by Tyler and a second by Nathan. Financial Statements for November were reviewed. Nathan moved to approve the financial statements for the general and leafy spurge funds. Tyler seconded the passing motion. Tyler moved to pay the vouchers and to allow the clerk to write utility, salary, salary related assessments and staff benefit checks as needed. Motion passed after a second from Nathan.

Under old business, Rod reported that the APHIS USDA invoices had finally arrived. The grasshopper account has \$81,690.00 in it, a total of \$76,597.69 is due to APHIS leaving a balance of \$5093.11 in that account. Nathan moved to pay the APHIS invoices and transfer the remainder of the funds back to the general account with the exception of one dollar to keep that account open. Tyler seconded the passing motion. Rod gave the activity report. He had attended fall conference the first week of November, took a couple weeks off, busy with mapping and the audit was done. Rod reported that he had visited with the manager at Big Horn Co-op regarding them wanting to be a part of the vendor coupon program and will follow up with them in the spring. Rod reported that the preferred new building site may not be available from the County for awhile after discussions with the county Road & Bridge Foreman and Commissioners. The Board discussed the site situation. It might be a good thing because of the upcoming Grasshopper season, perhaps keep the options open with the site next door but agreed that the lot next to the fairgrounds was the ideal location so being patient for now was the best plan. Rod reported that at fall conference the declared species resolutions had passed, resolution regarding the Governor and council to focus on invasive grass passed, resolution to add administrative requirements to become a certified supervisor passed after a change in the required hours and a resolution that was initiated at conference regarding guiding principles and setting up a committee passed. The Governor was at the fall conference and spoke highly of the Johnson County Weed & Pest. There was a lot of discussion on how to get more board members more involved with council business. Many felt it was a matter of timing and agreed that there should be a separate, focused, educational meeting for board members; maybe, in January.

Under new business Rod reported that he was a member of the Black Footed Ferret Working Group. It is important for the Weed & Pest to maintain a "seat at the table" regarding the Black Footed Ferret in order to have first-hand knowledge of what is going on. The "Friends of the Ferret" are seeking funding to treat/control plague in Prairie Dogs. The releasing of ferrets in Meteetsee had largely failed due to known plague. John Emric with that group and ex G&F Commissioner has went to Washington trying to get funding to treat for plague; but, going back to Washington seems to just be a never ending cycle and potentially unsustainable. There needs to be more studying if the breeding in captivity is the root of the problem. They just keep releasing ferrets, it failing and then not finding out why. Rod reported that he had received, completed and returned a records request from Senator James wanting information on gross wages of job positions. Rod reported that he had a lady drop by from the Department of Workers Compensation. They offer to do onsite inspections so that you are ready for an OSHA inspection if that were to happen. In addition, the offer several programs that give discounts; Drug Free Work Place a discount of 10% which would save the District approximately \$400 and a Safety discount that could earn the District a 3% to 10% discount. The inspection sounds like a good idea; but, not sure about all the requirements for the discounts. It was agreed by general consensus to look further into the guidelines of each program, then to try the Drug free work place one and make a decision on the safety one regarding the guidelines. Rod reported that they are ready to start the Russian olive/Salt cedar project on Streeter after the first of the year. He has 3 crew members to spray and an equipment operator lined up for 20 to 30 days; 2 of the crew members will only work on their break from college. Rocky Mountain Equipment has a new rotary mulching machine that might work better because you do not have to limb the trees first. The cost would be twice that of the cutter used last year, but, the production should double. The Board agreed to have them demo the machine, if it works better continue to use it and if not then go back to the turbo saw. Rod lead discussion on the grapel forks used on the skid steer last year caused problems with the skid steer. The forks need to push rather than grab and have a mounting bracket so that it is further out in front so a non-hydraulic head would be better. The Board discussed having one built and renting it verses having one built and buying it. Rod will check into these options and cost, maybe, a way to just take the hydraulic cylinder off and getting rid of a majority of the problems. Rod presented a request from the Ag in the Classroom for donation. The Ag in the Classroom provides educational programs in the schools. It was agreed by general consensus to "not go down that road" otherwise requests for donations will be never ending.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous ballot at 5:30 pm. The next regular business meeting will be January 2nd at 4 pm.

