

Morris County Conservation District 77th Annual Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2017

The Morris County Conservation District held its 77th Annual Meeting on January 28, 2017, at the Morris County Community Center located on the Morris County Fairgrounds. Kim Sanford and Courtney Parker were in charge of everyone signing the Conservation District voter register. Pens, “*Conservation Edition*” newspapers, ballots, student and adult raffle prize tickets, conservation coloring books/crayons/tattoos, “*Unlock the Secrets in the Soil*” folders/information sheets/brochures, and press-n-stick calendars were given away at the door. Tables were decorated with “*Healthy Soils Are full of Life*” placemats, Litany of Thanks for the Gift of Soil/Seeds and Soil story, District program booklets, bug erasers, rain barrel flyers, and colored balloons. Exhibits consisted of student awards, raffle prize table, Heavy Use Area downing board display, *Behold Our Living Soil* display, “*Conservation Edition*” newspaper display, Kansas Forest Service table, and 2016 activities.

Jim Parker, Chairman, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., and proceeded with the business session. Jim announced, “Under the provisions of Conservation District Law, each conservation district is required to hold an annual meeting to provide full disclosure of financial affairs and district activities as well as hold a public election of supervisors.” Jim announced that the 2016 Annual Meeting minutes and Financial Reports were printed in the program, and asked if there were any corrections or objections. The balance in the Operations Fund as of December 31, 2016, was \$52,523.98, Enterprise Fund was \$16,140.50 and Twin Lakes WRAPS was \$41,775.79. Chad Sanford made a motion to accept the 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes and Financial Reports, and Tim Biehler made a second. Motion carried.

Jim introduced Wayne Morrison, Pastor for the White City United Methodist Church, who gave the invocation and “*Litany of Thanks for the Gift of Soil.*” Ricky’s Café of Hanover catered a delicious baked ham/Italian marinated chicken/smothered steak/BBQ beef brisket meal. Approximately 225 people were served, with six Flint Hills 4-H club members and four leaders helping serve coffee, tea, and water. Jim asked for a big hand of applause for the excellent meal; and thanked the 4-H Club for serving the drinks.

Brian Burhoop, Supervisor Treasurer of the Board, introduced the Supervisors, Advisors and Employees of the District Board, NRCS, FSA, Extension, contractors, suppliers, bankers, Commissioner, Morris County Farm Bureau representative, Flint Hills Quail & Upland Wildlife Federation committee members, 2016 award winners, and Twin Lakes WRAPS coordinator. Brian stated the 2016 Annual Report was in the program booklets pages 12-16; and gave a big thank you to the Morris County Commissioners, who continue to financially support our efforts.

Jim Parker introduced Annie Wilson, rancher-songwriter of rural Elmdale. Annie is a member of the “*Tallgrass Express String Band*” – American Roots Music from the Tallgrass Prairie. Other members included Carl Reed of Manhattan, Jim Versch of Marion, and Kim Schmidt of Goessel. Their concert presented historic western dress, and performed a variety of musical genres: folk, bluegrass, country, western, and blues. Their final song, “*Home on the Range*” brought everyone in on the chorus to celebrate Kansas Day the next day.

Jim Parker announced, “The three-year terms of Chad Sanford and Brian Burhoop will expire tonight. We will now have a report from our nominating committee chairman, Tim Biehler. To be eligible to participate in the election you must be over the age of 18 and a resident in Morris County. If you did not receive a ballot when you came in tonight, hold up your hand, and one will be brought to you.”

The following nominating committee: Tim Biehler, Lori Bammerlin and Dennis Anderson were the official ballot collectors and counters. Tim Biehler announced, “The nominating committee has met and would like to report that Chad Sanford and Brian Burhoop will accept nominations for the Conservation District Board of Supervisors.” Jim Parker, Chairman, asked three times if there were any other nominations from the floor. Tim Biehler moved and Brian Burhoop seconded that nominations cease, and no one was nominated as a write-in from the floor. Motion carried. The nominating committee collected and tallied the votes.

Jo Bea Titus - Hutchinson, District Manager, reported there were poster, limerick, photography and coloring entries; and the winners were displayed at the front and all other entries in the back. She congratulated all of the winners as well as their parents and teachers. Student award winners were recognized. Student conservation awards were presented by Cynthia Engle for Posters Grades 2-9. Chad Sanford presented the Limerick and Photography Awards, and Brian Burhoop presented the Coloring Grades K-1 awards. First and second place winners received trophies and certificates, with Honorable Mention winners receiving certificates and ribbons. The Third Place photo also received a trophy and certificate. Sarah Loomis was presented with a medal and framed certificate for winning the ninth annual conservation district educational scholarship. Mindy Andres and Cindy Mullen took pictures of each group in front of their awards for the local newspapers to publish. Mindy and Cindy also photographed spotlights of the entire meeting and pictures of the eleven conservation award winning categories. The student prize drawing was held with the assistance of Kim Sanford and Courtney Parker.

Jarran Tindle, Water Quality Forester for the Kansas Forest Service, highlighted water quality issues in Kansas. Morris County has had several landowners sign up for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This partnership provides funding to reduce farmland lost to streambank erosion and improve the health and productivity of woodlands in priority watersheds. The program seeks to improve water quality and reduce the sedimentation of federal reservoirs through tree planting and forest stand improvement. Jordyn Sanford, Kansas Range Youth Camp Attendee, presented a PowerPoint program on her experience last July at Camp Mennoscah in Murdock that the CD sponsored for her to attend.

At this time, Alex Miller, NRCS District Conservationist, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Grassland Award. He presented a plaque, sign, and certificate to the Grassland Award Winner – Loomis Ranch – with Feyh Farm Seed Company of Alma as sponsor. Next Angela Anderson, Twin Lakes WRAPS Coordinator, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Outstanding NRCS Technician Award. She and Jo Bea Titus-Hutchinson presented an acrylic water drop plaque and certificate to Cindy Mullen.

Angela Anderson gave a PowerPoint presentation of the 2016 Twin Lakes WRAPS Project Award winners – CGHS Water Awareness Campaign Group, and presented them with an acrylic water drop plaque, sign, and certificate sponsored by Twin Lakes WRAPS. Lori Bammerlin gave a PowerPoint presentation, and Jason Booker, filling in for Mark Leydig who’s the 2016 Key Banker from Farmers & Drovers Bank of Council Grove, presented the Banker Award to Effland Land & Cattle with plaques, sign, certificates, and landscape/native grass print photographed by Mindy Andres, Council Grove. Carolyn Andres and Heidi Lange were in charge of the lights. The adult prize drawing was then held with Wanda Platz winning the \$25 grand prize Council Grove Merchant’s gift card. Jim Parker thanked Neosho Gardens of Council Grove for their generous support of our annual meeting with the six Boston ferns they donated to award winners.

After the awards, Tim Biehler, chairman of the nominating committee, gave the election report that Chad Sanford and Brian Burhoop were re-elected for three-year terms as supervisors. There were no write-in votes. A motion was made by Tim Biehler to adjourn the meeting, and seconded by Brian Burhoop. Motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.