

NDWCA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Bismarck Hotel & Conference Center, Bismarck, ND

September 26th, 2023

Yet to be approved

President Stan Wolf called the meeting to order at 10:04 am. Introductions of members and guests. Members present were Stan Wolf, Rick Schmidt, Bill Walker, Jim Bahm, Joan Lorge, Kent Luttschwager, Cliff Ferebee, Derrill Fick, Ron Manson, Roger Gunderson, Jim Hennessy, Richard Weisz, NDDA, and Merlin Leithold, executive secretary.

Guests present were Tom Bodine, ND Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture, John Mortenson, NDDA, Ryan Kobilansky, ND Trust Lands and Levi Jacobson, ND Game & Fish.

Additional agenda items were: Merlin asked to add Newsletter under Old Business, SBARE under New Business following NDSU Weed Specialist. Bill would talk about LAP under new business.

Jim Bahm moved to approve the agenda as presented, Bill seconded the motion. **M/C**

ND Trust Lands: Ryan Kobilansky introduced himself. He is the leasing coordinator which includes working with control of noxious weeds with the ND Trust Lands. He would like to have a good working relationship with us. Would like feedback as well. He gave a summary in what they are doing to control noxious weeds on their land. Ryan also spoke about their cost share program to their leasees. Very good discussion took place, on chemical mixes, how they vary from county to county. Currently they pay 50% of the labor, and 100% of the chemical. They are willing to work with counties to cost share a wider range of mixes. Ryan feels that biocontrol is another control method, but not necessarily the main control method. Many times chemical needs to be applied as well. ND Trust Lands would like weed officers to inform them if there is a problem on their leases, so they can work with the leasee to come up with a workable plan. Ryan wants to attend NDWCA events whenever his schedule allows as well, to be better informed as well. Stan thanked him for coming and invited him to stay at the meeting as long as he would like.

Minutes were reviewed. Bill moved to approve the minutes as presented, Jim B. seconded the motion. **M/C**

Financial Report: Merlin gave the financial report, including the check register and budget sheet.

Joan moved to approve the financial report as presented. Roger seconded the motion. **M/C**

Committee Reports:

Education: Derrill gave the education report. We are currently getting notices out to the schools across the state for our annual poster contest. This year a presentation has been created to be given to the 5th and 6th grade students before the poster is created to give the students a better idea on why noxious weeds are bad and how easy they spread. This presentation can be given by the local weed officer or by the local extension agent to the class. If you have a desire to do this presentation, let me know or you can get ahold of Lindy Berg, Extension Agent in Towner County, and we can get the information to you.

Here are the basic instruction for creating a poster for the contest:

Instructions

- Size of poster must be no larger than 12" X 18"
- Students name and grade, the teachers name and the name and address of the school must be on the back of the poster
- Send posters to the address below
- Mail to: Ward County Weed Control

Derrill Fick
P.O. Box 5005
Minot, ND 58702-5005

The winning poster will be printed on a t-shirt to promote youth awareness for noxious and invasive weeds in ND. The winning student will receive a plaque award with a picture of the winning poster on it. The entire class of the winning student will receive a noxious weed prevention presentation along with a t-shirt with winning poster on it.

Our web site is: www.ndweeds.com . This site will have many links and information for you. Posters will need to be received in my office by December 29th, 2023. The judging will be held at the ND Weed Control Association's annual meeting January 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 2024.

Derrill asked whether the association should have a booth at the ND Association of Counties Conference, October 9 & 10 in Bismarck. Bill moved to have the booth, Cliff seconded the motion. **M/C**

Derrill & Ron are already attending so they will watch the booth.

Derrill and Jim H. gave a Vision West update. October 26th meeting in Stanley and November 8th meeting in Dickinson. Both meetings will be concerning carbon capture and reclamation. Sarah Flath from North American Coal will be speaking.

By Laws & Policy Manual: Bill and Derrill have done some work on the membership status on the bylaws. It is not an easy fix to add more members. So for now, he suggests to leave the bylaws as is. Work on the issue later on.

40th Anniversary Celebration: Derrill and Merlin have done little so far. Will be ramping up very soon. Derrill will be working on updating the booklet. Derrill asked how elaborate the booklet should be. Bill feels it should be the same as the conference booklet. Merlin can have the same printer do it when he has the other done.

Agency Reports:

NDDA: Richard gave the NDDA report

Mapping Technology Grant

- The second round of the Mapping Grant is available for county/city weed boards that have not already participated.
- Applications are due December 1, 2023 at 4:00pm CST. Installations must be done by June 30, 2024.
- Please contact myself with any questions.

LAP & TAG Update:

- The new LAP & TAG agreements for the 2023-2025 biennium will be sent out this week.
- LAP agreements will now be 24 months. July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025. After December 31, 2024, county weed boards spending of LAP will be reevaluated for possible reallocation.
- TAG funds have increased from \$5,000 to \$7,500 for counties and \$2,000 to \$2,500 for cities.

USFS Funding:

- If anyone has proposals they would like to submit, please let me know.
- Limited funds are available.

County Weed Board Visits:

- Still ongoing and currently working on future visits. If you would like me to visit, please let me know!

Invasive and Troublesome Weed Guidebooks/Pocket guides:

- The new 5 x 8 books are available! These will replace both the big books and pocket guides. If you would like a box, please get a hold of me.

Law Books:

- The North Dakota Noxious Weed Law & Regulations law books are available. If you are interested and want some, please contact me.

Weed Seed Free Forage (WSFF):

- If you have any questions about this program and would like to participate, please contact myself for more information. Inspections are taking place already this year.

WOTUS:

- The new WOTUS rule does not impact North Dakota at all. It is still business as usual. We are under the exact same WOTUS rule that has been in effect since 1986 opposed to some other states.

Deputy Ag Commissioner Tom Bodine gave an update. They shifted money between the General fund and EARP \$351,000 to make everything balance. They added \$100,000 for Biocontrol. \$275,000 to use for UAF to do a study to fly an area on Palmer Amaranth to distinguish the difference between Waterhemp and Palmer Amaranth. This can also help some funding to counties. New technologies to help the identification of weeds. EPA is also trying to bring out a 900 page regarding endangered species. Nearly all pesticides moving forward could potentially have buffer zones on the labels. Bill said that this is a major issue coming down from Washington. Tom said it is called EPA Herbicide Strategy. Comments are due October 22.

John Mortenson gave a biocontrol update. It was a good summer for biocontrol. NDDA assisted with Spurge Beetle Collection days at Grant and Billings Counties. Both days had good turnout while the weather did reduce collections at Grant County. Department staff embarked on a journey to Missoula in June to collect Oberea releases. We took off with the hope of returning with 25 releases and were able to collect 68 releases. These 68 releases were distributed across

the state. We are hoping to do two more years of releases at these sites. The long-term goal is to get additional insectaries to collect and distribute releases. We have also seen sites the last two years where hawk moth have completely defoliated spurge plants. It will be interesting to see if the combination of Flea Beetles, Hawk Moth and Red-Headed Stem Borer improves bio control of leafy spurge.

We are still looking for new biocontrol sites for purple loosestrife and yellow toadflax, if you hear of any sites at all please let me know.

Stan mentioned that they have released in the past, a defoliating moth in Cass County on Spotted Hemlock. Be aware when ordering biocontrol through a catalog. Can be shipped later than the ideal period, plus prices can be extremely high.

Derrill asked if they have done anything with Houndstongue. John said they have not.

Government: Kent gave the report. Kent has issues with people spraying where they shouldn't be sprayed. The public watches this as well. They are the biggest voice when it comes to complaints. Bill said that homeowners are the worst misusers of chemicals, but farmers, landowners get the bad rap for it.

Summary of 2022 Noxious Weed Control efforts on US Fish and Wildlife Service Lands (Note 2022 Summary – 2023 report pending)

In 2022, the North Dakota Invasive Strike Team funded 9 positions throughout the state. These positions and resources served as a force multiplier in the efforts to control invasive species on fee title lands. The primary invasive species targeted were Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*), Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) and Yellow Toad Flax (*Linaria vulgaris*). Continued emphasis was placed on Early Detection, Rapid Response (EDRR) efforts that resulted in several stations reporting new sites of invasive weeds that were quickly controlled. Additionally, stations embraced the ArcGIS online field map technology to map treated sites. This year, half of the field stations utilized this recording and monitoring technology, with the expectation that all stations will transition to using this technology in the near future.

Invasive species were targeted through an Integrated Pest Management approach, utilizing a combination of chemical, mechanical, cultural, and biological actions. Stations chemically treated 4,922 acres on 1,483 different sites on fee title lands. It's important to note that specific spot spraying tactics on all of these sites is extremely time consuming, but very important to maintain the integrity of non-target native forb species present in the mixed grass prairie of ND. Stations reported using mechanical control methods (mowing, etc.) to control 554 acres on 13 sites. The focus of woody invasives primarily targeted Chinese elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*) and Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*). This year's efforts controlled or eliminated 410 acres of woody invasives on 25 sites.

Biological Control efforts in ND continues to be highlight of the ND Invasive Strike Team with stations reporting 2,930 acres of invasive weeds being treated at 118 sites. In 2022, the five field stations of the Eastern North Dakota Complex implemented the release of biological control agents to target Leafy Spurge on Wetland Management District and Refuge lands. Leafy

Spurge flea beetles (*Aphthona nigricutis* and *Aphthona lacertosa*) are a safe and proven long-term control of Leafy Spurge. Flea beetles have proven to be so effective, that they often consume all available spurge in a localized area that ultimately results in their demise. With the Leafy Spurge predation eliminated, this resilient invasive species then regains a foothold and competes with native vegetation.

From July 7 through July 27, 2022, Service staff and a crew from the Student Conservation Association (SCA) coordinated the time sensitive purchase, delivery, and release of 331,500 flea beetles. In the same time frame, station staff and the SCA crew, collected and redistributed 21,500 flea beetles from existing viable populations. The purchased and collected flea beetles were distributed to eighty-three Leafy Spurge infestations in the Complex. All release sites were recorded in Field Maps for future monitoring. If site conditions allow for the successful establishment of these releases, the estimated control of 830 acres of Leafy Spurge infested acres will be achieved over the next three years.

The ND Invasive Strike Team accomplishments of 2022 contributed to the sustained and efficient control of invasive species on fee title lands across North Dakota. These proactive efforts continue to demonstrate the Service's commitment to effective land stewardship and strengthening community relationships.

Summary of 2023 Noxious Weed Control efforts on ND Game and Fish Department lands

Chemically Treated 3,674 acres so far in 2023. Still some fall treatments occurring.

In addition, grazed several thousand acres addressing weed and invasive species concerns.

Also collected and moved bio control flea beetles for leafy spurge at numerous sites.

Treated leafy spurge, Canada thistle, yellow toad flax, absinth wormwood, and hounds' tongue.

Saltcedar detection and treatments scheduled for late September and early October on the Yellowstone and Missouri River in NW ND.

US Army Corps of Engineers: Report pending

Another problem they are seeing is landowner needs. If they have noxious weeds, want to spray, but has no equipment, and they can't find someone, what do they do. If they call the weed board, what can the weed board do for them? Stan said education and how to calibrate a sprayer. He has a list of contractors he would give them. How many counties don't have that list to provide that service? Derrill said they have a list of contractors as well. Merlin said that liability insurance is a killer. Bill asked if the association can request a list from counties. Merlin will put it on the agenda for the area meetings.

Education of people using the outdoors and not aware that they may be spreading noxious weeds. Maybe having an article once in a while in the outdoor magazine. Derrill said the NAISMA has a program called Play, Clean, and Go. They have stations at trail heads, etc. Bill said that in South Dakota, they have brochures with Fish and Wildlife about noxious weeds that could be put together.

Kent had one last thing. He has announced that he is resigning from the board. He is not retiring, just that being on the board, it gets difficult with the size of his job. He suggested that Levi Jacobson take his position. Ron moved that we accept the resignation of Kent. Joan seconded the motion. **M/C**

Joan moved to appoint Levi Jacobson to the government position. Derrill seconded the motion. **M/C**

Break For Lunch at 11:55

Reconvened at 12:19 pm

Industry Report: Bill Walker gave the industry report.

CORTEVA – Reminder on the Aminopyralid Products

Aminopyralid product labeling for sales of the hay after being treated with Aminopyralid products (Milestone Herbicide, DuraCor Herbicide, GrazonNext HL Herbicide, Chaparral Herbicide) has been updated on these products, the allowance for the sales of grass harvested for Hay off the farm is now in the current labels of these products as of April 4, 2023, new updated labels can be gotten off from www.cdms.net, we suggest that you go to the site and get the updated labels for your information and records as well.

Now the supplemental label has become part of the regular label and is at the end of each label.

CORTEVA as of this date has not announced any price increases, normally the price increases would come in September and take effect in October.

*****ENVU (formally Bayer) – Update on the TruRange Labeling**

First, EPA contacted ENVU and said that their pria date on the request for TruRange herbicide has been delayed by 150 days, was due in August 2023.

Now they have contacted ENVU and said that the pria date on TruRange Herbicide has been put on indefinite hold, no explanations or reason on this and no estimated date for review.

ENVU has not announced any price increases for the rest of this year but expected some after the first of the year in 2024, current 2023 pricing is in effect at this time.

BASF – Again, after their January 2023 price increases on most of their products, pricing has been stable, Plateau Herbicide was one of the heavier hit for increases seeing about 15% increase, any new price increases should come in January 2024.

NuFarm – E-2 Herbicide labeling issues **“Have Been Cleared up with EPA”**, NuFarm will be producing E-2 Herbicide within the next few weeks and product should come available in early July, they are still waiting on some State registrations to clear but that should go rather quickly.

NICHINO America – Venue Herbicide Updates

Venue Herbicide - Venue was introduced for use on **Leafy Spurge** in 2023 in ND, use rates are from 3.5 ounces per acre rates on pasture and rangelands to 4 ounces per acre rates in non-crop sites

It needs to be coupled with a 2,4-D amine, ester or Freelexx at 1 quart per acre and MSO Surfactant at 1% by volume or 1 gallon per 100 gallons water or *Liberate Surfactant at 1 quart per 100 gallons water (studying at this time).

NOW:

NICHINO America – is now separating the labeling on the crop and non-crop Venue Herbicide, the new non-crop product will be called **Pimlico Herbicide** – this product will have all non-crop labeling and “NO” crop labeling, this formulation will change from a 2% formulation to a 4% formulation as well.

NICHINO America is also removing all non-crop labeling from the Venue Herbicide label and that formulation will change as well from a 2% formulation to a 4% formulation and will have a new name as well.

Studies are showing Leafy Spurge can be reduced/controlled after 3 consecutive yearly applications, can be used to water’s edge, no grazing restrictions once spray has dried, minimal impact to grasses and trees, also works well on Field Bindweed, Russian Thistle, Kochia, and some others.

Late spring/early summer applications (yellow bract stages are best), very quick to show symptoms on the Leafy Spurge after applications, water’s edge, tree belts, CRP acres, Wildlife areas, Roadsides, Non-crop sites

Pimlico Herbicide - will be packaged in 1-quart containers and estimated costs of \$290.00 per quart at this time.

Glyphosate products – are still seeing price reductions, only order what you need at the time, pricing has seemed to stable off for now.

2,4-D Products – we are now seeing some price decreases in all types of 2,4-D amine and ester products, these are still not dropping as fast as the glyphosate pricing but on the decrease at this time, order what is needed just to help in following any price decreases that might happen.

Adjuvants - We are seeing some slight surfactant price increases; these have been in the 3% to 5% ranges so far with the petroleum products taking the higher increases at this time.

You will still want to make sure to let your distributors of your products, equipment suppliers and anything else, know in advance of your possible needs so they can be prepared as well to make sure they have what you might need when needed, there are still some spot shortages on certain items.

Discussion whether we should send a letter to EPA to try and get them to take their hold off of TruRange. Rick moved to have the NDWCA have a committee draft a letter, and take it to the

area meetings for support, and then send it to EPA. Jim B. suggested that a committee of Stan and Rick be formed to draft the letter. Rick moved to have a committee draft a letter and send it to EPA. Jim B. seconded the motion. **M/C**

Stan appointed Rick and himself to the committee. Stan will also have the executive board look at the letter before sending it. It is below:

OLD BUSINESS:

Credit Card Update: Merlin stated that we can now accept credit cards. He is set up to accept them either with the clover go device or through his computer. Due to security reasons, Merlin will only accept them in person or over the phone, not by email. Or placed on the registration form.

New & Invasive Weed Emergency Response: Stan took the proposal that was discussed at the June meeting to the Sugar Beet Growers. They said they will not oppose it, but would like it to be for cropland too. Soybean growers will support the proposal. Stan stated that this would work with Vetenata and other new weeds.

Bill stated that their Vetenata survey in western ND came up negative. Good news there.

Bill moved to move forward to put together a new program for invasive weeds. Derrill seconded the motion. **M/C**

Extensions Role with County Weed Boards: Stan said that there was some questions concerning Traill County and the NDSU Extension role with weed boards. Stan had Rick forward to him the protocol for extension agents. A copy was provided to the board.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICES AND COUNTY WEED BOARDS

The North Dakota Noxious Weed Law (N.D.C.C. 4.1-47) requires each county to establish a county weed board to implement a program for the management of noxious weeds and enforce the noxious weed law. The law requires the county weed board to appoint a chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer. Each county is also required to appoint a county weed officer to monitor noxious weeds, investigate complaints regarding uncontrolled noxious weeds, assist landowners with weed control, and perform weed control activities. This can include making herbicide applications and distributing herbicides to landowners through a cost-share program. In an effort to save resources and make use of existing expertise, some counties have explored ways to involve Extension agents with county weed board activities. These partnerships between county weed boards and Extension are extremely valuable, and we encourage Extension ANR agents to build a relationship with their local weed board and weed control officer. However, we must recognize that county weed boards are regulatory entities, while NDSU Extension is a non-regulatory entity that is focused on educational programming. The purpose of this document is to offer guidelines for the involvement of Extension agents in county weed board activities to eliminate or remove real or perceived conflicts of interests, reduce Extension's regulatory liability, and establish clear expectations for how Extension can assist county weed boards.

Potential Roles of ANR Extension Agents

Involvement of Extension personnel with county weed boards can vary considerably based on county budgets, local needs, and available resources. Since county weed boards are regulatory entities that enforce weed laws and issue violations, Extension agents can only serve on weed

boards as an ex officio, non-voting member. Extension ANR agents are encouraged to serve as a technical advisor to their local weed board to offer expertise on weed identification, biology, and management. Such technical advisor roles are consistent with the mission of NDSU Extension and the core duties of Extension ANR agents.

Extension agents may also be asked to serve a support role for county weed boards to schedule weed board meetings, keep board minutes and other records, track financial records, or serve as the secretary or treasurer. Such roles are appropriate if steps are taken to remove conflicts of interest and address the issues described below. However, weed board support duties are considered to be outside the core duties of Extension ANR agents.

Extension agents may be asked to serve as the county weed officer. This is strongly discouraged as a routine practice since it can create confusion with the public and a real or perceived conflict of interest. Having Extension agents serve as county weed officers can also create regulatory challenges for NDSU Extension since many weed board activities are regulated under the North Dakota Noxious Weed Law and state and federal pesticide laws and regulations. An agent is only allowed to serve as a county weed officer if steps are taken to address the issues described below. NDSU Extension reserves the right to re-evaluate and place limitations on Extension agents serving in weed officer roles.

Clearly Describing Weed Board Responsibilities in Vacancy Announcements, Position Descriptions, and Hiring Letters

Potential weed board responsibilities for Extension personnel should be addressed in conversations between county commissioners and the district director when Extension positions are vacant and commissioners are asked for their support to refill the position. To ensure transparency, any weed board responsibilities beyond serving as a technical advisor to the board must be clearly identified in the vacancy announcement and hiring letter for Extension agents. Such duties should be discussed with applicants during the employment interview and negotiated during the hiring process. Weed board responsibilities beyond a technical advisor role that are added to the duties of a currently employed Extension agent should be discussed in the current year performance review and added as an addendum to an updated position description.

Creating Separation between Extension and County Weed Boards

The North Dakota Pesticide Act clearly states that employers must take responsibility for any illegal acts performed by employees (N.D.C.C. 4.1-33-20(4)). This means that any enforcement actions for violation of the Pesticide Act must not only be levied against the individual committing the act, but also their employer. Weed officers are routinely required to store, distribute, handle and use pesticide products regulated under state and federal law and rules, and it is possible that those duties could result in an inadvertent violation. This could include such illegal acts as application of a product inconsistent with the labeling, distribution or use of an unregistered pesticide, improper storage, recordkeeping violations, and/or pesticide drift. Therefore, it is beneficial to create a distinct regulatory and budgetary separation between the Extension office and the county weed board.

If Extension agents engage in weed board activities beyond serving as a technical advisor to a county weed board, including performing administrative support duties for the weed board or serving as a weed officer, it is strongly recommended that those duties be covered under a separate contract along with an NDSU Extension Annual Conflict of Interest

Notification/Disclosure Statement, just as if the Extension employee was working for a separate employer.

Regulatory Actions

County weed boards are regulatory entities that have authority to levy regulatory actions to citizens for violations of the noxious weed law, as well as invoice citizens for noxious weed management activities. NDSU Extension needs to maintain a positive, non-threatening image with the general public. Therefore, if Extension agents serve as weed officers or in another capacity for the county weed board, any regulatory actions for noxious weed violations or invoices for weed control or pesticides must be signed by the weed board chair or appropriate county official, not the Extension agent. In addition, no regulatory actions or invoices for noxious weed management activities are to be prepared using Extension letterhead, envelopes, or materials identified as Extension.

Pesticide Stewardship

NDSU Extension believes strongly in the need to ensure that Extension offices are safe and healthy environments for employees and members of the public. In addition, ANR Extension agents routinely train members of the public on the proper storage, handling, and use of pesticide products, and are to serve as positive role models for pesticide stewardship. Noxious weed management includes use of herbicides and other chemical tools, and many weed boards make herbicide applications or distribute pesticide products to members of the public.

Pesticide exposure can occur through direct or indirect contact with such things as pesticide products, application equipment, or pesticide-contaminated clothing. Exposure can also occur through inhalation of pesticide-containing vapors. Therefore, no pesticides are to be distributed out of the Extension office on behalf of county weed boards, even if containers are sealed. In addition, no pesticides, pesticide application equipment, or pesticide protective equipment (PPE) used for pesticide applications are to be stored in NDSU Extension offices, except for unused or decontaminated equipment or PPE used for educational purposes.

Pesticide drift can occur even under ideal situations, and making herbicide applications on behalf of a local weed board puts the applicator at risk of being the source of a misuse or drift event. This raises two main concerns. First, herbicide drift often causes damage to nearby crops, trees, or ornamental plants, and this can cause ill will with affected property owners, even if those landowners are compensated for their losses. Second, ANR agents lead pesticide applicator training events as part of their duties, and agents need to be viewed as competent, technical experts on pesticide use. A pesticide misuse or drift event can negatively affect the public image of the agent and NDSU Extension. Therefore, Extension agents are not allowed to make herbicide applications on behalf of county weed boards, even if those duties are outside of the agent's job description and/or are covered under a separate employment contract.

Updated: September 2021

Newsletter: First, Merlin reminded everyone that the deadline for the newsletter is fast approaching. He would encourage all directors to submit a report. Secondly, we put out a newsletter in April, June, October and November. We as a board meets in April, June, September and January. Merlin would like to move the October newsletter to September, and then November. He wants the board to think about this until the January board meeting. He would also like to bring it up at the area meetings for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

NDSU Noxious Weed Specialist: Stan brought to the board attention that Dr. Quincy Law is resigning in December, as he will be taking a position at a University in Iowa. Stan asked at NDSU if we should send a letter to make sure they fill the position. He was told no, not at this time. There is a slight possibility that due to budget constraints, the position could not be filled. Let's hope not. Bill moved that we table sending a letter until the January 2nd meeting to see what has developed. Roger seconded the motion. **M/C** Richard asked to be kept in the loop as they would support the position as well. Jim B. said that a letter could be sent to SBARE before January 23rd, so that January 2nd will work.

SBARE: Stan said that there are 3 listening sessions coming up in the next several months. SBARE is an important step to get a proposed bill through the legislature. SBARE is a listening and prioritizing group. Stan could go to the one December 12th or 13th in Fargo. Derrill moved to have Stan present a letter in person at SBARE. Ron seconded the motion. **M/C**

Burleigh County: Merlin started the discussion on what all took place in Burleigh County with the weed board and weed officer resigning. Merlin said all he knows that it is a mess. 4 weed officers in 4 years, replacing board members, and very strong county commissioner with the weed board portfolio. Ron echoed that, plus added more details to what happened. Stan feels that the Ag commissioner and the attorney general need to step up and clean it up. The Ag Dept. and the attorney general's office has straightened up issues in the past in two counties. They need to do so again. The association will stay away from this mess.

Short Break:

Liability Insurance: Merlin said that currently we have our liability insurance with Mostad Insurance in Langdon for several years. He is the agent for Liberty Insurance. He called and said that he won't be handling Liberty Insurance. He stated that we can now get our insurance from the ND Insurance Reserve Fund. Also it would now be a 2 million dollar policy. We cannot get a 1 million dollar policy. It would now also have a governance liability in the policy. Currently, our liability insurance only protects us if someone gets hurt while at our booth. Now, we would have insurance to cover if we accidentally give the wrong advice to someone while at our booth. The costs would now be \$600/annually, instead of \$250/annually. Merlin asked Stan permission to check around with an agent closer to where Merlin is at, since nearly every insurance agent in the state writes for the reserve fund. Merlin came up with Osterbauer Insurance in Flasher. He is a Farmers Union Insurance agent as well. Same price as with Mostad Insurance. Merlin is asking the board for their approval to switch agents or to leave it in Langdon. Or, if the board so desires, Merlin could look into finding an agent that carries Liberty Insurance. Derrill moved to switch insurance agents and to go with the ND Insurance reserve fund. Roger seconded the motion. **M/C**

Budget for 2024: Merlin went through the budget line by line, getting board's input on each line. The preliminary budget figures are \$58,125.00 for income, and \$66,248.00 for expenses. Joan moved to tentatively approve the budget for 2024. Roger seconded the motion. **M/C**

2024 Conference: Jim B. led the discussion, saying that the meals are selected. Jim and Merlin discussed that tacos instead of brats on Wednesday evening for the auction. And besides Texas Holdem, there will also be a corn hole tournament. Cody Schnabel will be in charge of that, while Bill will take care of the Texas Holdem. Merlin asked what the theme of the conference should be. Jim B. said 40 years of Progress. After a lot of variations, it was decided that that would be the theme. Merlin passed around a notebook and pen set that would work as a giveaway. He would like to order around 150 at \$2.85 each. The board felt that each presenter should receive

one in their gift bag as well. The consensus was to order around 200. Derrill moved to have Merlin order minimum 200 or what is needed to cover the order. Bill seconded the motion.

M/C

Cornhole boards: Merlin said that to have the tournament, we should have 2 or 3 boards. Cody said that he could bring his. But he also feels that we should have 1 or 2 more. Merlin can get a professional set with bags and our logo for \$425.00. Bill moved to have Merlin check with Jamen on what prices he has, and have Merlin decide where to get them. He will order 2 sets. And he will inquire on sponsors. Roger seconded the motion. **M/C**

Merlin and Derrill will get together in Minot after the area meeting to order a laptop and projector.

Area Meeting Agendas: We will start in Valley City on Monday, October 23rd, and end up in Amidon on October 27th. Director's terms up and termed out are Area II (Ron) and Area III (Derrill). Second VP from Areas I, II and III can be nominated. So far under New Business: Contract sprayer lists from each area, newsletter and normal agenda items. Merlin will send the agendas to Area directors. Merlin has enough minutes printed for each area. Area II will also have Winter Show on agenda.

LAP: Bill and Jamen have been talking. Barnes County is very short of money. Their LAP has basically been the same for a number of years. When you look at the costs of 12 different chemical we use in the last several years, you will see a price increase of 20.8%. Yet, LAP has stayed virtually flat. So you're buying power has decreased 20.8%. You would have to raise the EARP registration fees \$25 or \$250,000 to cover the 20.8% from the increase of chemical. Merlin said that the new invasive weed proposal would also come to a \$25 increase in the registration fees. Perhaps we could roll the two together into one proposal.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, January 2nd, at, here at the Bismarck Hotel.

Being no further business, Stan adjourned the meeting at 4:01 pm

Respectfully Submitted:

Merlin Leithold

Executive secretary