



Ward County Weed Control

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WEED CONTROL

WARD COUNTY WEED CONTROL BOARD MINUTES DECEMBER 18, 2023

Weed Board members present were Shaun Sipma, Jerome Behm, Cale Neshem and Christopher Rockeman. Also present was Ward County Weed Officer, Derrill Fick and Weed Board Secretary, Sarah Walker.

Chairman Sipma called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Previous Minutes: Rockeman moved and Neshem seconded to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2023. Motion passed unanimously.

Bills: The bills were reviewed with Fick providing detail. There was some discussion regarding the amount paid to the Ward County Highway Department for gas and electric. Fick addressed the issue based on his conversation with the Highway Department engineer.

Cash on Hand: As of November 30, 2023, cash on hand is \$84,029.48. Fick explained the financials he provided and requested the board approve the purchase in the remainder of 2023 for chemicals to be used during the 2024 weed season. He also explained it is possible to use some money out of cash on hand for the purchase. Sipma moved that Fick be authorized to move funds from cash on hand to the chemical fund in this year's budget and spend the amount spent last year (\$50,000.00) plus 20% to purchase chemicals in 2023 for the 2024 season and set back some of the cash on hand for the possible purchase of a new truck in 2025. Rockeman seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Update on Spraying Yearly Site Inspection: Fick reported the following:

- 1) Bob Swartout who currently works for the Highway Department is retiring and has expressed interest in applying for a seasonal spraying position. Fick asked the Board if he has approval to pay Swartout's certification fee. Pay rates were also discussed for seasonal employees. Neshem moved and Behm seconded to approve payment of certification for Swartout. Motion passed unanimously.
- 2) Walkers Lawncare completed spraying for state roadways as well as drone spraying in the county. The cost for weed spraying more than doubled. Fick explained the cost was due to a variety of factors. He also addressed the drone spraying procedure and how it worked. Drone spraying is good for areas that are hard to reach, however, the process is slow and may not be ideal for all future spray locations.
- 3) The yearly site inspection went well. The inspector asked that signage be placed on the door where the chemicals are stored.

2024 Chemical Bids: Neshem moved that Fick be authorized to advertise for chemical bids for the 2024 spray season. Behm seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Bids to be opened at the March 18 meeting.

2024-2025 Contractor Bids: Neshem moved that Fick be authorized to advertise for contractor bids for the 2024-2025 spray season. Behm seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Bids to be opened at the March 18 meeting

ND Weed Control Convention: The convention will be in Bismarck at the Bismarck Hotel and Conference Center on January 3,4 and 5. Fick asked members to let him know if they plan to attend.

2024 Board Officers: Rockeman moved and Neshem seconded that Sipma be appointed Chair contingent on approval of his second term to the Board. Motion passed unanimously.

Rockeman moved and Behm seconded that Neshem be appointed Vice Chair of the Board. Motion passed unanimously.

2024 Meeting Dates: The meetings for 2024 will be March 18, June 17, September 16 and December 16. Special meetings can be scheduled as needed.

Additional Discussion: Sipma asked if reimbursement for expenses were adequate for those who travel from out of town to attend meetings. The members who travel indicated there were no problems.

There was also discussion regarding the effect on the budget if property taxes are eliminated especially in regard to agricultural properties. There are folks in the agricultural community who are creating a coalition to oppose the proposed initiative.

Meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m.

The next regular meeting will be Monday, March 18, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Submitted by:

Date Approved: 3/18/2024



Secretary/Treasurer



Chairman