



Gallatin County Weed Board

Regular Monthly Meeting

December 5, 2019 1:15 pm

ATTENDEES:

- **Board members:** Keith Mainwaring, Fred Bell, Noelle Orloff, and Steve Saunders.
- **Others:** John Ansley (Coordinator), Mike Jones (Assistant Coordinator), Danielle Jones (Program Assistant), Cola Rowley (Deputy County Administrator), and Scott MacFarlane (Commissioner).

MINUTES: Fred moved to accept the November minutes as written, Steve seconded, and all approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- The discussion continued about ideas for changing the enforcement policy to make it more effective. Proposed changes included: defining priorities for enforcement to allow for discretion in following up with complaints; considering the weeds involved (are they high priority?) and the area infested; considering whether a complainant has weeds on their own property; and requiring the complainant to provide more contact information for the landowner with the alleged violation. Steve introduced a motion that stated that wording be added to the complaint form which would require that the complainants must have a written weed management plan in place for their own property before the complaint would move forward. Fred seconded the motion. The motion was further discussed and Steve amended the motion to say that wording be added to the complaint form that states that in order for a complaint to be filed that the complainant must have demonstrated compliance with the county weed law and/or have a written weed management plan approved by the county. The motion passed with a vote of three to one. The Weed District will incorporate the proposed changes into the enforcement policy and complaint form, and will provide the board with a copy of these revised documents for their review before the next board meeting. Other discussion items included the cost of enforcement, including time spent and cost of supplies, and whether these costs are fully recovered. It may be useful to track costs and revenue for enforcement actions in order to quantify numbers over time.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Public Comment:** No public were present.
- **Monthly Report Q&A:**
 - Discussion included inquiries about a new subdivision on Springhill Road.
- **Commissioner Report:**
 - Commissioner MacFarlane offered to answer any questions the board may have about Commission related business.
- **Coordinators Report:**
 - **Enforcement Update.** All but one court-ordered enforcement treatment from this year have been attached to tax records, and one of those was already paid. One of the treatments was submitted to the Clerk and Recorder after the deadline, so will be added to taxes next year.
 - **MDA Inspection.** Theresa Schrum with Montana Department of Agriculture inspected daily application records from the past two years for John, Mike, and Danielle, as well as spray equipment and the herbicide storage shed. All passed inspection.

- **FY20 Budget.** John summarized his discussion with Justine, the Director of Finance, about the Weed District budget. Justine explained that funding for the cost share budget was not increased in FY20 mainly because the Weed District does not generally spend out our budget every year. The Commission figured that we could find the money for the increase elsewhere in our budget. Money not spent at the end of the year stays in the Weed District budget and does not go to other departments. There were questions about how the amount of cash is accumulated and retained, and how that number carries over from year to year. Justine will verify estimates of the cash budget because the number seemed to fluctuate a lot over time.
- **Weed Board Bylaws.** The Weed Board bylaws are outdated and need to be updated so that they reflect current statute and how the Board actually operates. Cola suggested that the bylaws could be revised this winter and then sent to the County Attorney for review.
- **North Bridgers NWTF Grant.** The Weed District will apply for another Trust Fund grant for the 2020 funding cycle for the North Bridgers Weed Management Area. The next step is to get funding commitments from the landowners. The application is due January 6th. There was a discussion about potential options for funding to help landowners manage ventenata infestations in the northern part of the county. Trust fund grants were discussed, as well as community spray days and the NRCS TIPS program. The local contact for the TIPS program is Chris Mahoney, and it was suggested to call him and possibly ask him to come to a future meeting to provide more information about that program and find out what the Weed District can do to help.
- **Gallatin County Weed Management Plan.** The county weed plan needs to be updated and approved by the board every two years, and the next update is due in 2020. Over the winter, the plan will be revised and brought to the board for review and approval. Once approved by the board, the plan will be signed by the Commissioners and then sent to MDA for approval. This new version of the weed plan will include the changes to the enforcement policy that have been discussed.
- **Cancel Jan. 2, 2020 Meeting?** The board decided not to cancel the scheduled January board meeting.
- **Roundtable, Discussion Included:**
 - Noxious weed calendars and the purchase of a drone, which will probably not happen this year.

Meeting dismissed at 3:00 pm

Next scheduled meeting: January 2nd, 2019, 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Danielle Jones, Program Assistant