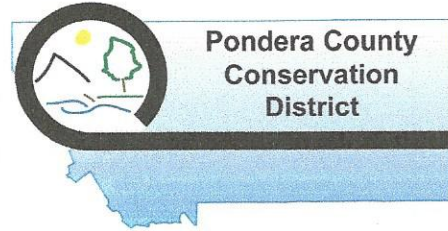


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**Pondera County Conservation District**

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The Pondera County Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on **Tuesday, March 10, 2025, at 8:00 am** at the USDA Service Center in Conrad, Montana.

**Call to Order:** Chairman Paul Jones called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM.

**Present:**

Paul Jones	Koltin Christiaens	Kesler Martin
Darla Baliko	Roger Paulsen	Pam Converse
Pete McKeone	Trina Jo Bradley (Rocky Mountain Front Ranchlands Group)	

**Absent:**

Eric Gunderson	Ramsey Offerdal, Jr.
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**Previous Minutes:**

- No previous minutes were brought to the meeting due to board member absences and District Administrator transition.

**Bills and Financial Statement:**

- Darla presented a document showing interest earned on the CD's warrant account and a statement from Stockman Bank showing current checking balance as of 2/27/2026.

**Public Comment:** *Topics not on the agenda may be discussed, but if action is required, the topic must first be placed on the next meeting agenda.*

**Trina Jo Bradley from Rocky Mountain Front Ranchlands Group** (a 501c3 created in 2021) presented the idea of partnering with the NRCS and PCCD to bring in a "weed workshop" education event. She has emailed Patti Armbrister, soil health educator, to ask about speaking fees, travel fees, and availability. Trina hasn't yet heard back from Armbrister. Darla mentioned that she had recently heard from Patti that she hopes to come to Pondera County to teach. Darla offered to nudge Patti to connect with Trina.

- Paul suggested the CD could probably help with the workshop costs, which are expected to be 1.) Patti's fees, 2.) Lunch and possibly snacks, and 3.) Advertising.
- Possible event locations were discussed before finally settling on Jones Park in Dupuyer. Pam Converse said there is no fee for using the park. Pam said that the county usually brings porta potties to the park sometime before summer.
- Trina suggested asking Patti if Thursday, June 11, from 10 AM - 3 PM will work for her.
- Pam suggested offering pesticide applicator credits and offered to work with Trina on getting credit approval. Kesler suggested offering at least two credits to make it more appealing to producers.
- There was a brief discussion of bringing in another speaker or workshop if Patti felt like 10 AM - 3 PM was too long for her workshop. Ideas for other speakers included Marni Thompson's rain trailer, Dan Wilkin from Pull Your Share. There was general agreement that this can be revisited if need be, but most likely Patti's presentation will suffice.
- Trina suggested asking a bank would sponsor the event and may help cover lunch.
- Darla and Trina agreed to stay in touch about the event after Patti and Trina connect.

#### **NRCS:**

- Koltin said the NRCS is working on EQIP applications (March 20 deadline), then will start on CSP applications.
- Koltin also said Stacy Eneboe mentioned that MOU agreements need to be renewed every five years, and ours was signed six years ago. Koltin will ask Stacy where the paperwork is when he sees her and bring it to the next meeting.
- Paul suggests the CD review and re-sign the document at a future meeting.

#### **MSCA:**

Roper Paulsen said he hasn't heard back from Montana Salinity Control. He is going to text Tara to make sure they are getting his email.

#### **PCCRC:**

No one present to report.

### **MSU Extension:**

No one present to report.

### **Pondera Co. Weeds District:** - Pam Converse reported.

- She will be contacting the job service with ads to hire seasonal 18+ y/o workers. There are a few previous workers returning.
- On June 24 there will be a Swift Dam Spray Day.
  - She explained that the county provides the herbicides and lunch. After lunch, there is usually a small education program for pesticide applicator credits.
  - She is expecting at least five local, state, and federal agencies, in addition to landowners.
  - Paul said the CD usually gives some money to help pay for lunch. Pam said the CD's support (money and otherwise) is very important.
  - She will let agencies and landowners know about the event via postcards to landowners, the Dept of Ag website, signs around Dupuyer, and email. Darla said she can also add it to the CD's April newsletter.
- Pam is also working on getting local cooperative costshare grants for landowners.

### **Community Garden** - Pete McKeone reported.

- Pete said the biggest issue at the moment is water because the pipes froze. He said the city has been cooperative and helpful. The city plans to help fix the pipes, but they have other projects that are higher priority. Pete thinks it's a "surface problem" not requiring the entire garden to be dug up. Paul offered to help get a water truck to help with watering. Pete responded that hauled water is difficult to use, especially for corn, but he will consider it if needed.
- Pete also reported that the shingles blew off the shed.
- Pete appreciates Gene Hauer's help moving the compost with a skidsteer.
- Pete has been working with the library and with the previous MSU Extension intern on getting a display of insect images for the walking path. He said the library had expressed concern over copyright issues, but he said the images will be ones taken by the intern. Once he gets all the images, he will work with the library on getting them on the signs. He also praised the job the city did in installing the Storyboard signs which will be used for the insect display.
- Pete also noted that the community garden food cannot charge money for the food they grow, as they don't want to compete with local growers. He said the Horizon Lodge, Senior Center, and Meals on Wheels have been grateful recipients. He said that the garden at Alice Garman's property donated 240 lbs of potatoes to the food pantry and kids were involved in digging potatoes.
- Pete also expressed gratitude for a past donation of concrete by Justin Salois.
- Pete would like to find another gardener to help at the garden. He also thinks it would be good to have more people see what the community garden does.

### **PCCD:**

- No written report was submitted due to the transition between Administrators.

### **Old Business:**

- Darla said that per an email receipt, the seedling order was placed on January 20 and payment was received on February 23. Order #2621.
- Paul said he has received many phone calls about ordering trees. Since the order period has closed, he has redirected people to order directly from the seedling nursery.

### **New Business:**

- Darla presented a letter she would like to mail to a producer who has had a piece of CD equipment since last summer and who has not paid the deposit or the use fee. Paul suggested some revisions and said he would like to add his signature to the letter. Darla will make the revisions and get Paul's signature before mailing it.
- Darla noted that in last year's March minutes, funds were requested for outdoor materials. Paul said that in the past, we applied for grants to cover the materials. He suggested we find out how much we spent last year and ask Kaysie about applying for a grant, since Kaysie is meeting with Darla at the end of the week to do some training.
- Mid-april seedling delivery is expected.
- Paul advised Darla to "lean on Koltin" for the April newsletter.
- Darla asked if there were any pressing issues she should be focused on at this point. Paul responded that Outdoor Classroom is high priority, as well as anticipating the seedling delivery.
- Paul asked Darla to set up a group text and message Board members and regular meeting attendees prior to the next meeting. He said texting a week in advance and the day before would be helpful.

**Executive Session:** None

### **Correspondence:**

- Darla presented a second bill from Pioneer Press for the job opening advertisement. Kesler motioned that the CD pay the bill. Roger seconded. Motion carried.
- Darla presented various other paperwork that had come to the office in her couple of days on the job, much of which seemed to be relatively unimportant and things to ask Kaysie about at the end of the week.
- Darla presented a "Delinquency Notice 2026 MW-3" from the MT Dept of Revenue. Paul suggested to follow up with Andrea (accountant) or Kaysie later this week.

**Adjournment:**

- Paul Jones adjourned the meeting at 9:37 AM.

**CALENDAR**

- April 14<sup>th</sup> PCCD Board Meeting
- Mid-April Seedling Delivery to the District
- May 8<sup>th</sup> PCCD Outdoor Classroom
- May 12<sup>th</sup> PCCD Board Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Darla Baliko, PCCD Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Jones", is written over the typed name "Darla Baliko, PCCD Administrator". The signature is stylized and cursive.