July minutes. No August meeting. Attached: Financial Reports for months of July + Aug. 2026

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MINUTES for Tuesday, July 7, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. meeting of the Pondera County Conservation District Board of Supervisors, at the USDA Service Center in Conrad, Montana.

Attendees - Paul Jones, Eric Gunderson, Ramsey Offerdal, Jr., Lane Reinecker, Pete McKeone, Darla Baliko, Kesler Martin

Absent - Roger Paulsen

Call to Order - by Paul Jones at 8:02 AM

Approval of previous meeting minutes - Ramsey motioned to accept the previous month's minutes. Eric seconded. All agreed. Motion passed.

Financial report - Darla gave the financial report of the Warrant Account balance (as the latest statement, June 8) of $162,112.25 and the Checking Account balance (as of June 30) of $10,789.21. Ramsey motioned to accept the report. Eric seconded. All agreed. Motion passed.

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.*

Reports:

- **NRCS**- Koltin gave the report. He introduced Lane Reinecker as a new hire in the Conrad office. Lane is a soil conservationist who has worked as an intern for NRCS in the past, including in the town of Baker at the same time Koltin was there. Koltin said they have finished EQIPs for Pondera County, as well as one tribal EQIP, and they are finishing up CSP contracts. He also presented the need for a LWG meeting (see "New Business" below.) Koltin also gave a RCPP update, stating 13 applications were selected for funding, with seven in Pondera County. He said that Glacier County CD is working on finalizing their details, and he assumes Pondera County will get some applications funded. He also described the RPP (Regenerative Pilot Program), which has 5-year contracts similar to EQIP and CSP, but having the requirement of soil health testing the first and last years. He assumes RPP will continue into 2027.
- **MSCA-** No one was present to report. Roger had texted in advance of the meeting saying he was unable to attend. He also said by text prior to the meeting that there are

no new salinity projects in Pondera County, and that MSCA has been doing education events and field work around the state. They have new brochures printed out so if we want some to display, we can let them know.

- **PCCRC-** No one was present to report.
- **MSU Extension-** No one was present to report.
- **Pondera Weeds District**- No one was present to report.
- **Community Garden** - Pete reported that the pipe/faucet problems persist, but they are able to use hoses as a "work around". He said that he plans to have the pipes dug up in the fall to identify/fix the problem. He said the garden is growing and very productive, and that the weeds are under control (controlled manually, not chemically). Paul offered to provide a water tank if that would help with watering this year, but Pete indicated that water tanks are difficult to use, and that the hoses are working sufficiently. He also said compost needs to be spread on the garden eventually.
- **PCCD Admin** - Darla submitted a written report. Darla also mentioned that she had personally invited the MSU Extension ag agent Grace Rooney to come to the meeting to give a report, and that Rooney said July is a very busy month with the tri-county fair, but that she would like to come in the future. Darla also asked the board if she should invite the Western Triangle Research Station to a meeting to give a report, and the board was in favor of that. Darla said she will invite them to a future meeting.

Old/Unfinished Business:

- **Injection Wells** - Darla said that she has been in touch with the commissioners, and that they are in favor of us submitting an amicus brief, contributing information/perspective that their attorneys might not contribute. She also said that the attorney MACD provides cautioned us against participating in anything that could appear to be political, and that she would need to first get approval from MACD before consulting with us. The board discussed that they do not feel like their involvement would be political, but appropriate, given that the issue pertains directly to conservation of Pondera County's natural resources. The board expressed interest in pursuing the option through the legal counsel MACD provides. Eric recommended that we find out what it would cost MACD approximately, wanting to be good stewards of MACDs resources, hoping that it could be a fairly short and straightforward statement that we could offer to the courts. Darla agreed to contact MACD's legal counsel and request that they seek MACD's approval to consult with us on the issue, as well as inquiring about the expense of doing so.
- **Meeting w/ Kody re: permissive mill levy** - Darla summarized her conversation with Kody, stating that the county tries to keep taxes as low as possible, one one way of doing so is through conservative use of the permissive mill levy. Since PCCD has a healthy warrant account balance, it makes sense to not increase the permissive mill levy at this time, but instead to simply continue it. Darla suggested a public hearing in August for continuing the current permissive mill levy. The board agreed, and Darla said she would publish the notice in the newspaper two consecutive weeks prior.
- **Kevin Hyde/Montana Mesonet reschedule** - The board discussed whether or not to reschedule the Montana Mesonet presentation which was canceled due to a schedule conflict. There was general agreement that interest would be lower now that we have

received rain to help alleviate the drought and because people are busy. The decision was made to wait until there is another event to pair with a Mesonet training.

New business:

- **NRCS Local Working Group meeting in August.** Koltin discussed the need to have a LWG meeting in order to establish priorities for next year's EQIP program. He requested having input prior to his August 25 meeting in Havre. Koltin said that they will not be doing TIPS for 2027. Koltin provided a handout listing primary resource concerns for the state. Koltin outlined a couple of different options: 1.) PCCD could choose a specific *resource* to focus on. 2.) PCCD could identify a specific *land use* to prioritize (rangeland, dry cropland, irrigated land, etc.). Koltin also said PCCD could decide *how long* to have the priority in place for, mentioning advantages and disadvantages to 1 year vs 3 year. He noted that by choosing a land-use priority, natural resource concerns would still be pertinent. The board discussed the best time to have the LWG meeting, noting that August is a difficult time to meet because of harvest. Given the fact that it would be hard to get people to an August meeting and the preference to give Koltin feedback before his August 25th meeting, they decided to continue the discussion at the current meeting. Eric asked Koltin what kinds of projects most people are seeking funding for. Koltin's response was "things having to do with livestock" (dried up stockwater, dried up wells... fencing, collars, stock tanks, etc.) Koltin also noted that many people are not happy that ECP went away. Kesler noted that ranchers sometimes feel bypassed, as more programs seem to be available for croplands than rangelands. Koltin added that funding livestock-related projects has the advantage of stretching the dollars to more applicants, whereas projects like irrigation pivots usually only benefit a few applicants. Eric suggested giving the broad category of "livestock" priority, which would allow for applications for cropland as well as rangeland. Koltin also noted that he likes to see grazing plans included in applications involving stock water in order to prevent overgrazing. Koltin also noted that the first year doesn't usually result in a lot of applications, so it might be good to have the priority in place for two or three years. He thinks Pondera County has done 3-year plans at some point in the past. Eric suggested having livestock be the plan for one year, with the idea of extending it to a second or third year if it was going well. The other board members were in agreement. Koltin plans to take this information to the NRCS meeting in Havre in August. Paul suggested advertising LWG meeting info (or any other pertinent announcements) to Lacey's FSA email blast. Rangeland/pastureland.
- **310 Emergency Notice** - Paul said he spoke with Ty Aaberg (PCCRC) before the meeting. Ty said that the recent massive amount of rain caused a washout at the Birch Creek/Kingsbury diversion, and that repairs were needed. Paul said he gave permission to Ty/PCCRC to make the necessary repairs in order to continue delivering water to shareholders, as he understands this to fall under the perennial maintenance category. Per Paul, Ty said they are experiencing bank erosion on one stream. Ty said they had done rip rap in the past and will need to do more rip rap or other measures to repair it

again. Per Kesler, another landowner's bridge also washed out, and Paul said it had done so several times in the past. Ramsey wondered if PCCRC had a 310 perennial maintenance permit on file. Paul said he thinks so, and there was some discussion as to the extent PCCD has been involved with PCCRC's stream permitting in the past. Paul also reported that he had communicated to Ty that while the emergency repairs of the washout fell under the perennial maintenance category, the additional work needed for streambank erosion would need a 310 permit application filed.

Blackfeet-Montana-US Water Compact draft rules - Darla said that PCCD had been contacted by the DNRC asking if we would like to comment on the draft rules which had been forwarded to the board members' email. She said she had reached out to PCCRC/Heather to hear her thoughts, as PCCRC has consulted with the DNRC for quite some time on the drafting of the rules. Heather had shared her thoughts, stating that she was in favor of the rules, and had shared her comments and additional information/links to the board members for review. Paul said he would like more time to review the draft rules before deciding whether or not the board would like to comment. He asked when the deadline is for submitting comments. Darla said she would find out.

Correspondence - none was presented/discussed.

Adjournment - Ramsey motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Eric seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9:35 AM.

CALENDAR 9/8/2026

- July 10-19 - Darla away (vacation)
- Aug 3-5 - Employee Organization SET Training in Miles City (Darla)
- Aug 11 - PCCD Board Meeting, Public Hearing to renew Permissive Mill Levy
- Sept 11 - CSP Document turn-in
- Sept 16-17 - Grant Management Training in Helena (Darla)
- Oct 30 - NRCS application deadline for 2027 (all programs)
- Dec 1-3 - MACD Annual Convention at Fairmont Hot Springs (Please let Darla know if you plan to attend.)

Pondera County Conservation District
September 2026 Financial Report (through August, 2026)

Warrant Account Balance: $153,931.10
Stockman Checking Balance: $10,206.61

Both accounts have been reconciled in Quickbooks.
See copies of both account statements and reconciliation printouts.
See also copies of the month's debit card transactions/online payments.

9/8/2026

Pondera County Conservation District
August 2026 Financial Report (through July, 2026)

Warrant Account Balance:	$158,488.63
Stockman Checking Balance:	$6,628.54

Both accounts have been reconciled in Quickbooks.
See copies of both account statements and reconciliation printouts.
See also copies of July's debit card transactions/online payments.

9/8/2026