

Minutes of the State Soil Conservation Committee Meeting



January 16, 2025

NDSU Extension West District Office, Bismarck, ND

A meeting of the North Dakota State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Bob Martin, 2024 Chair.

Committee Members and guests present:

Emily Montgomery – *Area I Supervisor (via Zoom)*

Chris Walberg – *Area II Supervisor*

David Hill – *Area III Supervisor, 2024 Vice Chair; 2025 Chair*

Bob Martin – *Area IV Supervisor, 2024 Chair*

Jess O'Brien – *Area V Supervisor, 2025 Vice Chair (via Zoom)*

Kelly Klosterman – *Governor Appointee*

Hannah Nordby – *Area V Program Coordinator*

Lindy Berg – *Area I Program Coordinator*

Paula Comeau – *NDSU Extension Program Coordinator*

Amber Fetch – *ND State Soil Conservation Committee
Administrative Assistant*

Carrie Johnson – *NDSU Extension Assistant Director*

Committee Members absent:

Anthony Mock – *Governor Appointee*

Introductions

SSCC member and NDSU Extension introductions.

Question from Chris about what the primary purpose of the Committee is. Bob provided some background, including that the Century Code mandates the existence of the Committee and what the Committee must do.

2025 SSCC Elections

- 2025 Chair nominations: Kelly nominated David for 2025 Chair. Bob seconded. Motion carried.
- 2025 Vice Chair nominations: Bob suggested a newer Committee member as Vice Chair. Kelly asked if there was any interest from Jess or Emily. After discussion, Bob nominated Jess for 2025 Vice Chair. Emily seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of November Meeting Minutes

- Kelly made a motion to approve the 11.24.24 meeting minutes. Bob seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Review of Financials

- Carrie went through a brief overview of financials.
- Discussion of DART funding and whether the appropriated funds will be divvied out by the end of the biennium.
- Discussion of SCDs missing DART reports and whether they still receive funding—if communication happens and they explain why they have not gotten their reports done, we will often send out that funding.
- Carrie suggested we distribute the ranking of SCDs for DART funding allocations before the next meeting and discuss how to allocate any leftover appropriated DART funding at the next meeting.

NDSU Extension Update

- Signed MOU between NDSU Extension and ND State Soil Conservation Committee distributed to Committee members.
- Discussion of current legislative session. Extension bill is SB2020 to follow along online if interested.

- Update on Extension grant funding, including thinking about what to do to prepare for asking for funding for more Area Coordinators.
- Update on Extension positions associated with SCDs and the SSCC. Andrea Bowman, Extension Program Coordinator, Leadership and Civic Engagement, who helps with Leadership Academy training and assisting SCDs is leaving at the beginning of March. That position (with a western ND focus) will be posted soon; hope to have that position filled around the time Andrea leaves or shortly thereafter.

State Program Coordinator's Report:

- Paula gave a brief report of what she has been doing in the month and a half since she began her position.
- Discussion of needing better tracking of outreach, data, etc. for grant funding purposes, with the hope of getting more funding for Area Coordinators in the future.
- Discussion of needing to streamline SCD outreach and project tracking as well.

Program Coordinator Updates:

- **Hannah, Area V:**
 - Hannah gave an oral report on things she's been doing since the last meeting. Statewide activities:
 - 2 podcast episodes, 2 Micro Lessons, 2 SCD Coffee Talks, facilitated a panel at the NDASCD Convention, etc.
 - Put together a New Supervisor Welcome Packet to send to SCDs—seems like SCDs are appreciating this. Some discussion of the packet. Overview of documents included in the packet. Is this the same as the "supervisor handbook"?
 - No; Jodi DeLozier was working on updating that; will need to find out where that is and what needs to be done yet.
 - Hannah also discussed Area V-specific activities.
 - Helping with onboarding new employees in various districts; helping with grant-funded activities.
- **Lindy, Area I:**
 - Lindy gave a brief oral report on her activities since starting her position.
 - Visiting SCDs in her Area has been a focus.
 - Also helping SCDs seek applicants for open positions.
 - Helping SCDs market the work they are doing is another focus.
 - Would also like to focus on increasing collaboration between Extension Agents and SCD employees.

Old Business:

- Supervisor Education
 - Discussion of how many hours of training are required for SCD supervisors every year.
 - Hannah gave an overview of how training currently works.
 - Continued discussion of what counts as training, how to track training, etc.
 - Committee is good with the current training requirements we have been using.
 - Extension will need to look into the supervisor training report being used by SCDs to ensure consistency across the board.
 - Prolonged discussion of what counts toward supervisor training requirements.
 - Committee will come back to this discussion next meeting after Extension Coordinators have fleshed out the training requirements and document more.

- State Assistance Funds
 - Paula noted that SCDs need better instructions on what financials to report to the SSCC so they are all on the same page and reporting the same information to the Committee to help with determining how to allocate the DART appropriated funds.

New Business:

- Legislative Hearing
 - Bob, former Chair, will be testifying at the legislative session today.

David called a recess for lunch at 12:30 p.m. Reconvened at 12:49 p.m.

- David raised a question about what needs to be done to fill a vacant SCD supervisor position.
 - Carrie quoted ND Century Code noting that the state Program Coordinator should be notified, then the SSCC will be notified and approve of a replacement.

Next Committee Meeting:

The next SSCC board meeting will be in April in Dickinson at the SCD office. Details about the specific time and location will be shared via email in advance of the meeting.

Adjournment:

David called to adjourn the meeting at 1:01 p.m.