

Hughes County Weed and Pest Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
December 14, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting was held in the Hughes County Commission meeting room.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Lyle Stewart at 1:37 p.m.

Those in attendance:

Mr. Lyle Stewart  
Mr. Trent Arbach  
Mr. Joe Boxley  
Mr. Bruce Helbig  
Mr. Troy Blevins  
Mr. Randy Brown (via phone)  
Ms. Lori Jacobson  
Ms. Laura Graves

Agenda:

Budget and Chemical Review: Mr. Arbach and Mr. Boxley gave information on what chemicals were used during the last year regarding the spraying of noxious weeds, current supply on hand, when spraying occurred and what areas were treated. Budget has allowed for \$45,000 remaining for chemical expenditures.

Application planning Spring/Summer/Fall: Discussion was held among the attendees when bids for spring spraying will be sought, how and when the request for bids will be published. Also discussed were application processes, types of chemicals to be applied and satisfaction with current chemical contracted services with Kusser Spraying.

Spray Bid: Discussion was held regarding request for bids and suggestions were made as to parties who may be interested and are possibly providing services to other counties in the area. A suggestion was made by Mr. Brown that the county consider utilizing a drone for the application process. Drone usage, possibility of purchase, rent or lease, application procedures, license requirements and cost were discussed at length by participants. Additional research will be conducted with the possibility of a demonstration of usage by a vendor to be provided. No vote was taken or required on the issue.

Review Enforcement Procedures: Discussion was held regarding making sure State statutes are followed and creating enforcement procedures for landowners regarding controlling noxious weeds on properties. Additional research will be conducted seeking information from other counties on their procedures for attempted enforcement.

Important dates: Ms. Jacobson confirmed with the attendees that local noxious weed requests are due to State offices mid January. The annual and fiscal reports are due the end of January. The SD Weed & Pest conference will be held in February, 2024. The county is required to hold an annual County Weed Board meeting by March 31, 2024 and legal notice of responsibility to control noxious weeds and declared pests must be published by April 1, 2024. Ms. Jacobson will assist Ms. Graves in the procedures for posting notices, etc.

New Business: Discussion was held regarding potential challenges with seed head weevils in sunflowers, complaints received by Hughes County residents and how they were fielded or handled, prairie dog infestations, worm wood sage, goat heads, sand burrs and thistle management. Additional discussion included which areas in Hughes County pose the most challenges regarding noxious weed management. Mr. Helbig inquired of Mr. Arbach and Mr. Boxley about what challenges they have faced and for input regarding how their management of the program is handled along with their main duties for the County. It was suggested by Mr. Helbig that the Weed and Pest Commission meet again in the near future to ensure the County is staying diligent and committed to its efforts regarding weed and pest control issues.

New Hughes County Emergency Manager, Mr. Troy Blevins, was introduced to the attendees as well.

A motion was made by Mr. Brown to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Mr. Helbig and the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Stewart at 2:37 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by Ms. Laura Graves

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