

**Pembina County Soils Committee**  
**December 6, 2022- 10:00 AM**  
**Farmer's Room~ Pembina County Courthouse**

SOILS COMMITTEE MINUTES:

Soils Committee met with Pembina County Commissioners on December 6, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. in the Farmer's Room of the Pembina County Courthouse. A quorum was declared. **Members Present:** Camburn Shephard, Bill Gunderson, Robert Vivatson, Nick Heuchert (alternate) **Others Present:** Tax Equalization Director, Mikka Willits, Deputy Tax Director/GIS Specialist, Lisa Wieler, County Assessor, Lisa Keney, Water Resource Board, LuAnn Kemp, NRCS Resource Soil Scientist, Jordaan Thompson-Larson, Commissioners, Manny Doyle, Jim Benjaminson, Blaine Pappenfuss, Darren Otto, Andrew Cull, Pembina County Auditor, Linda Schlittenhard, Zelda Hartje, Carmen Augustin, Loren Estad, Kaylyn Dalsted, Laura Hinkle, Casey Krieg, Dave Moquist, Terry Meidinger, Revel Sapa, Marcus Ramsey

Absent: Brad Schuster, Curtis Christenson (alternate)

Meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman, Jim Benjaminson at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Vivatson presented an email/letter to the Commission from USDA/NRCS Asst. State Soil Scientist, Lance Duey. Mr. Vivatson also displayed a 2009 flood map on the projector for reference to show the Commission what areas they believe are in need of a discount due to flood water.

Mr. Vivatson gave a presentation on behalf of the soils committee. Soils Committee is recommending a 10% discount to those parcels along the Red and Pembina Rivers that are affected by flooding. He also stated there are a few along the river bank that should be adjusted as well.

Mr. Vivatson recommended a 10% reduction on rocky soils with a higher PI along the western side of the County. One of the soils mentioned was the Lankin Soil. Only corn, wheat and sunflowers are able to grow in this area. Mr. Shephard mentioned the high PI along the escarpment. Mr. Shepard referenced the email/letter which Mr. Vivatson presented to the Commission from Lance Duey regarding the escarpment and how it's a huge area of concern.

Mr. Vivatson made a recommendation for a 30% reduction in salinity for anything over 3 acres within an affected soil. It was discussed that the landowner would be responsible to provide proof to receive this discount. Mr. Shephard mentioned that Walsh County gives an extra 15% discount to those along the ridge. Mr. Vivatson mentioned the amount of appeals that the County would receive if they did not apply these discounts.

Ms. Willits mentioned that Mr. Duey addressed those that had issues re: rocks and other soil concerns at the June 26, 2021 meeting on how to challenge their concerns to NRCS. At this time, Mr. Duey has received no challenges.

NRCS Resource Soil Scientist, Jordaan Thompson-Larson explained that more testing and research in that area is planned to begin in the summer of 2023. Ms. Willits mentioned that Grand Forks County does not use any modifiers but they do have an inundated land application through the State. Ms. Willits expressed her concern with how these modifiers will be approved. Ms. Willits explained that if these recommendations are approved by the Commission, they would also need to be approved by the State.

Ms. Dalsted asked for a moment to speak. Ms. Dalsted mentioned that she had attended the Soils Committee Meeting that was held on Monday, December 5, 2022. Ms. Dalsted feels the soils committee is addressing issues on what benefits them and not the entire county. She addressed Mr. Shephard that there are others, like herself that don't want to pick up the burden of the tax shift with the discounts they are recommending. She stressed that equalization is for all residents of Pembina County and not just a select few.

The commission will take the soils committee recommendations into consideration. Decision was tabled until the next commission meeting on December 20, 2022.

Motion was made by Mr. Vivatson to adjourn the meeting and seconded Mr. Heuchert. Meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

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Secretary for Tax Equalization Office

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Soils Committee Chairman