

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING**
Lincoln County Commissioners Chambers, Courthouse– Davenport, WA
Wednesday, December 13, 2023

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 9:07 AM by Vice Chairman, Braidy Haden. Those attending the meeting in person were as follows: Chris Laney, Jim Baye and Josh Sherwood, LCCD Supervisors; Jo Gilchrist, Lincoln County Commissioners; Elsa Bowen, Delaini Disher, Debra Armstrong, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:

Jim noted that his name should be removed from the list of attendees for the November 8 meeting on page 1 because he was not able to attend the meeting.

- *1. Josh moved to approve the November 8, 2023 minutes as amended. Chris seconded. There was no other public comment. Motion passed.*

B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:

- *2. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #12263 to #12287, along with 11 EFT's, totaling \$68,590.89. Josh seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.*
- *3. Jim moved to submit voucher #1 for the 23-DG-11062752-163 grant in the amount of \$0.00 to DNR. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *4. Jim moved to submit voucher #1 for the Adams CD TA grant in the amount of \$645.25 to Adams Conservation District. Josh seconded. Motion passed.*
- *5. Jim moved to submit voucher #4 for the 24-39-NR grant in the amount of \$6,555.58 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *6. Jim moved to submit voucher #4 for the 24-39-IM grant in the amount of \$14,267.10 to the Conservation Commission. Josh seconded. Motion passed.*
- *7. Jim moved to submit voucher #5 for the 24-39-IM grant in the amount of \$12,016.03 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *8. Jim moved to submit voucher #5 for the VSP 5 grant in the amount of \$9,707.99 to the Conservation Commission. Josh seconded. Motion passed.*
- *9. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District VISA statement for September 26, 2023 through October 23, 2023 be approved. The total amount owed was \$2,749.63. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. There was no public comment. Motion passed.*

- **10. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District VISA statement for October 24, 2023 through November 24, 2023 be approved. The total amount owed was \$1,075.45. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**
- **11. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of November 15, 2023. The total amount owed was \$157.81. Josh seconded. Motion passed.**
- **12. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of November 30, 2023. The total amount owed was \$277.84. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**

After reviewing the statements, the Board members initialed each page of the bank statements for the checking and money market accounts.

The Board reviewed the report of the current annual leave/sick leave balances for District employees.

Elsa reported that the only grant ending this year is the WaterSMART grant and that all of the funding has been spent. A new \$75,000 Fire Resiliency grant has recently been received by the District and the addendum needs to be approved by the Board.

Elsa noted that the amended 2023 budget and proposed 2024 budget had been approved at the November meeting and give Jim a hardcopy of the 2024 budget for him to review. Elsa reminded the Board that the Budget is a working document and can be updated by the Board anytime as needed.

- **13. Chris moved to approve the Treasurer's report and Grant's report as presented. Josh seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

C. AGENDA

Building Update

Elsa handed out hard copies of the updated floor plan just received from NRCS for the ongoing remodeling of the Davenport Service Center. The open space on the back side/north side of the office is the space allotted for District staff. Elsa will be speaking soon with Continuum Office Environments, the vendor who provided the current District office cubicles now in storage, and ask if these cubicles can be traded in for new, more adjustable cubicles that will fit better in the back of office.

The building is now scheduled to be finished by the end of December, but NRCS and FSA will be doing a walk through before approving the remodeled office. NRCS and FSA could not finalize their furniture orders until the final floor plan which was just received and was delayed due to a mistake made in measurements that had the building 6 ft. larger than it actually is. NRCS and FSA may be working on fold up tables for a while in the remodeled office until their new office cubicles arrive.

Springbrook Accounting Software Update

Elsa announced that Springbrook now has an available software update for \$1,700 that will enable District staff to enter their own timesheet hours after taking the 1 hour training session. Elsa requested that the Board approve the acquisition of this software update from Springbrook.

14. Chris moved to approve the purchase of Springbrook software update for \$1,700 for staff to enter their own timesheets. Josh seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.

Elections

Elsa noted that the District needs to approve a resolution for 2024 Supervisor elections no later than the board meeting in January. Elsa recommended that the elections be held in March again to follow the Conservation Commission designation as March for elections month. The question again is whether to mail ballots to all 8,000 registered voters in the county as was done for spring 2023 or go back to the voluntary ballot request system that has only brought in fewer than 20 ballots in past years.

Elsa recommended that the back side of the ballot be printed with a list of District services and activities as part of an outreach and information effort to county voters. Elsa also recommended that Parks Print be hired to print, fold, stuff and mail the 8,000 ballots to county voters. Board members requested that a draft ballot be developed for review at the January meeting and suggested that the annual tree sale, Firewise and cost share grant information be included on the back of the ballot. Delaini noted that all CD's are required to follow a calendar of event dates for elections activities in order for the Conservation Commission to approve the elections results in May.

15. Jim moved to approve Resolution 2023 – 03 to mail spring 2024 Supervisor Elections ballots to all the registered voters in Lincoln County, include District activities and services outreach information on the back of the ballot, and to contract with Parks Print to print, fold, stuff and mail the ballots as discussed. Implementation grant money will be used to pay for the elections cost. Josh seconded. There was no further public comment. Motion passed.

2024 Tree Sale

All of the spring 2024 Tree Sale plant species have been ordered and the tree sale brochure has been finished with copies already mailed to the 175 customers who ordered trees or requested a brochure last year. The online tree sale brochure is now available for customers to review but orders will not be taken until after New Year's Day. Tree sale pickup is scheduled for Thursday and Friday, April 4th and 5th. This year ornamental flower and grass species will be sold by individual pots and will not be sold in pollinator packs as in previous years. With no open hardware store in Davenport in the foreseeable future, there should be no issues with competition with local businesses.

Surplus Equipment Update

Elsa reported that the white pickup, camera and GPS unit on the surplus equipment bid list from last month have been paid for and picked up by the top bidders. Staff are now working on cleaning up the hard drives on other surplus computer equipment including a Mac Book, iPads, desktop towers, and other accessory equipment such as keyboards

and mice. Some of the computers have broken screens or are not working. Board members asked if the nonworking equipment could be donated to schools for repair if they could not be sold.

16. Jim moved to approve the sale of remaining surplus computer equipment and accessories as identified by District staff. Josh seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.

Grants Update

There were no Cost Share applications or payments for approval. Elayne has been working on a grant project to design and install a windbreak in the limited space around the border of the baseball field in Reardan.

Elsa reported that a new \$75,000 Firewise grant, 24-39-FH, had been received by the District with an addendum requiring Board approval. Elsa proposed that the focus of the grant be directed toward the newer housing development areas along Lake Roosevelt and the Spokane River. Some portion of the \$75,000 grant such as \$25,000 could be allocated to hiring a Firewise coordinator, preferably with a forestry background, to work with local fire districts, developments and interested local residents. Elsa reminded board members that the Firewise grant funding could only be spent on projects in Lincoln County and could not be spent in adjacent Spokane or Grant county.

The consensus of the Board was that Elsa start work on a Firewise Coordinator position and bring it to a future Board meeting.

17. Josh moved to approve the new \$75,000 Firewise 24-39-FH grant and addendum. Jim seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.

VSP Update

Delaini reported that she had attended a recent VSP meeting with a presentation on land stewardship in Lincoln County from WDFW and had also been meeting with other VSP staff members from surrounding CD's. Delaini has also been working with Ben Floyd on VSP information and outreach efforts in Lincoln County by developing a newsletter and survey to mail to residents in individual sub-watersheds. The first sub-watershed selected was the Hawk Creek watershed, a part of the Lower Lake Roosevelt/WRIA 53 watershed. A list of 140 different landowners in the Hawk Creek watershed was developed to mail the newsletter and survey. The survey asks landowners to review a list of resource issues and asks what issues are a concern for them on their ground and if they would be interested in applying for VSP grant funding to address them. A monitoring strategy is also being developed for 2024 and some new equipment will be ordered.

Jim asked if LLC's (Limited Liability Corporations) were able to be identified for the watershed area, as significant areas of land are owned by absentee landowners and are managed by renters, including LLC's. Chris requested that a map of the watersheds and sub-watersheds in the county be brought to the January meeting. Elsa noted that Lincoln County had transferred the new \$250,000 VSP grant funding to the District to implement VSP in the county. Some of this funding was used to purchase an "Owl" for remote meetings such as Zoom that rotates the meeting camera in the host meeting room to turn towards the different speakers in the room when they speak.

WACD Annual Meeting

Jeff, Chris and Elsa attended the meeting in person in Wenatchee. Only 25 CD's and 46 voting members attended the meeting in person, with other CD participation done remotely. FSA now only has 116 employees across the state, and CD's across the state now have more employees than FSA or NRCS. All the resolutions passed except for the resolution to support removing the Snake River dams, which failed by a surprisingly narrow 26 to 24 margin. Chris noted that Whitman and Spokane CD's are using a 25 question self-evaluation form board member conduct and that Lincoln CD would also score high on the form. Elsa announced that Jim Baye and Jeff Schibel had received 10-year service pins from WACD and presented the pin to Jim.

Amy McKay has been elected to serve as WACD Vice-President and Mike Mumford has been reelected as WACD President. Larry Cochran has replaced Darryl Williams as the Conservation Commission Chairman. James Thompson from Cowlitz County has been selected as the new Executive Director for the Conservation Commission. The next 2 Annual WACD meetings will be held at Northern Quest Casino in Airway Heights.

FSA and NRCS Report

Ashley Smith has been promoted to FSA CED (County Executive Director) for the Davenport Service Center and Abigail (Abby) Zurcher has been hired as a new program technician. Acreage reports are due December 15 and the current Farm Bill has been given an extension until September 30, 2024.

Carolyn Edenbo from the Tri-Cities has been selected as the new West Palouse Team (Davenport and Ritzville offices) District Conservationist. NRCS has established new Natural Resources Specialist positions in the Davenport and Ritzville offices. The latest Administrative Assistant candidate for the Davenport office has declined the position and so NRCS has to start the hiring process all over again.

County Commissioners Report

Jo reported that the County had just received a \$275,000 grant to install new lighting around the new indoor arena starting to be constructed at the fairgrounds. The hog barn has now been moved to the lawn area.

EPA announced at a recent Council of County Governments meeting that it is seeking to designate all 154 miles of Lake Roosevelt as a Superfund area due to arsenic mine waste tailings at the Canadian border. The County Commissioners are opposed to this designation. The Department of Ecology will be giving a presentation at the Sprague fire station on Tuesday, January 2 on the Sprague Flooding Report. Rural Resources Victims Service has now opened a new office in Davenport at 1018 Morgan Street and joins other offices in Colville, Republic and Inchelium. The county is having difficulty with paying for the 53% increase in insurance premiums for 2024.

Almira will be the first city in the county to have the new county operated broadband service started, followed by Creston and Harrington, and then by the Seven Bays and Deer Meadows areas. The county provides the fiber optic cable to the power poles, and then residents can select from 11 different ISP's to hook up the high speed broadband to individual homes and businesses.

Executive Session

The Board went into executive session under option 1(g) of RCW 42.30.110 at 10:45 AM for an estimated 45 minutes to conduct Employee Reviews. The Board came back out of executive session at 11:30 AM. Several motions were made as a result of the Executive Session.

18. Jim moved to approve Thursday, November 24 (day after Thanksgiving) and Tuesday, December 26 (day after Christmas Day) as administrative days off from the Board for District staff. Josh seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.


19. Jim moved to approve the Manager's recommendations for salary increases effective January 1, 2024. Chris seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.

Request for Public Comment

Braidy asked if there was any more public comment for the meeting. There was no public comment.

Vice Chairman Braidy Haden adjourned the meeting at 11:34 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 10 starting at 8:30 AM. The location is to be determined at a later date.

Respectfully submitted,



Josh Sherwood, Secretary



Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:

All 19 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the November 8, 2023 minutes as amended.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #12263 to #12287, along with 11 EFT's, totaling 68,590.89.
- 3. M/S/P to submit voucher #1 for the 23-DG-11062752-163 grant in the amount of \$0.00 to DNR.
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