

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
USDA Service Center Conference Room – Davenport, WA  
Wednesday, July 12, 2023**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

Meeting called to order at 8:30 AM by Chairman, Jeff Schibel. Those attending the meeting in person were as follows: Jim Baye, Chris Laney, Josh Sherwood, and Braidy Haden - LCCD Supervisors; Marika Kearsley, NRCS; Ryan Baye, WACD; Elsa Bowen, Delaini Disher, Debra Armstrong, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

**A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:**

- *It was noted that on page 4 of the June 14 minutes in the Elections Approval paragraph, the date to which the new 3 year term as Supervisor that will be in effect for Jim needed to be changed from May 21, 2023 to May 21, 2026.*
- *1. Chris moved to approve the June 14, 2023 minutes as amended. Jim seconded. There was no further public comment. Motion passed.*

**B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:**

- *2. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #12118 to #12167, along with 9 EFT's, totaling \$614,554.16. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *3. Jim moved to submit voucher #24 for the VSP 4 grant in the amount of \$42,237.07 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *4. Jim moved to submit voucher #9 for the 23-39-DG grant in the amount of \$10,194.02 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *5. Jim moved to submit voucher #5 for the 23-39-WFF grant in the amount of \$321,400.10 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *6. Jim moved to submit voucher #1 for the DNR SIM Table grant in the amount of \$147,975.00 to DNR. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. Elsa noted that 3 of the SIM tables had been ordered. The SIM tables are portable and will be shared with the adjacent NE Area CD's. Motion passed.*
- *7. Jim moved to submit voucher 12 for the 23-39-FR grant in the amount of \$135,034.81 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *8. Jim moved to submit voucher #24 for the 22-39-NR grant in the amount of \$28,294.31 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*

- **9. Jim moved to submit voucher #14 for the Cluster Engineering grant in the amount of \$3,220.09 to Stevens County CD. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **10. Jim moved to submit voucher #15 for the Cluster Engineering grant in the amount of \$1,784.96 to Stevens County CD. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **11. Jim moved to submit voucher #11 for the 23-39-IM grant in the amount of \$0.00 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **12. Jim moved to submit voucher #12 for the 23-39-IM grant in the amount of \$17,400.00 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **13. Jim moved to submit voucher #20 for the 22-27-NR grant in the amount of \$518.43 to Adams CD. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **14. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for May 25, 2023 through June 23, 2023 be approved. The total amount owed was \$15,283.92. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. Elsa noted that every conservation district across the state was eligible this year to apply for up to \$20,000 of fiscal year end grant funding from the Conservation Commission for buying office and field equipment and other gear that had to be purchased and in hand by June 30. Lincoln County CD used \$17,400 of this year end grant funding to purchase well level measuring equipment, office furniture and a laptop computer, and various jackets, boots, gloves, and hats primarily for field use. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**
- **15. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of June 15, 2023. The total amount owed was \$75.25. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **16. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of June 30, 2023. The total amount owed was \$206.94. 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 a total of \$405,000 had to be moved from the checking accounts of several banks in order to cover the high amount of grant voucher expenses this month, including the 23-39-WFF, DNR SIM Table, 23-39-FR, VSP 4 and 22-39-NR grants. Once the District receives grant voucher reimbursement from the Conservation Commission and DNR, the checking account funds will be returned to the banks from which they were withdrawn. At this time, Lincoln County CD still has \$832,000 in grant

funding to use, and a new \$80,000 CWPP (Community Wildfire Protection Program) grant was recently received that will run for 5 years into 2026.

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

## C. AGENDA

### NRCS Report

Marika reported that the major work with EQIP applications had been completed and that the primary focus for the West Palouse Team now was processing CSP applications for the current signup. The deadline for obligating contracts in the current signup is August 15.

For CSP Classic, 14 applications had been approved in Lincoln County with 3 contracts obligated and 1 application cancelled. In Adams County, 8 applications were approved with 0 contracts obligated at this time.

For CSP IRA (Inflation Reduction Act), 13 applications had been approved in Lincoln County with 11 contracts obligated and 1 application cancelled. In Adams County, 5 applications had been received with 4 contracts obligated.

A third CSP signup has been announced, with applications due by July 23 and the deadline for obligating contracts on September 15. One application has been received in Lincoln County and 4 applications have been received in Adams County so far.

Marika noted that an additional \$12 million in CSP IRA funding had been made available across the state for the third CSP signup. One big difference between the CSP program and EQIP is that the CSP funding limit per producer for each 5 year farm bill program is \$200,000 while the EQIP funding limit is \$450,000 for each 5 year farm bill program. Because the EQIP funding limit per farm bill is more than twice the CSP funding limit, some producers are waiting to sign up during the next EQIP signup instead of signing up for the third CSP signup.

Producers can use CSP and EQIP to implement different practices on the same farmland fields, but they can not use both CSP and EQIP funding to implement the same practice on the same farmland fields. Most producers with CSP contracts are using this funding to implement reduced tillage practices on their farmland. IRA funded practices are primarily targeted to address the adverse effects of climate change. Irrigated producers are finding that they are not eligible for most IRA funded practices except for nutrient management.

Marika announced that the recent CRP signup Task Order with the District to write 250 CRP contracts had been completed. There were 156 applications submitted in Lincoln County with 4 contracts declined. In Adams County there were 176 applications with 10 contracts declined. Heidi and Bryon are currently conducting all of the existing CRP field checks in Adams and Lincoln counties that are expiring in 2024. The deadline for Continuous and for SAFE CRP applications is July 31. For Lincoln County, 11 SAFE and 6 Continuous applications have been received and for Adams County, 13 Continuous applications have been received so far.

Marika noted that intern Byron Gagnon would be finishing his temporary position in the Davenport office on July 28. Marika's appointment as acting DC for Cari will be

ending on July 17. Marika also noted that Cari has accepted a new position with NRCS in Jamestown, North Dakota and will be starting there in mid August.

Following Marika's report, Elsa reported that Jeff Kuhlman, long-time NRCS Conservationist in the Spokane Area office, will be retiring in July and that a retirement party will be held for him in the office on July 17. It was also noted that Marika was interested in applying for the position held by Jeff at the state office.

Board members expressed concerns over how long it might take before a new DC would be appointed for the West Palouse Team. It was noted that it typically takes 6 to 8 months for WA-NRCS to hire a new DC for field offices, and that in the meantime, an acting DC will be appointed for the first 3 months and may be replaced by other acting DC's until a new DC is hired. After Ann Swannack retired, it took about a year and a half before Cari was hired as DC for the WPT.

### **Cost Share Update**

Hard copies of the current Cost Share project application list for possible contracts in 2023 and for potential projects in 2024 were distributed. Elsa announced that the District will receive \$81,222 for NRI (Natural Resources Investment) 23-39-NR grant funding that will run up through June 2025. Elayne compiled the list of prospective projects and cooperators after contacting them by phone and by field visits. Most of the cost share project applications (12 of 18) are for livestock watering facilities. Elsa and Elayne reviewed and ranked the list of projects and cooperators to create the list of the 4 highest ranking projects on the second page, which include 3 livestock watering facilities and 1 livestock exclusion fence. The 3 livestock watering facility projects would receive \$20,000 in 23-39-NR grant funding and would be required to provide 25% or \$6,666.67 in cost share for a total maximum project cost of \$26,666.67. The livestock exclusion fence project would receive up to \$10,000 in grant funding and would also have to provide 25% cost share. The District is allowed to retain \$11,222.00 for administrative overhead.

***18. Jim moved to approve the 4 highest ranking projects on page 2 of the Cost Share project application list as presented for 23-39-NR grant funding and cost share sheet as presented. Chris seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.***

### **VSP Update**

Elsa reported that the County Commissioners have allocated the \$240,000 received by the county for VSP funding for the new biennium to the District for VSP administration, VSP cost share projects and VSP Work Group assistance in Lincoln County. Ben Floyd with White Bluffs Consulting is the current contractor hired for facilitating VSP in the county. District staff have already begun advertising the RFQ (request for qualifications) online for a contractor to facilitate VSP in Lincoln County for the new biennium. Elsa and Delaini will be giving a VSP technical report for Lincoln County at the NE Area VSP meeting being hosted at Spokane CD tomorrow.

***19. Chris moved to approve advertising the RFQ for the VSP 4 grant. Braidy seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.***

### **Washington Conservation Society Investment**

Elsa announced that reinvestment in the Washington Conservation Society has been requested for 2024. The District has invested \$150 per year to the Washington

Conservation Society in previous years to support the Society and to be eligible to apply for small conservation grants through the Society.

**20. Chris moved to approve the investment of \$150 in the Washington Conservation Society again for 2024. Braidy seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

#### **WACD Dues**

Elsa reported that the WACD dues for 2024 will be \$3,088.89, the same amount as last year. The WACD dues have been paid with funding from the Implementation grant in the past.

**21. Jim moved to approve paying the \$3,088.89 in WACD dues for 2024 with funding from the Implementation grant. Chris seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

#### **Tree Planting Project**

Elsa reported that the District staff have been working with Jason Echelbarger to coordinate the planning for a tree and shrub planting project on Lazy YJ Ranch land in the Waukon Rd/Hwy 2 area. The 3,600 stems needed for the project have already been ordered and the DNR work crew has been scheduled to plant the trees and shrubs in spring 2024.

#### **Executive Session**

The Board went into executive session under option 1(g) of RCW 42.30.110 at 9:45 AM for an estimated 1/2 hour to discuss personnel matters. The Board came back out of executive session at 10:20 AM. No actions were taken as a result of the Executive Session.

#### **Conservation Commission Report**

Ryan reported that annual reports are due to the Conservation Commission in the near future. Elsa noted that the CTA report had been finished and submitted along with all the required annual reports.

The July meeting for the Conservation Commission will be held in Wenatchee next week. The Commission should be hiring a contractor to facilitate the search for the new Executive Director. Ron Shultz, long term Policy Director for the Commission, has recently passed away.

#### **WACD Report**

Ryan reported that one of his goals is to visit all 45 conservation districts across the state in person at board meetings. Tom Salzer is on vacation until August. Ryan has been appointed as Acting Executive Director until Tom returns to work. A new WACD staff person has been hired to assist with CD board supervisor training, education and other tasks starting August 1.

Several of the WACD committees are actively working on current issues this summer. The Livestock Committee is looking into how Ecology and WDFW are now approaching livestock watering and water quality issues and how livestock producers may be affected. The Shared Resources work group is working with WACD to hire shared employees to work with multiple conservation districts and save CD's money by

not having to hire separate employees themselves. The first new shared employee hired is a legal assistance specialist.

Ryan is a member of the current Ag/Forestry class. His 5-member group project for the class involves the creation of an Ag Education toolbox for urban and suburban schools to help educate school kids kindergarten through 9<sup>th</sup> grade about agricultural crops and practices along with ag producer perspectives.

Ryan reported that WACD is considering holding a joint annual meeting with Idaho in 2024 or 2025 to give board supervisors and staff members from each state a different perspective on CD's work in the adjacent state. Separate business meetings would be held in different meeting rooms for each state's participants. Ryan asked the Board if they might be interested in attending a joint meeting with Idaho CD's in the future. Elsa noted that a joint meeting location in Couer d'Alene or Spokane would provide places and activities for participants and their spouses to visit during the meeting days. The Board agreed by general consensus that they would be interested in participating in a joint meeting with Idaho. Ryan suggested that a joint meeting with Idaho in 2025 or 2026 and held in Spokane would be the best option for Washington CD's.

Ryan reminded the Board that the 2023 Annual Meeting would be held in Wenatchee on November 27 – 30 and that the 2024 meeting might be held in Spokane or the Tri-Cities.

### **WADE Training Report**

Delaini, Debra and Elayne attended WADE (Washington Association of District Employee) training at the Sleeping Lady in Leavenworth this June. Delaini attended training sessions in the education, farms & fields and fire recovery training track. Debra attended training sessions in the financial training track. WADE directors are looking into restructuring WADE training and adding some new tracts such as sustainable agriculture. About 300 participants attended WADE training at the Sleeping Lady this year. With up to 50 people attending some of the training sessions, participants are starting to recognize that this is too many people to have productive discussions at individual sessions.

Elsa commented that the option for remote training worked out well for her to participate in WADE while working at the office. WADE training has always had issues with the training in June due to fiscal year end grant project completion and grants reports due at the end of June. At this point in time, it appears that WADE training is pretty well locked into the middle of June at the Sleeping Lady.

### **FSA Report**

There was no FSA report.

### **Miscellaneous**

Dean mentioned that Tom Wilson is retiring from collecting and sending monthly precip totals for his location at Lamona after nearly 57 years of cooperative precip collection at this farm from September 1966 up through summer 2023. Tom noted that there are some other producers in the Lamona area that may be willing to carry on precip collection for the Lamona vicinity but that they also live in Odessa and it may be hard for them to capture daily precip amounts, especially in winter. Board members asked if setting up an automated remote weather station might be feasible for the Lamona area.

Elsa reminded the Board that the NE Area meeting this year will be held this year in Pend Oreille county in October and will probably be held at the Cusick Learning Center again.

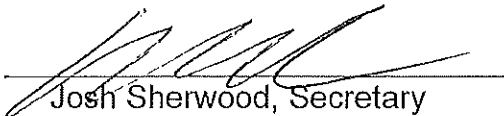
Jeff asked who is planning on attending the annual WACD Meeting in Wenatchee on November 27 – 30. At this time, Chris, Braidy and Jeff are planning on attending the annual WACD Meeting.

#### **Request for Public Comment**

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

Chairman Jeff Schibel adjourned the meeting at 11:08 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 11 as an in-person meeting starting at 8:30 AM in the conference room at the USDA Service Center in Davenport.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Josh Sherwood, Secretary

  
Dean White, Minute Taker

#### **SUMMARY:**

All 21 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the June 14, 2023 minutes as amended.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #12118 to #12167, along with 9 EFT's, totaling \$614,554.16.
- 3. M/S/P to submit voucher #24 for the VSP 4 grant in the amount of \$42,237.07 to the Conservation Commission.
- 4. M/S/P to submit voucher #9 for the 23-39-DG grant in the amount of \$10,194.02 to the Conservation Commission.
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- 6. M/S/P to submit voucher #1 for the DNR SIM Table grant in the amount of \$147,975.00 to DNR.
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- 11. M/S/P to submit voucher #11 for the 23-39-IM grant in the amount of \$0.00 to the Conservation Commission.
- 12. M/S/P to submit voucher #12 for the 23-39-IM grant in the amount of \$17,400.00 to the Conservation Commission.
- 13. M/S/P to submit voucher #20 for the 22-27-NR grant in the amount of \$518.43 to Adams CD.
- 14. M/S/P that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for May 25, 2023 through June 23, 2023 be approved. The total amount owed was \$15,283.92.
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- 18. M/S/P to approve the 4 highest ranking projects on page 2 of the Cost Share project application list as presented for 23-39-NR grant funding.
- 19. M/S/P to approve advertising the RFQ for the VSP 4 grant.
- 20. M/S/P to approve the investment of \$150 in the Washington Conservation Society again for 2024.
- 21. M/S/P to approve paying the \$3,088.89 in WACD dues for 2024 with funding from the Implementation grant.