

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
NRCS / FSA MEETING ROOM-DAVENPORT WA
Tuesday, January 15, 2019**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 8:30 AM by Chairman, Mike Carstensen. Those attending the meeting were as follows: Jim Baye, Jeff Schibel, Josh Sherwood - LCCD Supervisors; Mike Baden, Conservation Commission; Mark Stedman, Lincoln County Commissioner; Ann Swannack, NRCS; Braidy Haden and Chris Laney, guests; Elsa Bowen, Val Vissia, Kristen Balko, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:

- *1. Jeff moved to approve the December 12 minutes as presented. Jim seconded. Motion passed.*

B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:

- *2. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #10648 to #10664, along with 3 EFT's, totaling \$82,806.38, for November 30, 2018 – December 31, 2018. Jeff seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.*
- *3. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #10665 to #10673, along with 15 EFT's, totaling \$6,194.73, for January 1, 2019 – January 14, 2019. Jeff seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.*
- *4. Jim moved to submit voucher #2 for the FAC 3 grant in the amount of \$5,171.41 to the SCWRCD. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*
- *5. Jim moved to submit voucher #17 for the VSP 2 grant in the amount of \$539.13 to the Conservation Commission. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*
- *6. Jim moved to submit voucher #25 for the LC Sage Grouse Mitigation & Education grant in the amount of \$54,531.25 to BLM. Jeff seconded. Discussion was held. Elsa noted that since the federal contract with BLM for the grant had been approved before the recent partial federal government shutdown, the District would be reimbursed for costs incurred, but there would probably be delays due to the ongoing federal government shutdown. Motion passed.*
- *7. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Cenex credit card statement with a closing date of December 10, 2018. The total amount owed was \$323.58. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*

- **8. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for November 24, 2018 – December 24, 2018 be approved. The total amount owed was \$1,334.44. Josh seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.**

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

Elsa distributed hard copies of a Grants & Stuff handout that briefly discussed the current grants listed on the Grant Funds Receivable and Accounts page.

The special assessment report page was briefly discussed. There are about 14,000 parcels in Lincoln County, with about 60% rural cropland or rangeland and 40% urban parcels. The District works to provide assistance to both rural and urban landowners, and paid Lincoln County a little over \$13,000 in 2018 for the assessment collection fee.

- **9. Jim moved to approve the Treasurer's report and the Grant's report as presented. Josh seconded. Motion passed.**

C. AGENDA

Internal Audit Schedule

Elsa reported that the annual Internal Audit was scheduled for Wednesday, February 13, in the conference room after February board meeting. Mike Baden will be there for the audit. Jeff and Jim volunteered to stay after the board meeting. Mike will be out of town and will not be able to attend the board meeting or the Internal Audit. Val noted that February 13 is also the scheduled 2019 election day for the District.

County Commissioner Report

Commissioner Stedman reported that the Columbia Basin Development League (CBDL) will be in Olympia towards the end of January to lobby the state legislature to approve a second \$300 million bond for the Office of the Columbia River (OCR) for next fiscal biennium. This \$300 million bond would include \$40 million for continued work on the East Low Canal and the Odessa Subarea deep well irrigation water replacement. The county commissioners from Grant, Kittitas and Lincoln counties recently met and selected Alex Ybarra to replace the position vacated by Matt Manweller, Republican, in the 13th legislative district.

Commissioner Stedman thanked Elsa and Kristen for working with Margie Hall, Lincoln County Economic Development Council, on flooding issues in the Sprague area and helping to facilitate the efforts of Ecology, WDFW, the Army Corps of Engineers, Adams County, and Lincoln County on solutions for this flooding issue. Lincoln and Adams CD staff are currently working on a MOU between the Districts to work cooperatively on this project. Lincoln County CD will be providing the technical

assistance while Adams CD will be providing the administrative and financial assistance.

Commissioner Stedman expressed concerns that small school districts, especially in Eastern Washington, may be under pressure to consolidate given the revised school funding formulas and procedures. The Porcupine Bay Road project is progressing along better now and may allow for the application of hot mix to the road surface by May 2019. After the road has been successfully rebuilt, the park should be able to reopen, assuming the federal government is no longer still shut down. Mike asked how the county roads are doing this winter with the numerous freeze/thaw cycles so far this winter. The county paved roads are holding up pretty well so far, but a lot of gravel is being applied to county gravel roads this winter. One positive aspect of this winter season is that the county is paying a lot less for snow removal and overtime with the more mild winter weather. Jeff noted that Odessa had just hired a new police officer for the city. The state departments of Health and Commerce are continuing to work on a 4 county well monitoring project for the GWMA counties (Adams, Franklin, Grant, and Lincoln counties) that may follow the Texas well monitoring model. A mayor's well meeting for Lincoln County cities will be held at 9 AM on Friday, February 15 in the Commissioner's Chambers in the courthouse in Davenport.

Well Level Monitoring Grant Report

Dean handed out several maps for an update on the progress of the well level monitoring grant. The first map showed the 6 well level measuring routes and the meter(s) used to measure the water level at each well. For well level measuring that started at the end of June and continued through the end of November 2018, 77 wells were visited. The well level measuring grant had a goal of measuring 50 wells. The second map showed very brief qualitative notes on how the water levels had varied in the wells measured across the county that included "little change" to "significant drawdown and recovery" and also included "varies with Lake Roosevelt."

All of the well level measuring field notes have been entered in draft form into Excel spreadsheet. Current work involves the finalizing of measuring point heights, air line lengths, and well location coordinates. Once this is done, a final spreadsheet with well water levels (SWL) and well water elevation will be sent to Kevin Lindsey with GeoEngineers and Ecology ERO staff to review before the information is ready to enter in the Ecology EIM database, which needs to be done before the start of continued measurements by late February/early March. Selection of transducers and installation in selected wells also needs to be implemented in the near future as part of the grant tasks.

Elsa reported that she had been working with ERO staff to get the well level grant extended one year from June 2019 to June 2020, which should be approved in the near future.

Conservation Commission Report

The Conservation Commission is working on budget issues and looking to fill in the gaps, along with the upcoming elections season. Executive Director Mark Clark is retiring this week. An announcement for an interim director has been sent out, and a selection for an interim director is expected to be made soon in time for Legislative

Days and state budget negotiations. An assistant will also be hired to help Ron Schulz, who is recuperating from health issues.

Mike worked to secure funding for the cooperative riparian tree pruning project at the outlet of Sprague Lake between Adams and Lincoln County CD's to help reduce potential flooding issues in the Sprague area. Mike will be attending the Adams CD meeting on Thursday.

The Department of Commerce is leading, and the Department of Health is funding a series of 3 well monitoring meetings for the 4 GWMA counties (Adams, Franklin, Grant, and Lincoln counties) that will be held from March through May. Commerce and Health have contracted with the Conservation Commission to facilitate these meetings. All Group A well systems, including the cities in the 4 counties will be invited to attend, along with county commissioners and conservation districts.

Mike will be attending the February 13 board meeting and afterwards to facilitate the Internal Audit. Mike will also be working with Josh on new board member orientation. One of the requirements for new board members is to view the Open Public Meeting Act videos from the state.

NRCS Report

Ann reported that NRCS staff has been present and working in the Davenport and Ritzville offices. Signing of the new Farm Bill and some funding left in reserve has allowed NRCS staff to keep on working during the current partial federal government shutdown, while the FSA side of the offices has been closed since the end of December due to no funding to pay staff. NRCS staff have been working a lot with online training, including planner certification. Ann noted that since Lincoln County CD does not have a conservation planner currently up to speed on NRCS programs, a conservation planner from Grant County CD has been approached to assist the West Palouse Team with CSP contracts. Roylene Rides at the Door has cancelled the STAC (State Technical Advisory Committee) meeting next week.

Ann handed out the current NRCS fact sheets on the EQIP program and the special initiative practices that are available for producers to sign up, including the Air Quality Initiative, the On-Farm Energy Initiative, and the Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative. Local Working Group (LWG) funds are available to fund practices for these 3 initiatives along with CAP plans. Any producer that submits an application for EQIP is not obligated to complete any practices until the contract is signed. Applications must first be ranked, and only the high ranked applications will proceed further in the signup process. Those applications that rank medium or low in priority do not proceed any further and will not get approved for contract funding. The next 2 cutoff dates for general EQIP applications, including applications funded through the Local Working Group, are February 15 and April 19, 2019.

Gary Cook has joined the Adams CD Board of Supervisors. Gary worked for many years as a Conservation Technician for NRCS in the Ritzville office, and also worked on many projects in Lincoln County. Scott Stevens accepted a new position with NRCS in Massachusetts, fairly close to where he grew up, and is no longer working in the Davenport office. The East Area is still waiting to get a new Area Engineer hired and on board. Adams CD will be holding its annual meeting this year at the American Legion Hall in Ritzville on January 30.

NRCS program assistance for flooding issues in the Sprague area moves pretty slow. Growers need to be on record with FSA as the operator. Producers in the

Sprague area in Lincoln County that farm land within WRIA 34, the Palouse Basin, are eligible to sign up through RCPP (Resource Conservation Partnership Program) in the EQIP program for practices that target direct seeding and riparian buffers.

CSP contracts are still being processed by WPT staff. Staff have been working on spot checking 10% of CSP contracts, and still have about 20 contracts to review. Only 5 new CSP applications have been received so far. CSP contracts that were set to expire back in 2014 were extended non-competitively another 5 years to July/August 2019

Any FSA deadlines that expire during the partial federal government shutdown will be extended for a proportionate amount of time for the length of the government shutdown, once the shutdown has ended. Producers that sign up for NRCS programs that require FSA to update farm records will encounter delays due to the government shutdown.

Ann requested feedback from the District on when the upcoming LWG meeting should be held. It was noted that the LWG meeting was held in Ritzville last year, and so the meeting should be held in Davenport this year. Ann noted that the LWG meeting needs to be held by early March at the latest before producers start getting busy in the field. The meeting was tentatively scheduled for February 26 at Lincoln County Public Works starting at 9 AM. Soon after the meeting ended, the LWG meeting had to be moved to Tuesday, February 15, starting at 9 AM at Lincoln County Public Works, due to meeting conflicts.

FSA Report

There was no regular report from FSA with the FSA office closed for the partial federal government shutdown. It was noted that Sara would be coming in for several days in the near future, but only to do some emergency work on the farm loan program tasks.

Policy Manual Update

Copies of the Policy Manual update concerning Washington State's new Paid Family and Medical Leave Program were distributed. The update noted that the District will pay the employee share and the District share for the Paid Family and Medical Leave Program for any employee who works 820 hours or more annually. The board members present signed the addition to the policy manual.

MOU with Adams CD

An MOU was needed to work with Adams CD with Natural Resource Investment (NRI) funding from the Conservation Commission for the Sprague Lake outlet/Cow Creek riparian pruning/Rex Harder project in Adams County (18-27-NR grant).

10. Jeff moved to approve an MOU with Adams CD to work on the Sprague Lake outlet/Cow Creek riparian pruning project in Adams County funded by NRI funds from the Conservation Commission. Jim seconded. Motion passed.

RCW 89.08 Review

Copies of RCW 89.08 that covers the legal requirements affecting conservation districts were included in the board member packets. Elsa reminded the board members that they were required to review 89.08 on an annual basis.

Elections

Elections process for board members in 2019 is already in progress. The poll-site election for one board member for the District will be held on February 13, 2019 in the office at 1310 Morgan St. from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

Braidy reported that he had brought with him the papers for collecting signatures from eligible voters in the county recommending him as a candidate for Board Supervisor for Lincoln County CD.

Elsa reported that an ad had been run in the local newspapers for the elected Board Supervisor position formerly held by Eddie Johnson. Nobody else except Josh replied to the ad and applied for this Board Supervisor position.

Elsa announced that for new board members, free email accounts are available from the Conservation Commission for conducting conservation district business. The email accounts are open to the public records act and are therefore subject to possible public review. Board members are strongly encouraged to use the free email accounts from the Conservation Commission for conservation district business so that their own personal email accounts will not be subject to public review due to any District business that should not be in private email accounts.

Jim suggested that all board members be upgraded from the older I-Pads to more versatile Microsoft Surface Pro portable computers. Elsa will investigate the cost of obtaining 5 Surface Pros for board members along with the options for reusing or surplus the I-Pads.

Memorial Recognition for Eddie Johnson

A page for the Legacy Book of the Washington Conservation Society for Edward "Eddie" Johnson was included in the board member packets. Elsa asked the board members for ideas and options on how Lincoln County CD could recognize and honor Eddie's 38 years of service as a District board member. Elsa will be working with Aaron Esser, WSU Extension director of the Wilke Farm just east of Davenport, to identify any needed projects at the farm that the District could help fund or install in recognition of Eddie's service as a board member for the Wilke Farm. Public funds can not be used for a memorial project to honor Eddie, but board members, staff, and other county residents can make private donations. The District can use funding for cost share on the installation of a conservation practice, such as a living snowfence at the Wilke Farm.

Cost Share Approval

Assistance has been requested from the District for a runoff water diversion/channel reconstruction project on land owned by Doug and Robin Nachtigal southwest of Rocklyn. An ephemeral stream that only runs during spring runoff has broke out of the historical channel and is now running south into the Nachtigal farmstead and threatening the house and other farmstead buildings. Approval was needed to allocate 18-39-NR funding for 50% cost share up to \$10,000 for this runoff water diversion project. The project will involve the reconstruction of the original small channel to divert runoff water away from the farmstead and back into the small intermittent pond to the west. Elsa has scheduled a field visit tomorrow with WDFW staff as part of the permit review process.

11. Josh moved to approve cost share funding from the 18-39-NR grant for 50% cost share up to \$10,000 for the Nachtigal runoff water diversion project. Jim seconded. Motion passed.

Mike initialed the cost share funding papers as Board Chairman.

Records Retention Grant

Dori Griffin and Linda Knutson have been hired as temporary District employees with funding from the Records Retention grant to review the 3 ring binders, papers, photos, VHS tapes, and CD's stored in the storage unit north of the office. These items will be separated into different categories including save categories, scan or otherwise archive categories, or dispose categories in order to save space in storage and to transfer the archive material into electronic format to make them more accessible for future use as needed. Eddie Johnson requested at the November board meeting that those items categorized for disposal be reviewed by board members before being disposed. Kristen noted that several totes with storage items are ready to be reviewed by board members after the meeting today.

VSP - Advertisement for GIS Specialist & Natural Resources Planner

Elsa reported that advertisements for a full time GIS Specialist & Natural Resources Planner to work for the District here in the Davenport office had been run in local newspapers, but that only 1 person had replied to the ad so far. The GIS Specialist would initially be working on GIS identifications of the 5 critical area types within county boundaries for the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) for Lincoln County CD and for Adams and Pend Oreille county CD's.

District staff will be giving a brief presentation on VSP in Lincoln County at the Highline Grain Growers meeting in Odessa on February 19.

Direct Seed Grant and 2019 Direct Seed Association Meeting

No new applications have been received recently for the Direct Seed grant. Grant funding was used to send Kristen, Jim, Jeff, and Palouse-Rock Lake CD staff to the annual Direct Seed Association meeting in the Tri-Cities. Josh and Braidy also attended the meeting on their own. The Direct Seed meeting was well attended with about 400 people attending. Jim handed out hard copies of some photos he took of the presentations at the meetings. Some of topics covered included nitrogen use, soil fertility, cover crops, soil health considerations, and the difficulties of increasing soil organic matter levels. Ann noted that soil health and cover crops are likely to be emphasized in future CSP and EQIP programs. Soiltest Farm Consultants in Moses Lake is now certified to conduct the Haney test. The Washington State Soil Health Committee has a website at www.soilhealthwa.org.

Spokane River Forum

The Spokane River Forum will be held on April 16 & 17 at the Davenport Grand Hotel in Spokane.

12. Jim moved to approve registration for board members and staff who like to attend the forum. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.

2019 Legislative Days

Elsa has 3 hotel rooms reserved for Legislative Days in Olympia on January 28 & 29. Ryan Baye, Legislative and Membership Assistant for WACD, will be working to set up appointments for conservation district board supervisors to meet with state legislators on January 28. Conservation districts will meet with legislators on February 29.

Elsa will work with District staff to gather handouts for board members to give to legislators at Legislative Days, including the Lincoln County CD Report of Accomplishments, well level grant maps, and VSP and Firewise work reports.

Wolf 101 Presentation

Joey McCanna with WDFW will be leading a Wolf 101 presentation at Memorial Hall in Davenport on January 29 from 2 to 5 PM. Topic include wolf habitats, non-lethal deterrents, how to tell the difference between a wolf and a coyote, and what to do if you think you have possible wolf predation. District staff will be assisting with advertising and with the meeting room setup and refreshments.

STAC Meeting

The State NRCS STAC meeting has been rescheduled to March 27 & 28 as a face to face meeting at the State NRCS office in Spokane.

WACD Report

Along with serving as a District board member, Eddie Johnson had also been recently reelected to another term as a WACD Board Director from the NE Area. At this time, it looks like Tom Miller from Spokane will be filling in Eddie's position on the WACD Board. The WACD Board of Directors meets quarterly and all meeting expenses are paid.

Other Upcoming Meetings

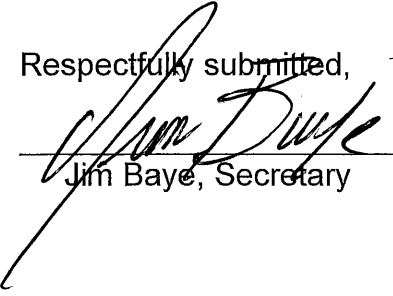
The WSU-Washington Oilseeds Cropping System (WOCS) project will be holding an annual oilseeds crop workshop in Wilbur at the Wilbur Community Center on January 23, starting at 8 AM.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Mike Carstensen at 10:53 AM. The next regularly scheduled board meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2019 in the conference room here in the USDA Service Center in Davenport.

Respectfully submitted,


Jim Baye, Secretary


Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:

All 12 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the December 12 minutes as presented.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #10648 to #10664, along with 3 EFT's, totaling \$82,806.38, for November 30, 2018 – December 31, 2018.
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- 8. M/S/P that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for November 24, 2018 – December 24, 2018 be approved. The total amount owed was \$1,334.44.
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- 12. M/S/P to approve registration for board members and staff who would like to attend the Spokane River Forum.

