

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
Lincoln County Public Works  
Wednesday, January 5, 2022**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

Meeting called to order at 8:44 AM by Chairman, Jeff Schibel. Those attending the meeting in person or by telephone were as follows: Jim Baye, Chris Laney and Braidy Haden (phone) - LCCD Supervisors; Mike Baden (phone), Conservation Commission; Cari Roepke, NRCS; Elsa Bowen, Connor Nikkola, Delaini Disher, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

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

*It was noted that the current term of service for CD Board Supervisors needed to be changed from 2 years to 3 years in the WACD Annual Meeting Report paragraph towards the bottom of page 6 in the December 8 minutes.*

- **1. Jim moved to approve the December 8, 2021 minutes as amended. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**

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

- **2. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #11624 to #11635, along with 1 EFT, totaling \$22,905.30. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**

*There were no grant vouchers available yet to approve at the meeting today.*

*There were no VISA or Cenex credit card statements available to approve at the meeting today.*

Delaini passed around bank statements for the board members to initial.

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

Elsa noted that the Reserve Fund for Employee Liability Coverage in the Treasurer's Report would be raised from \$65,000 to \$80,000 in the February Treasurer's Report as approved at the December 8 board meeting. Jim noted that the final collection amount for 2021 on the Special Assessment page should be changed from the \$296,000+ as listed to the expected value of \$149,000+. Elsa noted that this edit would be made in the February Treasurer's and Grants Report. Elsa also noted that a grant approval letter had been received for the WaterSMART grant from USBR but that no approved contract had been received yet from USBR for the WaterSMART grant.

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

## **C. AGENDA**

### ***Annual Investment for PNW Canola Association***

Elsa reported that the PNW Canola Association had sent a request to the District for a renewal of the \$250 annual investment to PNWCA. Elsa distributed several handouts to Board members that listed the services that PNWCA provides for the annual investment. It was asked if the PNW Canola Association worked with all oilseeds or just with canola. The general consensus was that PNWCA is just involved with canola. Karen Sowers, who was the Extension and Outreach Specialist for the WSU Oilseed Cropping Systems project from 2007 – 2019, is the current Executive Director.

- **4. Braidy moved to approve \$250 for the annual investment request from the PNW Canola Association. Jim seconded. Motion passed.**

### **Elections**

Delaini reported that Board supervisor elections are currently underway and that she had absentee ballots with her to distribute. The elected position currently held by Braidy is up for election, and the appointed position held by Chris is up for reappointment by the Conservation Commission. Chris noted that he had already completed the online form for appointment. Mike confirmed that the Commission had received the completed appointment form from Chris. It was asked if newly elected and appointed board members would now be serving a 4-year term as proposed and approved by the Conservation Commission and WACD. Mike noted that the state legislature must first approve the change of CD Supervisor term of service from 3 years to 4 years. There are several pre-filed bills that address conservation district elections, and it may be awhile before the legislature approves any changes to CD Board Supervisor term of service.

### **Cost Share Approval**

Copies of the Cost Share Action spreadsheet were reviewed. There were 6 applications and 1 reimbursement request for fire recovery funding from the Conservation Commission and 2 requests for reimbursements with the completion of LCCD funded implementation projects

- **5. Jim moved to approve the Cost Share Action spreadsheet as presented. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**

### **LCCD Cost Share Project Selections**

Connor noted that he had been in contact with all of the landowners listed on the LCCD Cost Share Information spreadsheet that was distributed. Elsa suggested that one highest priority project plus one backup project for each of the 5 main categories of LCCD funded implementation projects (brush management/fuel breaks, fencing, watering facilities, grassed waterways, and other earth moving conservation projects)

be selected for funding. After further discussion on the merits of individual conservation projects for LCCD funding, the following motion was made:

**6. Jim moved to approve the selection of the highest priority project along with a second backup project at the Manager's discretion for all 5 of the main project categories for the applicants and projects listed on the LCCD Cost Share Information spreadsheet. The proposed list of high priority and backup projects will be presented at the February Board meeting for final approval by the Board. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**

### **Tree Sale 2022**

Elsa reported that the 2022 Tree Sale was now open and that 10 online orders had already been received. One huge order was made for 60 succulent packs (3 pots per pack), 60 pollinator packs (3 pots per pack), and 40 pots each for the two ornamental grasses offered in the tree sale. The current District Policy Manual allows a 15% discount for orders of over 20 bundles and a 20% discount for orders of over 40 bundles of the regularly priced bareroot stock sold in bundles of 5 stems for \$10, but no discount is given for the higher priced tree sale stock, including potted forbs and grasses. Elsa and Delaini proposed that the District Policy Manual be updated to allow a 10% discount off of the total price of potted plants in tree sale orders with more than 20 individual potted plants.

**7. Chris moved to approve the proposed update to the District Policy Manual to give a 10% discount off of the total cost of potted plants for Tree Sale customers who order more than 20 potted stock plants in their tree sale order. Jim seconded. Motion passed.**

Delaini noted that she has been able to order more potted forbs and grasses and make them available for other tree sale customers to order. Elsa noted that a refrigerated trailer has already been reserved again from Mark with Class A Trailers for the 2022 tree sale. Josh has already agreed to keep the diesel tank filled for refrigerate trailer.

### **WACD Report**

Jeff reported that that the next WACD Board meeting will be held by Zoom on Monday evening, January 17.

### **Conservation Commission Report**

Mike confirmed that the Conservation Commission had received the completed online application form for appointed Board Supervisor from Chris. One of the prefiled bills in the state legislator for reforms to CD Board Supervisor elections proposes changing the term of service from 3 years to 4 years, having all CD's across the state hold their elections in the same one month period, holding elections for selected versus appointed positions on alternating years, and allowing larger CD's like King County the option to place elections for Board Supervisors on the November general ballot.

The Governor's proposed budget includes \$2 million for the Sustainable Farms and Fields program to address carbon storage and climate change resilience along with a riparian plant propagation program. For the new NRI program, the Conservation Commission Liaisons will be checking in quarterly with their CD's on the progress with NRI funded projects. Some additional funding of \$10,000 to \$20,000 per project may be available for NRI funded projects and to help pay for culture resource review costs.

Ecology has paused the implementation of its proposed changes to its 1025 policy that had allowed livestock producers since 1994 to divert water from a stream to a water trough without obtaining a separate livestock water right. Concerns raised by conservation districts, livestock producers, and state legislators on the proposed changes has prompted the Conservation Commission to convene a stakeholder forum in early 2022 to provide feedback to Ecology, who has agreed to work with Conservation Commission on this process. WACD will also be participating in the stakeholder forum process.

Mike continues to encourage CD's to send Fire Recovery applications to the Conservation Commission. The Commission will have the money to fund fire recovery projects starting July 1, 2022 and is looking to have proposed projects ready to be implemented. Additional funding for fire recovery projects is also available for landowners adversely affected by the Whitney Road fire.

Jim asked what the current status was on the selection of the new Executive Director for the Conservation Commission. Mike reported that interviews with the 3 final candidates were held on December 15 and he thanked District board members and staff for participating remotely in the interviews. The Conservation Commission met on December 21 and elected to take the recommendation of the search committee for the top candidate. The Conservation Committee is now negotiating with the top candidate on the salary for the Executive Director using established guidelines.

### **Direct Seed Grant Update**

Elsa reported that Connor and Delaini will be traveling to Kennewick next Monday to set up the District booth at the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association Conference that will provide information on the availability of the new Direct Seed 3 grant for producers in Lincoln and Adams counties. Elsa has made hotel reservations for board members for Tuesday and Wednesday. Connor has been working on refining the grant application list and finding more first-time direct seeders for the Direct Seed 3 grant. Only producers looking to try direct seeding for the first time and who don't already have their own direct seed drills will be eligible to apply for grant funding. Producers who have received previous Direct Seed grant funding from the District will not be eligible to apply for grant funding for direct seeding, and this includes applications to direct seed other fields that have never been direct seeded before.

### **NRCS Report**

Cari reported that she had sought approval to attend the upcoming Direct Seed conference in Kennewick but was denied due to travel restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of training in NRCS since the pandemic started has been done remotely. Out of the total 117 CSP payments to process, the West Palouse Team only has 3 more payments to finish. WPT staff is now working primarily on processing EQIP applications that must be ranked by the end of February.

Brandon Davis started work as Soil Conservationist in the Davenport office in November. Aubrey Hoxie has been selected as the new East Area Conservationist. A pathway student trainee may be coming to work in the Davenport office for 18 weeks later this year. The WPT still has 2 open positions in the Davenport office. More new staff may be made available to the WPT in the future, and if so, these staff members would be stationed in the Ritzville office due to the lack of space in the Davenport office.

### **County Commissioner Report**

Elsa relayed the following email update from Commissioner Stedman. The Sprague Flooding issue letter is to be signed by Adams and Lincoln County commissioners in order to request funding to determine all issues regarding Sprague flooding.

### **FSA Report**

There was no report from FSA.

### **Miscellaneous**

Elsa noted that Anchor QEA had expressed its thanks to the District for sending the 50% payment for the late VSP voucher submission, as approved at the December Board meeting. Todd Baarstad with WDFW called Elsa and asked the District if it would be willing to take on implementing some more projects with WDFW funding. Elsa said that the District would be open to implementing some more projects with WDFW funding since the District already has an established cultural resources review process to follow. Elsa also noted that if the USDA Service Center in Davenport is closed due to inclement weather, staff is now expected to work at home the way it has during the COVID-19 pandemic unless the Internet is not working at home.

Jim noted that a Highline Grain Growers meeting that is also scheduled for February 9 might be a potential conflict for the February Board meeting. A Valley Wide Coop growers meeting is scheduled for February 10.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

Chairman Jeff Schibel adjourned the meeting at 9:54 AM. The next board meeting is scheduled as an in-person meeting on Wednesday, February 9, 2022 starting at 8:30 AM at Lincoln County Public Works in Davenport. A telephone call in number will be available for those people wishing to participate by phone.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Josh Sherwood, Secretary



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Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:

All 7 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the December 8, 2021 minutes as amended.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #11624 to #11635, along with 1 EFT, totaling \$22,905.30.
- 3. M/S/P to approve the Treasurer's report and Grant's report as presented.
- 4. M/S/P to approve \$250 for the annual investment request from the PNW Canola Association.
- 5. M/S/P to approve the Cost Share Action spreadsheet as presented.
- 6. M/S/P to approve the selection of the highest priority project along with a second backup project at the Manager's discretion for all 5 of the main project categories for the applicants and projects listed on the LCCD Cost Share Information spreadsheet. The proposed list of high priority and backup projects will be presented at the February Board meeting for final approval by the Board.
- 7. M/S/P to approve the proposed update to the District Policy Manual to give a 10% discount off of the total cost of potted plants for Tree Sale customers who order more than 20 potted stock plants in their tree sale order.