

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
MEMORIAL HALL - DAVENPORT WA
Tuesday, December 10, 2020**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 9:03 AM by Chairman, Jeff Schibel. Those attending the meeting were as follows: Jim Baye, Josh Sherwood, Braidy Haden and Chris Laney - LCCD Supervisors; Mark Stedman, Lincoln County Commissioner, by teleconference; Elsa Bowen, Val Vissia, Connor Nikkola, Delaini Disher, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:

- *1. Chris moved to approve the November 10, 2020 minutes as amended. Josh seconded. Discussion was held. Two corrections were requested. On page 3 under Conservation Commission Report, "note" needed to be changed to "not", and on page 4 under Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association Investment Request, "PWNSA" needed to be changed to "PNDSA". Motion passed.*

B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:

- *2. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #11307 to #11338, along with 13 EFT's, totaling \$69,775.80. Braidy seconded. Discussion was held. Elsa noted that the District brought in \$179,373.71 of income in November, due in part to several grant payments, while only expending \$69,775.80. The Lazy YJ Farms payment was for a waterway ditching project along the south side of Hwy 2 just east of Reardan. The District had to obtain multiple permits for this project to be implemented. Motion passed.*
- *3. Jim moved to submit voucher #17 for the VSP 3 grant in the amount of \$612.90 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *4. Jim moved to submit voucher #6 for the 21-39-IM grant in the amount of \$9,227.26 to the Conservation Commission. Josh seconded. Motion passed.*
- *5. Jim moved to submit voucher #17 for the 20-39-NR grant in the amount of \$0.00 to the Conservation Commission. Braidy seconded. Motion passed.*
- *6. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for October 24, 2020 – November 24, 2020 be approved. The total amount owed was \$839.75. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. The VISME software was used to produce the LCCD video presentation for the NE Area Meeting. Val has prepared the presentation to be posted on the Lincoln County CD website and newsletter starting tomorrow. Motion passed.*

- **7. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Cenex credit card statement with a closing date of November 10, 2020. The total amount owed was \$290.30. Braidy seconded. Motion passed.**

After review the board 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.

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

C. AGENDA

County Commissioner Report

Commissioner Stedman reported that the county computers were hacked on November 13, but the damage was not recognized until November 16. Unknown hackers sent a ransom note for an undisclosed amount of money demanded to restore the information on all of the county computers. The county has only 2 employees in the IT department working to restore the county computers and the data, and after several weeks, the county computers are still not back up and operating, including the laptop computers in the Sheriff's deputy vehicles. Part of the county insurance does cover computer repair and computer data restoration. The County Commissioners have informed county staff that they need to go back to the old methods of doing business on paper hardcopies as needed until the county computer system is restored.

Mark noted that 83.4% of the registered voters in Lincoln County voted in the November election, for a typical high voting turnout rate in the county. Gravel crushing was going well into the fall and early winter until a breakdown shut down operations. Jeff congratulated Mark on finishing his term as Columbia Basin Development League President. Mark noted that his continuing priorities include recruiting more younger people to join the CBDL and to encourage the multiple special interest groups already involved in the CBDL to work more together to accomplish the organizations goals. Mark asked if there any discussions on water banking issues at the recent WACD meeting. Jeff noted that a supervisor from the Upper Methow area in Chelan County expressed continuing concerns with water rights transfers out of the WRIA still being allowed.

Mark noted that the 2021 legislative session will all be done remotely on Zoom. An issue brought up for legislators participating by Zoom is that the current state constitution requires that legislators be present in person in Olympia in order to vote. Each legislator will also be limited to 5 bills that they can sponsor for approval.

Draft Budget Review and Approval

Hardcopies of the 11 X 17" LCCD Budget spreadsheet were distributed. Elsa reminded the board members that the District can spend below the budgeted amounts but is not allowed to spend above a budgeted amount. The Board can adjust the values in the Budget anytime as needed. Elsa noted that for the 2021 proposed budget, she did not increase the amounts 10% as has been done in recent years. The travel budget was reduced because travel has been significantly curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Both the amended 2020 budget and the proposed 2021 budget needed to be approved. Chris requested that an updated Budget spreadsheet be made available at future board meetings every 3 months.

9. Braidy moved to approve the 2020 Amended Budget as presented. Josh seconded. Motion passed.

10. Braidy moved to approve the 2021 Budget as presented. Chris seconded. Motion passed.

Elections

Hardcopies of the polling results from the Saturday, November 21 Conservation Commission webinar on options for supervisor elections were distributed and reviewed. The amount of District supervisor and staff participation in the Saturday webinar was not very high with only about 20% of the possible board members and staff participating. The Commission presented 4 different options for elections ranging from keeping the current elections procedures in each district with increased outreach efforts, to allowing CD's the option to include supervisor elections on the November county general ballot for a significant fee. As noted in previous meetings, Lincoln County would charge the District about \$30,000 for adding CD supervisor elections to the November general ballot for just one year.

Elsa asked the Board if it wanted to create a reserve fund for elections to cover the cost of adding CD supervisor elections to the November general ballot for just one year. Jim asked if it would be a wise move for the District to shift some of the bank account funds to a reserve fund for elections. Elsa noted that page 1 of the Treasurer's Report showed the current reserve funds that have already been established and include Funds 29, 30, 31, 32, 56, 57, and 58. Val noted that she already had everything setup and in place for the 2021 elections on February 10.

11. Braidy moved to create a \$30,000 reserve account for elections. Jim seconded. Motion passed.

2021 Tree Sale Preparations Update

Elsa noted that the District's PayPal account, which had been used previously for online tree sales, had been closed and a new account with Square had been opened to use for online tree sales in spring 2021.

Elsa reported that she had contacted Mark Lang with Class A Trailers, as requested, and had been informed that an available 48 ft. refrigerated trailer powered by a diesel compressor would cost the District about \$1,000 for 1 month's rent and \$2,000 for 2 month's rent for providing refrigerated storage for the 2021 tree sale stems. The cost would be about the same as renting a refrigerated trailer from S&S Distributing in the Spokane Valley that Stevens CD uses for refrigerated storage for their tree sale. Spokane CD still does not know if it will go ahead and repair the old outside refrigerated trailer or rent a new trailer for their 2021 tree sale. Spokane CD

will not have room to hold Lincoln County CD's tree sale stems for 2021 if it does not get an outside refrigerated trailer for spring 2021. Elsa has checked with the Lincoln County Fairgrounds and was informed that the District would be allowed to park a temporarily rented refrigerated trailer on the fairgrounds as long as it is not parked on the main asphalt travel way on the fairgrounds.

12. Braidy moved that District staff reserve a diesel-powered refrigerated trailer from Class A Trailers as soon as possible to use for a 1 month period in early spring 2021 for an estimated \$1,000 rental cost to provide cold storage as needed for the 2021 tree sale stems. Jim seconded. Discussion was held. It was noted that the rental cost for a refrigerated trailer at the fairgrounds would consume a significant part of any profit generated by the annual tree sale, but that gas money and tree sale labor time would also be reduced by eliminating almost all of the trips up to Spokane CD to drop off tree sale stems, do inventory, and then bring the stems back to the fairgrounds kitchen for packing of tree sale orders. Motion passed.

District Vehicle Mileage Review and Replacement

The 2008 Chevrolet white 4 door pickup has about 92,000 miles and the 2007 Chevrolet heavy duty 2500 standard cab pickup has 83,000+ miles on the odometer. Connor has investigated the current values of these pickups, with the white 4 door pickup valued at about \$12,000 and the heavy duty 2500 pickup valued at about \$11,000. As discussed at the November board meeting, the white 4 door pickup would be the best choice to sell first because it has the highest mileage. Connor researched the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services website and found out that a new 2021 Chevrolet 4 door pickup with a spray in bedliner and vinyl floormats would cost about \$38,000 from the state website compared to about \$50,000 at a private pickup dealer.

13. Jim moved to replace the 2008 white 4 door pickup with a new 2021 Chevrolet 1500 door pickup at the Manager's discretion and as researched on the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services website for an estimated \$38,000, and that the minimum bid for the 2008 pickup be set at \$12,000 and be advertised after the new pickup is obtained. Josh seconded. Discussion was held. By general consensus the Board recommended that the paint color for the new pickup be gray, white or desert brown equivalent. Motion passed.

Cost Share Approval

Hardcopies of the Cost Share Action spreadsheet were distributed. There were three requests for cost share reimbursement from the Direct Seed grant and one request for cost share reimbursement for a recently completed Lazy YJ Farms waterway ditching project.

14. Josh moved to approve the Cost Share Action spreadsheet as presented. Jim seconded. Motion passed.

Conservation Commission Update

The District was recently awarded a Hazard Mitigation grant for \$4,950 from the Conservation Commission through the Form 4 Addendum that required Board approval. The primary task for the grant is to coordinate logistics, program, outreach,

and registration for “Wildfire Risk Mitigation Resource Essentials training for Public Relations Officers Training.” All training is planned to be remote training due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

15. Jim moved to approve the Hazard Mitigation grant for wildfire risk mitigation training from the Conservation Commission for \$4,950. Josh seconded. Motion passed.

Additional funding was recently made available from the Natural Resources Investment grant through the Conservation Commission for implementing conservation projects on the ground with 75% cost share. Scott Samples applied for a \$15,000 NRI grant through the District to install a livestock watering facility with a drilled well and solar panels for power. An additional \$3,750 was made available to the District to provide technical assistance on the project, for a total award of \$18,750.00

16. Josh moved to approve the NRI grant awarded from the Conservation Commission for the Scott Samples livestock watering facility project for \$15,000 at 75% cost share along with \$3,750 for District staff technical assistance. Jim seconded. Motion passed.

The top 3 photos in the 2020 Conservation Commission CD photo contest were recently announced. No photos submitted by Lincoln County CD staff were selected as the top 3 winners, but some of the photos submitted by staff may be included in the 2021 CD Photo Contest calendar as inset photos. The Conservation Commission will be sending out an electronic copy of the 2021 calendar for CD’s to print themselves and all 140 photos that were submitted for the contest will be uploaded to the Conservation Commission photo gallery website sometime later in January.

Well Level Grant Update

Kevin Lindsey with GeoEngineers contacted the District to request that a remote meeting/teleconference be scheduled in January to lay the groundwork for compiling the final report for the Well Level grant and submitting it to Ecology by the end of the extended grant on June 30, 2021. Dean noted that he had finished the final round of well level measuring in the field for the year and is now concentrating on entering the well level data from the 2020 field sheets into Excel spreadsheet and then reviewing for consistency and to fix any data entry mistakes this winter. Additional office work will be needed to process the data downloaded from the 5 well transducers along with cutting and pasting the completed well level data into the Ecology EIM database submittal spreadsheets as required by the grant. The sonic meter was just shipped to Ravensgate Corporation in California to diagnose and repair the intermittent power up issues with the meter. The sonic meter was originally purchased by the District back in 2010 for the WRIA 53 well level measuring grant and has been used a lot for the current county wide well level measuring grant.

Other Grant Updates

Elsa announced that Harold Crose with Grant County CD has submitted the RCPP grant application for obtaining EQIP funding from NRCS to help pay for the installation of pipelines to conduct Columbia Basin Project irrigation water from the East Low Canal to deep well irrigators seeking to convert from declining groundwater supplies to surface water. The District sent a letter of support for the RCPP grant application last

month. NRCS will not be announcing which RCPP grant applications have been accepted until later on in 2021.

District staff are working on a WaterSMART grant application for \$50,000 from the Bureau of Reclamation to establish the Columbia Basin Sustainable Water Coalition as a working and viable organization seeking to obtain and maintain sustainable water supplies for Adams, Franklin, Grant, and Lincoln counties that were part of the original GWMA (Columbia Basin Groundwater Management Area) study area. GWMA no longer exists as a state funded organization, but the water supply issues continue to grow across the four-county area.

Connor and Delaini have been working on applying for 1 year extensions for the current Direct Seed grant and the Mielke WRP grants from Ecology.

Elsa reported that the District had been contacted by Rob Dewald, a local farmer and member of the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association, who asked if the District would be willing to help cosponsor the upcoming three day PNDSA conference that will be held this coming June at the Whitman County Fairgrounds near Colfax. If Lincoln County CD wanted to cosponsor the June PNDSA conference, it would be able to get its name on advertisements for the conference, and some of the cost of cosponsoring should be able to be covered by the current Direct Seed grant. Elsa will further investigate the possibility of cosponsoring the June PNDSA conference, including the cost, and will report back at the January meeting.

Jim asked what kinds of new grants are available for the District to apply for in the near future. Connor noted that there is not much new grant funding available right now except for the new Direct Seed application that was recently sent to Ecology. Jim commented that there will probably be more emphasis on clean water, clean air, sustainable agriculture, and carbon sequestration issues in the near future, and that the District should be aware of and be looking for new grant possibilities in these resource concern areas. Dean suggested that improving the capacity and reducing the cost for local landowners to dispose of downed or dead trees and brush and convert them into biochar that could be applied to local lands would help to reduce the potential fire danger in summer and increase carbon sequestration and soil health at the same time.

WACD Annual Meeting Review and Update

Elsa noted that it was easier for her to participate in more annual meeting sessions remotely compared to attending the conference in person. The entire WACD Conference was recorded. People interested in reviewing the annual meeting can download individual sessions. Discussions on diversity, equality and elections occupied much of the meeting. Elsa commented that NRCS has worked to start addressing diversity and equality issues by offering opportunities for historically underserved populations to apply for NRCS programs. Jeff noted that some of the CD's in more rural counties in the state don't have the elections and diversity issues like those CD's in the higher populated counties, and object to being pressured to spend a lot of time and resources to respond to these issues when they are not the issues of most concern within their own district. Jeff also noted that there was not a big jump as expected in board supervisor participation across the state in the remote WACD Annual Meeting this year, and that there was significantly more participation at recent in person meetings held in the Tri-Cities. If the COVID-19 pandemic has been successfully addressed by next fall, the next WACD Annual meeting is scheduled to

be held in Tacoma. The state legislature has notified state agencies, including the Conservation Commission, not to waste time or energy to ask for funding that is not already a line item on the state budget or that does not address the COVID-19 pandemic or police reform, as the state does not have any money to fund other budget requests.

Elsa presented the 1-year service recognition awards to Chris, Braidy and Josh that were originally going to be presented at an earlier board meeting by Mike Baden.

Alan Stromberger Memorial Update

Elsa spoke several weeks ago with Austin Miller, the ag science and ag shop teacher for Sprague High School about doing something to benefit the ag program with the memorial funding received for Alan Stromberger. Nothing has been heard back yet from Sprague High School, but Elsa will keep in touch and update board members at a future board meeting.

COVID-19 Policy

Elsa asked the Board what the policy would be for District staff if somebody with NRCS or District staff working in the office tested positive for COVID-19. Would District staff follow NRCS policy or Lincoln County Health Department policy? NRCS currently has a policy stating that any NRCS employee who tests positive for COVID-19 has to quarantine themselves for 14 days along with all other NRCS employees working in the same office. However, the CDC has recently reduced its quarantine period recommendation from 14 days to 10 days.

After discussion, the Board decided by general consensus to follow NRCS policy for safety measures required while working in the office, and office closure if it comes to this extreme condition. Otherwise, District staff will follow county health department policy for quarantine period and other COVID-19 related issues.

Elsa will compile these policy recommendations and present them for review at the January board meeting.

NRCS Report

There was no report from NRCS.

FSA Report

There was no report from FSA.

Executive Session

The Board went into executive session under option 1(g) of RCW 42.30.110 at 11:10 AM for an estimated 2.5 hours to conduct annual employee reviews. The Board came back out of executive session at 1:28 PM. The following motion was made as a result of the Executive Session:

17. Josh moved to approve the Manager's recommendation for staff wages effective January 1, 2021. Jim seconded. Motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Jeff Schibel at 1:30 PM. The next board meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, January 13, 2021 starting at 8:30 AM. It is anticipated that the January meeting will be held remotely over Zoom with an option to call in on the Conservation Commission teleconference line due to the worsening COVID-19 pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,



Josh Sherwood, Secretary



Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:

All 17 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the November 10, 2020 minutes as amended.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #11307 to #11338, along with 13 EFT's, totaling \$69,775.80.
- 3. M/S/P to submit voucher #17 for the VSP 3 grant in the amount of \$612.90 to the Conservation Commission.
- 4. M/S/P to submit voucher #6 for the 21-39-IM grant in the amount of \$9,227.26 to the Conservation Commission.
- 5. M/S/P to submit voucher #17 for the 20-39-NR grant in the amount of \$0.00 to the Conservation Commission.
- 6. M/S/P that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for October 24, 2020 – November 24, 2020 be approved. The total amount owed was \$839.75.
- 7. M/S/P to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Cenex credit card statement with a closing date of November 10, 2020. The total amount owed was \$290.30.
- 8. M/S/P to approve the Treasurer's report and Grant's report as presented.
- 9. M/S/P to approve the 2020 Amended Budget as presented.
- 10. M/S/P to approve the 2021 Budget as presented.
- 11. M/S/P to create a \$30,000 reserve account for elections.

- 12. M/S/P that District staff reserve a diesel-powered refrigerated trailer from Class A Trailers as soon as possible to use for a 1 month period in early spring 2021 for an estimated \$1,000 rental cost to provide cold storage as needed for the 2021 tree sale stems.
- 13. M/S/P to replace the 2008 white 4 door pickup with a new 2021 Chevrolet 1500 door pickup at the Manager's discretion and as researched on the Washington State motor pool website for an estimated \$38,000, and that the minimum bid for the 2008 pickup be set at \$12,000 and be advertised after the new pickup is obtained.
- 14. M/S/P to approve the Cost Share Action spreadsheet as presented.
- 15. M/S/P to approve the Hazard Mitigation grant for wildfire risk mitigation training from the Conservation Commission for \$4,950.
- 16. M/S/P to approve the NRI grant awarded from the Conservation Commission for the Scott Samples livestock watering facility project for \$15,000 at 75% cost share along with \$3,750 for District staff technical assistance.
- 17. M/S/P to approve the Manager's recommendation for staff wages effective January 1, 2021.