

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
Lincoln County Public Works Meeting Room
Wednesday, May 12, 2021**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 8:34 AM by Chairman, Jeff Schibel. Those attending the meeting in person or by telephone were as follows: Jim Baye, Chris Laney, Josh Sherwood (phone), Braidy Haden - LCCD Supervisors; Mark Stedman, Lincoln County Commissioners; Elsa Bowen, Connor Nikkola, Delaini Disher, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:

- **1. Chris moved to approve the April 14, 2021 minutes as presented. Jim seconded. Motion passed.**

B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:

- **2. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #11448 to #11472, along with 10 EFT's, totaling \$102,075.44. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. The higher than average expenses were due primarily due to the tree and shrub bill for the Cobb Ranch WRP planting and for the new Chevrolet Silverado 4 door, 4-wheel drive pickup. Motion passed.**
- **3. Jim moved to submit voucher #22 for the VSP 3 grant in the amount of \$29,557.84 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **4. Jim moved to submit voucher #11 for the 21-39-IM grant in the amount of \$19,532.30 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **5. Jim moved to submit voucher #11 for the Mielke Project grant in the amount of \$13,425.77 to DOE. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **6. Jim moved to submit voucher #16 for the Well Monitoring grant in the amount of \$17,015.31 to DOE. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **7. Jim moved to submit voucher #4 for the 20-27-NR grant in the amount of \$2,113.55 to Adams CD. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **8. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for March 25, 2021 through April 23, 2021 be approved. The total amount owed was \$1,763.17. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. Some of the bigger expenses were from the purchase of a new Ravensgate Sonic Meter, drip irrigation components for the Eddie Johnson memorial at the Wilke Farm, and**

a memorial plaque for Jeff Knutson that will be reimbursed from NRCS. Motion passed.

- ***9. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Cenex credit card statement with a closing date of April 10, 2021. The total amount owed was \$412.64. Chris seconded. Motion passed.***

Bank statements were passed around for the board members present to initial.

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

Elsa noted that the District still has not heard back from Ecology if the requested 1 year extensions for both the Direct Seed 2 and Mielke Project grants have been approved. About \$500 may have to be returned back to the Conservation Commission for the 21-39-HZ grant because printing for training session was not done due the training being held over Zoom. Connor is working on several VSP 3 grant projects with the remaining funding. The well monitoring grant will end on June 30. Due to the 1-year grant extension, Kevin Lindsey with GeoEngineers is requesting additional funding to complete the final report for the grant. Elsa noted that \$4,000 in remaining well level grant funding was available to be transferred to the grant reporting task to help fund the completion of the final grant report, if approved by the Board.

10. Chris moved to approve the transfer of \$4,000 from the remaining funds in the well monitoring grant to the grant reporting task to help fund the completion of the final grant report. Jim seconded. Motion passed.

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

C. AGENDA

Annual Financial Report

Copies of the draft Annual Financial Report which included the Schedule 21 Report were distributed for review. Delaini is preparing to submit the report, which is due to the Conservation Commission by the end of May. Elsa noted that Lincoln County CD brought in \$463,075 in state grants to the District for calendar year 2020. District staff worked on 14 individual state grants, and this did not include agreements to work on other grants such as with Adams CD. Federal grants for \$36,000 were also brought into the District for 2020.

Chris asked if the District had any new grants in the pipeline for future funding. Elsa noted that applications have been made for the following grants, but they have not yet been approved: Direct Seed (3) grant, ALEA grant, WaterSMART grant, FEMA wildfire mitigation grant, WDFW Whitney fire mitigation grant, Hazard Mitigation training grant, and the Conservation Commission fire mitigation grant for Okanogan, Douglas and Lincoln counties. It hoped that \$500,000 out of \$1.5 million available for the next fiscal

year would be available for mitigation of the Whitney fire in Lincoln County from the Conservation Commission fire mitigation grant.

12. Chris moved to approve the draft Annual Financial Report as presented. Jim seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.

Conservation Commission Report

Elsa reported that Mike Baden was not able to participate in the board meeting due to a recent injury. Board members should be receiving updates on the Conservation Commission Budget request to the state legislature from emails sent out by the Commission.

CRP Task Order Update

With extensions to the current CRP signup, the original deadlines for CRP task order work have been removed. However, the funding for the current CRP task order from the Conservation Commission does have a deadline of June 30, 2021, and so District staff are moving ahead with the task order work as planned. District staff have completed 95 CRP plans for Adams County and 41 out of 168 CRP plans for Lincoln County. The completed plans have been forwarded to their respective county FSA office. District staff is also continuing to work on 50 CRP field checks that are required by the task order.

Cost Share Update

Copies of the updated cost share request list were distributed. One of the 5 landowners already approved for Lincoln County CD cost share funding to install a grassed waterway has declined to implement his project. Mark Kruger has expressed an interest in the installation of a grassed waterway on his land. Two of the approved grassed waterway projects are currently being implemented, while two other grassed waterway projects are waiting for HPA approval or are waiting on Ecology and WDFW to inform the District on what they would require to move forward and approve the grass waterway project. It was noted that the Lincoln County CD grant funding for installing the grassed waterway projects would not expire until the end of December 2021, and that the funding could be rolled over as needed to the next year.

13. Braidy moved to approve the Mark Kruger grassed waterway project for Lincoln County CD grant funding. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. It was noted that if Mark decides later that he can't install his grassed waterway project this year, the LCCD Cost Share list will be reviewed and re-evaluated to determine the next grassed waterway project to consider for funding. Motion passed.

22-39-IM Grant Update

Elsa reported that the Master Contract for the new implementation grant from the Conservation Commission, the 22-39-IM grant, would be arriving at the District in June for approval from the Board. The same general funding priorities from the 21-39-IM grant would be proposed for the new 22-39-IM grant.

WACD Report

Jeff reported that WACD is moving forward with election committee and DEI committee work. The next WACD planning/work session will be held remotely next Monday evening. Executive Director Tom Salzer has announced that \$2 million in Technical

Assistance funding has been received by the Conservation Commission and will be divided between the 45 CD's across the state. The Conservation Commission has received \$3 million in fire mitigation funding for the next year that will be available counties impacted by large 2020 fires including Okanogan, Douglas and Lincoln counties. WACD is working on "welcome wagon" procedures to welcome new supervisors. The meeting format for the annual WACD meeting has still not been determined and may not be determined until late summer. The PMC had a good year for spring tree and shrub sales and has started plantings for the 2022 tree sale.

NRCS Report

Elsa gave the NRCS report for Cari, who was not able to attend the meeting due to training. Brent Lindell from Wenatchee, who had previously accepted the first Soil Conservationist position in Davenport, has elected to accept another position elsewhere in part due to delays caused by issues from transferring from the Forest Service to NRCS. This leaves 3 staff positions in Davenport and 2 positions in Ritzville to be filled for the West Palouse Team and is not good news for the local NRCS offices due to the high workload.

Six EQIP applications have been approved and are in the process of being obligated for funding. For CSP, 39 applications have been received in Adams County and 66 applications have been received in Lincoln County. These 105 applications in the WPT constitute more than half of the 205 total CSP applications and associated workload for the entire state of Washington.

For CRP, 118 of the 136 CRP field checks have been completed in Adams County for the current CRP signup. Lincoln County CD has completed the planning on 95 of the Adams County CRP plans and forwarded them to FSA office in Ritzville. In Lincoln County, LCCD has completed 41 out of the 168 plans for the CRP task order and has forwarded them to FSA staff in Davenport.

PNDSA Conference in June

Connor noted that the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association conference will be held in person at the Whitman County Palouse Empire Fairgrounds near Colfax on June 15 and 16. Hotel reservations have already been made. Chris, Braidy, Jeff, Connor, and Delaini are planning to attend the conference.

County Commissioners Report

Mark reported that the Lincoln County Sheriff's office has been having some difficult times lately with 2 recent suicides in the jail and a shortage of jail staff. The Commissioners have contacted the Teamsters Union and given them 3 dates to meet with the Commissioners in the near future to work on contract negotiations for Sheriff office staff, who have not had a new contract approved with the county for over 2 years. Keith Nelson has been hired as the new IT director for the county. Columbia Basin Development League members, including county commissioners, have been writing letters to their local elected representatives in Congress in Washington D.C. to approve federal funding to help farmers in the Columbia Basin pay for extending pipelines from the East Low canal to their irrigated farms to replace declining deep well water supplies with CBIP surface water. The Washington State Supreme Court has ruled that counties must replace fish blocking road culverts with bridges for the Salmon Recovery program in the state. Lincoln County will receive \$2 million for replacing culverts with bridges.

Covid-19 is still making its presence known in the county, especially in the Davenport, Reardan and Wilbur areas. The next Columbia River PAG (Policy Advisory Group) meeting will be held online in June. Mark will help anyone interested to log onto the next PAG meeting. At the recent PAG meeting, a question was raised about whether or not local farmers are using the current U.S. Drought Monitor maps to help them make future plans for farming with the current severe drought conditions. The latest May 4 map now shows that southern Lincoln County is now classified as being in D2 Severe Drought conditions, while the northern tier of the county is still considered to be in D1 Moderate Drought conditions.

FSA Report

There was no report from FSA.

Grant County CD Application to RCPP Grant

Jeff reported that the Grant County CD application to the RCPP (Resource Conservation Partnership Program, administered by NRCS) program, that was submitted to obtain funding for farmers in the Columbia Basin area to extend pipelines from the East Low Canal to their irrigated farms to replace declining deep well supplies with CBIP surface water, was not approved by NRCS due to the lack of funding match from state dollars. The Conservation Commission has not been funded with enough dollars from the State Legislature for the last several years to provide enough funding to match federal dollars for existing RCPP projects across the state. The local irrigated farmers and conservation districts who worked on submitting the RCPP application and who would have benefitted greatly from the RCPP funding are not pleased with the whole RCPP grant application process due to the existing unavailability of adequate state match funding for federal RCPP funding in the first place.

Well Level Measuring Grant Update

Dean handed out copies of the field work sheet, well level measuring summary sheets, and piezometer tube diagram for the Dreger Observation monitoring well along Swanson Lake Road that was used for recent field training on April 19 for the upcoming WSU/BOR well level monitoring grant. Dean demonstrated how the Lincoln County CD transducers in 2 of the piezometer tubes are downloaded and relaunched, and he along with Patrick Cabbage and Tracy Band with Ecology demonstrated how Etapes are used to measure the well water level in a piezometer tube. Participants then drove several miles to the west to observe how an irrigation well airline is measured to determine the well water level.

Dean noted that he recently finished entering the final 141 well level measurements for March and April 2021 into the Excel field spreadsheet for the well level monitoring grant and has also completed most of the error checking work for the new data. These early season measurements are very important to show if wells are or are not recovering back up to the same well water levels as last spring. Most wells have shown somewhat lower well water levels in early spring this year compared to spring 2020 and 2019.

Dean noted the following statistics for the well monitoring grant:

82 wells have been actively measured, with:

- 33 domestic exempt wells (40%)
- 23 irrigation wells (28%)
- 20 municipal Group A or B wells (24%)
- 6 dedicated monitoring wells (6%)

1,952 well level result rows have been entered into Excel spreadsheet. Each measurement has its own result row so that it can be readily entered into the Ecology EIM database as part of one of the requirements for the well monitoring grant:

- 603 airline result rows (31%)
- 519 Etape result rows (27%)
- 811 sonic meter result rows (42%)
- 19 transducer (well operator installed) result rows (0.1%)

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

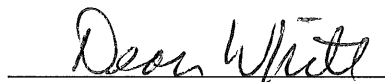
14. Braidy moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:06 AM. Chris seconded. Motion passed.

The next board meeting has been scheduled as an in-person meeting on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 starting at 8:30 AM at the Lincoln County Public Works downstairs meeting room. A telephone call in number will be available for those people wishing to participate by phone.

Respectfully submitted,



Josh Sherwood, Secretary



Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:

All 14 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the April 14, 2021 minutes as presented.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #11448 to #11472, along with 10 EFT's, totaling \$102,075.44.

- 3. M/S/P to submit voucher #22 for the VSP 3 grant in the amount of \$29,557.84 to the Conservation Commission.
- 4. M/S/P to submit voucher #11 for the 21-39-IM grant in the amount of \$19,532.30 to the Conservation Commission.
- 5. M/S/P to submit voucher #113 for the Mielke WRP grant in the amount of \$13,425.77 to DOE.
- 6. M/S/P to submit voucher #16 for the Well Monitoring grant in the amount of \$17,015.31 to DOE.
- 7. M/S/P to submit voucher #4 for the 20-27-NR grant in the amount of \$2,113.55 to Adams CD.
- 8. M/S/P that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for March 25, 2021 through April 23, 2021 be approved. The total amount owed was \$1,763.17.
- 9. M/S/P to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Cenex credit card statement with a closing date of April 10, 2021. The total amount owed was \$412.64.
- 10. M/S/P to approve the transfer of \$4,000 from the remaining funds in the well monitoring grant to the grant reporting task to help fund the completion of the final grant report.
- 11. M/S/P to approve the Treasurer's report and Grant's report as presented.
- 12. M/S/P to approve the draft Annual Financial Report as presented.
- 13. M/S/P to approve the Mark Kruger grassed waterway project for Lincoln County CD grant funding.
- 14. M/S/P to adjourn the meeting at 10:06 AM.

