

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
NRCS / FSA MEETING ROOM-DAVENPORT WA
Wednesday, June 12, 2019**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 8:35 AM by Vice Chairman, Jeff Schibel. Those attending the meeting were as follows: Jim Baye, Josh Sherwood, Chris Laney, and Braidy Haden - LCCD Supervisors; Jeff Kuhlman, NRCS; Andrew Engells, assistant to Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers; Elsa Bowen, Val Vissia, Kathy McQuade, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

With 2 board members leaving the Board and 2 new board members joining the Board at the end of May, the first order of business was the reorganization of Board officers. The following list of Board members were nominated for the officer positions: Jeff Schibel, Chairman; Braidy Haden, Vice Chairman; Jim Baye, Auditor; Josh Sherwood, Secretary; Chris Laney, Member.

1. Jim moved to approve the nominations for Board officers as brought before the Board. Josh seconded. The motion passed, with Jeff abstaining as acting Chair for the motion.

A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:

- ***2. Jim moved to approve the May 8 minutes as presented. Chris seconded. Motion passed.***

B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:

- ***3. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #10800 to #10824, along with 10 EFT's, totaling \$92,722.47. Josh seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.***
- ***4. Jim moved to submit voucher #3 for the NE Area Cluster Engineering grant in the amount of \$2,121.13 to Stevens County CD. Josh seconded. Motion passed.***
- ***5. Jim moved to submit vouchers 21 & 22 for the VSP 2 grant in the amounts of \$18,742.63 and \$14,045.96, respectively, to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.***
- ***6. Jim moved to submit voucher #16 for the 18-39-NR grant in the amount of \$107.84 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.***
- ***7. Jim moved to submit voucher #10 for the 19-39-IM grant in the amount of \$20,270.48 to the Conservation Commission. Josh seconded. Motion passed.***

- **8. Jim moved to submit voucher #2 for the 18-27-NR grant in the amount of \$492.86 to Adams CD. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **9. Jim moved to submit voucher #2 for the 19-27-IM grant in the amount of \$2,773.04 to the Conservation Commission. Josh seconded. Motion passed.**
- **10. Jim moved to submit voucher #7 for the NFWF Weed Management CWMA grant in the amount of \$5,966.90 to NFWF. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.**
- **11. Jim moved to submit vouchers 34 & 35 for the RCPP (WRIA 34) grant in the amounts of \$198.46 and \$104.16, respectively, to Palouse CD. Josh seconded. Motion passed.**
- **12. Jim moved to submit voucher #3 for the Direct Seed (2) grant in the amount of \$23,929.71 to DOE. Josh seconded. Motion passed.**
- **13. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Cenex credit card statement with a closing date of May 10, 2019. The total amount owed was \$552.04. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **14. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for April 25, 2019 – May 24, 2019 be approved. The total amount owed was \$22,440.78. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. Quite a bit of equipment was approved for purchase from several grants scheduled to expire at the end of June. Some of the equipment purchased included a portable generator, laptops for the Board members, storage shelves, a plotter with paper and ink, and 2 drones for use in future VSP work and tree planting work. 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.

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

C. AGENDA

WACD Dues

Kathy has completed the dues calculation form to determine the draft amount of dues to be paid to WACD for 2019 by the end of July. Copies of the form were included in

the board member packets. The final amount of WACD dues to be paid by the District for 2019 have now been determined to be \$4,560. For 2018 the District paid \$5,040 for WACD dues as a second-tier dues district.

Update of Banking Information

Elsa reported that with the recent change in board members, some Board officer names need to be deleted and some names need to be added to the signature cards for local banks that house District funds. Jim Baye will remain as Treasurer. Mike Carstensen needs to be removed and Jeff Schibel needs to be added as Chairman. Alan Stromberger needs to be removed and Braidy Haden needs to be added as Vice Chairman.

16. Jim moved to approve the proposed changes to the bank signature cards as presented. Chris seconded. Motion passed.

Well Level Grant Contract Extension

Elsa announced that Ecology had approved a request from the District for a no cost time extension from June 30, 2019 to June 30, 2020 for the well level grant. The contract with GeoEngineers as hydrogeology consultant for the well level grant also needed to be extended.

17. Jim moved to approve a no cost time extension from June 30, 2019 to June 30, 2020 for GeoEngineers to serve as hydrogeology consultant for the well level grant. Josh seconded. Motion passed.

20 – 39 Master Contract with the Conservation Commission

Elsa reported that the 20 – 39 Master Contract with the Conservation Commission needed to be re-signed. Elsa proposed that the \$12,500 allocated for basic funding be accepted and that the other allocations for tree maintenance and education and outreach remain the same.

18. Chris moved to approve the 20 – 39 Master Contract with the Conservation Commission with the proposed allocations. Josh seconded. Motion passed.

Resolution 2019-1

Resolution 2019-1 addresses the Cooperator Labor Rate to be approved for 2019. The Conservation Commission has already approved the maximum Cooperator Labor Rate statewide for in kind labor contributed by cooperators on conservation projects at \$22 per hour.

19. Jim moved to approve for Resolution 2019-1 that all labor provided by cooperators on cost share projects shall be reimbursed at a rate of \$22 per hour. Josh seconded. Motion passed.

Resolution 2019-2

Resolution 2019-2 addresses the cost share rate and maximum amount of grant funding allocated to each individual cooperator for the current fiscal year. Elsa noted that the District's current cost share and grant amount for cost share projects is 75% cost share with \$10,000 maximum allocated per cooperator/cost share project per year. Most other conservation districts across the state now allow 75% cost share and a \$50,000 cap on each cost share project. The proposed Melder Channel Bed Stabilization project on Crab Creek at Downs Road is a big project that will require

significantly more than the current \$10,000 funding cap to complete this project. Mike Baden has suggested that the District could leave the current \$10,000 cap/75% cost share policy as is for projects funded by Lincoln County CD special assessment and approve a \$50,000 cap/75% cost share for large projects that will be funded with Conservation Commission grant funding. The Conservation Commission also allows more funding for projects that involve continuous stretches of land between multiple landowners, such as riparian restoration projects along streams.

20. Jim moved to approve for Resolution 2019-2 that grant funding allocations from the Conservation Commission be capped at \$50,000 per cooperator per fiscal year (July 1 June 30) with a cost share rate of 75%. Josh seconded. Discussion was held. The current \$10,000 cap/75% cost share policy for cost share projects funded with Lincoln County CD special assessment funding would remain as is. Motion passed.

End of Year Funds

Elsa reported that the District has applied for and received \$7,000 in unspent fiscal year end funding from the Conservation Commission. Items recently purchased with this year end funding include 5 new laptops for board members, a new tonneau cover for the white pickup and a new Honda generator. Elsa also noted that all of the 19-39-IM funding will be spent by the end of June.

VSP Update

The first VSP report for the 2017 – 2019 biennium is due at the Conservation Commission in August. The District has received the draft report from Anchor QEA, the contractor hired to help facilitate VSP in Lincoln County. The draft report will be presented to the VSP Working Group for review and approval at the next meeting on Tuesday, and is also available on the Lincoln County website. VSP in Lincoln County is now in Phase 2, the implementation phase. The District recently purchased a plotter with paper and ink cartridges, along with a paper folder with VSP funds expiring by the end of June to assist with future VSP implementation workload.

The Conservation Commission just signed the contract with Lincoln County to provide \$240,000 in VSP funding for the next biennium. The county is only seeking \$5,000 of these funds, leaving the rest of the funding to be used by the contractor Anchor QEA and by District staff to work on the next round of VSP tasks, including monitoring.

Dean noted that he had received a phone call from a producer in the county who after reading the one page VSP flyer sent to county landowners had concerns about when state regulatory agencies might start enforcing regulations on farmland. Dean explained to the producer that the purpose of VSP was for landowners and operators to voluntarily implement and report practices to help protect the 5 types of critical areas in the county, which would then avoid regulatory agency involvement in critical areas, but this made no difference with the producer's concerns. Dean referred the producer to speak with Board members and speak with the local VSP Work Group about his concerns. Andrew Engells, assistant to Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, asked if counties are still under critical area ordinances even if they are not GMA (Growth Management Act) counties, and the answer was yes. If VSP is not successful in showing that critical areas are being protected in Lincoln County, protection of the critical areas will fall back under the county critical area ordinances.

Elsa noted that a one page conservation plan can become the VSP Stewardship Plan, and that the Stewardship Plan is not available or open to public review.

Cost Share Applications and Payments

A cost share action spreadsheet was distributed for review. The spreadsheet included requests for cost share payment from the 19-27-IM grant and 18-27-NR grant from Adams CD, applications and a cost share payment request from the CWMA (Cooperative Weed Management Area) grant, and cost share payment requests from the DOE Direct Seed grant.

Discussion was held. The Direct Seed grant provides 50% match to implement direct seeding on a maximum of 200 acres at \$28 per acre. The Direct Seed grant currently has more applicants than grant money to fund them in Lincoln County, but producers are still encouraged to submit applications that will be funded as more grant money becomes available.

21. Jim moved to approve the list of cost share payment requests and grant applications as presented. Chris seconded. Motion passed.

Cooperative Agreement for CWMA Weed Mapping

Mike Rule with USFWS who is stationed at the Turnbull Wildlife Refuge near Cheney has approached the District and asked if the District might be willing to participate in a cooperative agreement to hire a temporary employee to conduct weed mapping within the current CWMA border this summer. The employee would be hired on as an AmeriCorps employee, and the District would receive 10% for overhead. The information collected would be available to the public.

22. Jim moved to approve a cooperative agreement with USFWS to hire a temporary AmeriCorps employee to map weeds within the current CWMA boundaries. Josh seconded. Discussion was held. No weed mapping would be conducted on Turnbull Wildlife Refuge ground. Any mapping on private ground would be voluntary and need the landowner's permission. There would be no connection or information shared with county weed boards. A monthly report would be available. The motion passed with one abstention.

Crab Creek Channel Bed Stabilization Project

Mike Melder has been developing a plan to implement a channel bed stabilization project on 4 stretches of creek bank on his land along Crab Creek in the Downs Road area. This is the same general area where District staff used Terry Husseman grant money to remove numerous abandoned vehicles from the creek bank and do some stream bank replanting and landscape fabric stabilization back in 2004. Mike has already had Ecology, WDFW, and the Army Corps of Engineers out to the site for a field visit and to review the draft engineering plans that he has developed to address the continuing stream bank cutting and meandering that is threatening a field road and portions of Downs Road by the creek.

Elsa proposed that the District apply for Conservation Commission NRI funding to implement the channel stabilization project and move it to the highest priority for NRI funding. A cultural resources review would have to be done. The NE Engineering Cluster grant would pay for any more engineering work that would be required.

23. Josh moved to approve the Manager to pursue 20-39 NRI funding to implement the Melder Channel Bed Stabilization Project and move it to the highest priority project for NRI funding. Chris seconded. Motion passed.

Hart Road Fire Replanting Funding

Funding from FSA has now started to become available to fund forestry replanting for landowners who had land burned by the August 2016 Hart Road fire. Hal Johnson with Johnbold Farms is the first landowner in Lincoln County to obtain funding from FSA to help replant the ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir burned on his ground. The District has already secured 9,900 conifer plugs along with some chokecherry and serviceberry to replant the Johnbold Farms land, and DNR planting crews have also been reserved. Elsa is working with FSA to obtain a 6 month extension for the grant funding so that the trees and shrubs will be planted in spring 2020 when soil is moist again for planting and the trees and shrubs are available.

WACD and Conservation Commission Update

A letter from Jeannette Dörner, WACD President, was received by the District regarding concerns raised by board members over current management activities at WACD. The issue of filling the NE Area board member position that was previously held by Eddie Johnson was also discussed.

Carol Smith has been hired as the new Executive Director for the Conservation Commission to fill the position formerly held by Mark Clark.

WADE Training Report

Kristen and Tim were attending their 3rd day of WADE (Washington Association of District Employee) training. Dean attended one day of WADE training yesterday and gave out handouts from the training on the basics of operating drones and on native bumblebees.

Seth Flanders with Spokane CD and Andrew Phay with Whatcom CD have several years of experience operating drones and are available to help other CD's who are just getting started with a drone program. Each CD that operates a drone must have at least one person who has obtained a Section 107 remote pilot's license from the FAA. The test to obtain a 107 license costs \$150 and must be retaken every 2 years. There are some general rules that must be followed, including not flying the drone higher than 400 ft. off of the ground, keeping the drone within sight of the operator, not flying a drone near an airport without written permission, and respecting other people and their property.

Entomologist Don Rolfs gave a good presentation and distributed a neat handout with some of the more common native bee species in the state of Washington. There are at least 600 species of native bees in the state, but there are currently no field guides for native bees, and a large number of species have not been given a name yet either. There are 28 species of native bumblebees in the state and they are warm blooded, which allows them to pollinate in colder weather. Bumblebees have many hairs on them that accumulate pollen but then let it fall off relatively easy at the next flower, and this is one of characteristics that make them much more efficient pollinators compared to honeybees. Dr. Rolfs does not like to see honeybees out in native plant areas, as they are resource hogs that take away much pollen and nectar from the native bees that have evolved in these areas to pollinate these plants.

Ag Burn Update

Dean noted that an approximate section of expired CRP grass in the Harrington area had not yet been able to be burned and that a large field burn permit refund request for \$2,300+ would probably be submitted to the District by the end of the third week in June. Some discussions were also held about the difficulties in taking out and converting old bluegrass stands to other crops without being able to legally burn anymore. The cost of numerous tillage operations and the diesel involved makes it so expensive that the fine for burning bluegrass sod to convert it to another crop would probably be less than the cost of other methods to remove the bluegrass.

NRCS Report

The board members introduce themselves to Jeff Kuhlmann, acting West Palouse Team DC until sometime in August when his appointment will end. NRCS has re-advertised nationwide for a permanent West Palouse DC position as a GS-11 or GS-12 position, as no Washington NRCS personnel applied for the position during the first advertisement.

The WPT has just finished ranking for the second round of EQIP funding in 2019. Only one CAP plan was preapproved. Round 3 of EQIP funding, which includes the Local Working Group funding, is arriving soon. Producers can reapply for EQIP funding in this round if their application didn't rank high enough in earlier rounds. Most previous applications have been made for concentrated flow and soil quality/soil health practices.

There is not direction yet on what is to be done with 2014 CSP contracts that have expired; seek a contract extension or apply for a new CSP contract? Signup 52 for Continuous CRP opened on June 3. There may a regular CRP signup later this summer or fall.

Jeff thanked District staff for their help with tree planting on the Cobb Ranch WRP project.

FSA Report

There was no FSA report. Producers are reminded that crop reporting is due July 15.

County Commissioner Report

There was no county commissioner report, as Commissioner Mark Stedman was attending a CBDL (Columbia Basin Development League) meeting in Moses Lake today.

Miscellaneous

Elsa noted that Mike Baden will be reaching out soon to new board members about required training, such as for the Open Public Meetings Act.


Public Comment


There was no public comment.

24. Jim moved to adjourn the meeting. Chris seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 AM. The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 10, in the conference room here in the USDA Service Center in Davenport.

Respectfully submitted,


Josh Sherwood, Secretary


Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:

All 24 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the nominations for Board officers as brought before the Board.
- 2. M/S/P to approve the May 8 minutes as presented.
- 3. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #10800 to #10824, along with 10 EFT's, totaling \$92,722.47.
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- 21. M/S/P to approve the list of cost share payment requests and grant applications as presented.
- 22. M/S/P to approve a cooperative agreement with USFWS to hire a temporary AmeriCorps employee to map weeds within the current CWMA boundaries.
- 23. M/S/P to approve the Manager to pursue 20-39 NRI funding to implement the Melder Channel Bed Stabilization Project and move it to the highest priority project for NRI funding.
- 24. M/S/P to adjourn the meeting.

