

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
Zoom Meeting ID: 987 6961 1557
14 N Mission St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday, November 19, 2021
1:30 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Junell Wentz, Chair; Dillon Miller, Vice Chair; Amy Bridges, Auditor; Kurt Hosman, Member.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Bartelme, Member.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Baden, WSCC; Chris Wright, NRCS; and the following District staff: Ryan Williams, Valerie Hampton, and Nada Wentz. Attendees were present in person and via Zoom Meeting / conference call.

Junell Wentz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

Consent Agenda: Approve the October 15, 2021, Regular Meeting minutes, approve the Treasurer's Report, and authorize payment of bills.

M/S/C Dillon moved and Amy seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. (Unanimous)

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) asked the District for a letter of support for their project to do flood risk mapping of alluvial fans. Other districts were also asked to send a letter of support.

M/S/C Kurt moved and Amy seconded to approve sending a letter of support to DNR. (Unanimous)

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT: Chris Wright

NRCS folks are still working on end of year contract payments. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) eligibility deadline was yesterday. The EQIP applications received are for orchards, nutrient management and some forest work. The Forest Service building remodel is set to be completed by June.

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (WSCC) REPORT: Mike Baden

The Commission is in the process of hiring for the Executive Director position. The three finalists will attend a 'Meet and Greet' meeting, giving districts a chance to talk with them. Watch for the information in the Commission's Weekly Digest Bulletin and the website. The ever-changing COVID updates are also posted on the Commission website.

Commission personnel are currently short staffed. A financial person left last month making payment request processing move a little slower for a while. District patience while they are filling this position is really appreciated.

Mike reminded the District to get the notice to the newspapers within seven days after the election resolution has been approved, and review the election deadlines set to see that they do not fall on holidays.

Districts are to continue to add projects to the Commission's list for consideration in the 2023 budget so they can make allocations as soon as funds are available. Let Mike know about fire recovery news and cultural resources work.

There is an opportunity for districts to comment on the Department of Ecology's (DOE) proposed rule changes for livestock water rights.

OLD BUSINESS

Grant Applications:

FEMA Grants: Ryan discussed plans for work to be done under three FEMA proposals, including Red Apple and Sleepy Hollow post-fire reseeded, Wildfire Resilient Landscaping Training, and updates to the Chelan County Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

WDFW/RCO Fish Barrier Removal: The Brian Abbot Fish Barrier Removal Board's grant round is due in January. The Cutler Fish Passage Barrier Replacement construction project is a strong candidate for this funding source.

Potential Joint Application: Cascade Fisheries, Trout Unlimited and Cascadia CD are developing project concepts around stream flow, fish habitat and riparian planting in the Wenatchee and Entiat watersheds. There are several grant rounds coming up in the next few months that the group is considering applying for. These include WaterSMART, Ecology Streamflow, FEMA, and others. Each of these grants have different requirements that may lend themselves to having different organizations sponsor the grant applications. Some of the deadlines may occur before the next meeting. The Board was asked to support Cascadia's participation in these efforts and to be the potential sponsor of related grant applications as appropriate.

M/S/C Dillon moved and Amy seconded to approve FEMA applications for post fire reseeded, wildfire resilient landscaping training, and Community Wildfire Protection Plan updates; an application for a Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal project; and participation in or sponsorship of multiple partner applications for stream flow, fish habitat and riparian planting. (Unanimous)

Grant Contracts:

Underwood CD Agreement: The Center for Technical Development (CTD) is now sponsored by Underwood CD. An agreement is needed to bill for Ryan's time for CTD business. Underwood is also interested in assistance with cultural resources investigations. The Board was asked to approve the agreement between Cascadia CD and Underwood CD.

Snohomish CD Agreement: Snohomish CD asked for assistance with their Rates & Charges program, which would only take about a half hour of time. Ryan felt that the small amount of time should not be billed but would like to get an agreement in place for the districts to assist each other with future projects.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Agreement: This agreement establishes the partnership; it is a requirement before the funding agreement can be started, which is crucial for support of the forester position. Ryan asked the Board to approve his electronic signature on the agreement.

M/S/C Amy moved and Kurt seconded to approve the following agreements: mutual assistance Interlocal agreements with Underwood and Snohomish CDs and Ryan's electronic signature for the RCPP Partnership agreement. (Unanimous)

Cost Share Agreements: A cost share agreement with Zook for forest treatment needs approval and signature by the Board. It is scheduled to be implemented in the spring.

M/S/C Kurt moved and Dillon seconded to approve and sign the Zook cost share agreement for forest treatment. (Unanimous)

Cost Share Payment - Warman: The first step of a two-step project is the replacement of a mainline. It is funded by the Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) and is certified as completed. The Board was asked to approve the cost share payment.

M/S/C Dillon moved and Amy seconded to approve the Warman Adventures LLC cost share payment. (Unanimous)

Policies: Board approval is needed to amend the 2021-9 Cost Share Policy to increase post-fire recovery actions cost share to 90%. The Board was asked to adopt the amendment in Resolution 2021-9a.

M/S/C Kurt moved and Dillon seconded to adopt Resolution 2021-9a, amending the post fire recovery cost share percentage to 90%. (Unanimous)

Other Business:

2022 Health Coverage: Ryan, Valerie and the Board had a lengthy discussion about the 2022 Health Care coverage options available, including the addition of District contributions for coverage of spouses and families. For 2022, the District would cover 100% of the employee's medical and dental coverage, and 50% of any dependent coverage elected. For employees waiving coverage due to being on a spouse's plan, 50% of the employee premium would be paid into their VEBA plan account. Also, the current practice is to start medical coverage the first of the month following a 30 day waiting period. This means staff hired early in the month wait nearly two months for coverage to start. Mark Ingman had a later start date than planned due to housing delays. Ryan would like to waive the waiting period and allow his coverage to be effective November 1, and to change the effective date for future enrollment to the first day of the month following the hire date. The Board agreed Ryan should make the final Health Care plan decision.

The Cost-of-Living (COLA) increase and Consumer Price Index (CPI) discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

M/S/C Kurt moved and Dillon seconded to approve the new health care enrollment and benefit structure, waiving the health care waiting period for Mark Ingman, and Ryan making the 2022 Health Care Plan selection. (Unanimous)

Amy left the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

Kurt left the meeting at 2:52 p.m.

Elections: Valerie recommended having the Supervisor Election in mid-February. That time frame would open options to advertise the election in our Quarterly newsletter, as well as the local newspapers; and there is a higher likelihood of folks noticing the ads after the holidays. The Board will be asked to approve the Election Resolution at the December meeting. They were encouraged to talk to potential candidates about the open position. Jim is not running for re-election and may be moving away from the area.

Executive Director's Report: Information about the Heritage Gardens program was shared with the Board. Liz will present more information at the next Board meeting.

Conservation Commission Projects: Cultural resource investigations have begun on the approved cost share projects.

Project Updates by Region

Lake Chelan Basin: The District hosted the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Report meeting, which had good attendance. The meeting was recently posted to our website. There have already been additional viewings of the meeting. Patrick is working with about 15 interested landowners. Close to 20 rolls of coconut matting were donated to the District to help the 25 Mile Creek folks with steep slope stabilization on their properties.

Entiat Watershed: Kurt conducted a small tour for Mark and Ryan of past District projects in the Entiat area.

Wenatchee Watershed: Ryan briefly discussed the Commission cost share projects, the DOE grant that was funded and the finalization of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant focused on irrigation efficiencies that will be brought to the board next month.

Southern Chelan County Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 40: No updates at this time.

Personnel Updates: Joe Hill accepted the Forestry position. He starts work effective January 1, 2022. The applicant that was offered the Resource Specialist position has not accepted yet. Ryan will update the Board when he receives word.

Set December 2021 Regular District Meeting Date and Agenda: The next Regular Meeting is Friday, December 17, 2021, at 1:30.

The meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved sending a letter of support to DNR;

Approved FEMA applications for post fire reseeded, wildfire resilient landscaping training, and Community Wildfire Protection Plan updates; an application for a Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal project; and participation in or sponsorship of multiple partner applications for stream flow, fish habitat and riparian planting;

Approved the following agreements: mutual assistance Interlocal agreements with Underwood and Snohomish CDs and Ryan's electronic signature for the RCPP Partnership agreement;
Approved and signed the Zook cost share agreement for forest treatment;
Approved the Warman Adventures LLC cost share payment;
Adopted Resolution 2021-9a, amending the post fire recovery cost share percentage to 90%;
Approved the new health care enrollment and benefit structure, waiving the health care waiting period for Mark Ingman, and Ryan making the 2022 Health Care Plan selection.

CHAIR_____

OFFICE ASSISTANT_____