

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
Upstairs Conference Room
14 N Mission St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Thursday, December 19, 2019
3:30 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Junell Wentz, Vice Chair; Roger Wristen, Auditor; Jim Bartelme, Member; and Dillon Miller, Member.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Josh Koempel, Chair.

OTHERS PRESENT: Chris Wright, NRCS; and the following District staff: Peggy Entzel, Mike Cushman, and Nada Wentz.

Junell Wentz, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approve the Minutes of the November 21, 2019 Regular District Meeting, approve the Treasurer's Report, and authorize payment of bills.

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Roger Wristen submitted a letter of resignation from the Board of Supervisors, effective January 31, 2020. He has served the District for ten years and is relocating to be nearer to family.

M/S/C Dillon moved and Jim seconded to approve Roger Wristen's resignation from the Board, effective January 31, 2020. (Unanimous)

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT

A Special Workgroup meeting will be held on January 10, 2020, at the fire hall in Chelan, at 1:00 p.m. The new farm bill programs will be rolled out, as well as discussions on conservation planning, contracting, consolidation of funding sources and resource concerns. Two additional resource concerns will be added to the list that was voted on at the last workgroup meeting.

A new agreement for task orders is coming, potentially similar to the current task orders. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is moving forward. Chris is concerned about several CRP contracts that will soon be expiring in Grant and Douglas counties. He would like to have District staff, already trained in conservation planning, available to assist landowners with expiring contracts and possibly roll them into Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts. Funding is available for this assistance. Chris will keep the District updated.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Board discussed issuing a memorandum to Chelan County Community Development outlining available District technical services to assist landowners with minor shoreline compliance issues. Questions were raised about funding for staff time, as well as the importance of maintaining the District's non-regulatory role. The Board agreed that funding would be needed to cover staff time if the County wanted to arrange for technical assistance to landowners who are out of compliance.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Peggy reported on items as they came up during the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Conservation Commission Projects:

Cost Share Program Review: Changes to the fuels reduction cost share program were discussed, as well as where it overlaps with other agency programs that do the same work. There was discussion regarding grouping projects and having the fire district serve as the holder of the cost share contract; however, the Conservation Commission requires cost share contracts to be with landowners, not a subcontractor.

Grant Updates: The riparian cost share project for the Implementation grant is almost finished. The project will be closed out in January. The remainder of the Implementation grant tasks and Natural Resource Investments grant are ongoing. The Drought grant ends December 31, but there may be potential for it to be extended. The Irrigation Efficiencies grant is also ongoing. The archaeologists both have cultural reports to finish for the NRCS Task Orders.

Project Updates by Region:

Lake Chelan Basin: Mike gave a brief update about the recent watershed meeting he attended in Chelan. Topics included the continued 'Keep Lake Chelan Blue' campaign development and the Aquatic Invasive Species report.

Entiat Watershed: Meetings and plans for future projects continue in and for the Entiat Valley.

Wenatchee Watershed: North 40 is compiling four videos to support the Kids in the Forest program. They will be used for training teachers involved with the program, similar to the Kids in the Creek program videos.

Southern Chelan County (WRIA 40): Drought and fire preparedness resource information will be provided to the folks in the South Wenatchee area through some upcoming opportunities with community leaders.

Other Updates:

Grant Applications / Contract Updates: The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) put together a group of selected communities to include in a budget to support the development of a social marketing campaign. They selected a marketing firm that is working with Okanogan Conservation District, Kittitas Conservation District and Cascadia Conservation District. The application went out December 13.

Amanda is looking into an Environmental Protection Agency grant application for Kids in the Creek and salmon education funding. A Drinking Water Providers Partnership grant is being proposed to pay for toilets along the wilderness trails in Icicle Creek.

Trout Unlimited, Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, and Cascadia are partnering on an application for funds to do barrier removal work.

Board signatures were requested for the DNR Arborist contract, when it arrives, and the Kids in the Forest contract with the Wildfire Project and the Museum. The District agreement with Franklin Conservation District for the Environmental Educator position was changed to remove the stipulation of the number for kids to reach.

Contracts and Agreements Legal Review Status: Mike and Valerie met with the Davis Arneil Law Firm regarding contract templates that need to be updated. They discussed the document review, the budget allotment for the work, and they are currently awaiting feedback from the law firm. Information will be brought to the Board at the next meeting.

WACD Annual Meeting Report: Mike, Dillon and Roger attended the annual meeting. Each briefly talked about their meeting experience, the topics discussed at the meeting, and what they would like to see done differently.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2019-6, Chelan County Hazard Mitigation Plan: In order to be eligible for annexation into the Hazard Mitigation Plan, a Board resolution needs to be in place. This plan provides the District with the opportunity to directly apply to FEMA for funding.

M/S/C Jim moved and Dillon seconded to approve Resolution 2019-6, the Chelan County Hazard Mitigation Plan. (Unanimous)

Staffing Updates: Bonnie Meaux will be leaving at the end of the month. She was hired as a seasonal technician. Kirk Beckendorf accepted the position of Environmental Educator and begins work on January 6, 2020. Franklin and South Douglas conservation districts are partnering with us for the educator position. Peggy and Mike will review the Veterans Corps program and could possibly start it again in the spring.

Employee Benefits Updates / Policy Changes – Sick Leave, Special Holiday, VEBA & Insurance: Junell reviewed and approved the Health Alliance health care plan for District staff. Peggy and the Board discussed changing the sick leave benefits policy of no benefits for staff working 20 hours a week to giving 4 hours of sick leave per month.

The Wenatchee World building will be closing three hours early on Christmas Eve. Peggy asked the Board to approve three hours holiday leave for District staff, and to approve changing the sick leave policy to granting four hours of sick leave for staff that consistently work 20 hours a week.

M/S/C Jim moved and Roger seconded to approve three hours of holiday leave on December 24, and to change the sick leave policy to include four hours of sick leave monthly for staff consistently working 20 hours a week. (Unanimous)

Set January Meeting Date & Agenda: The next District Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 16, 2020, at 3:30 p.m., in the Upstairs Conference Room.

The meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved Roger Wristen's resignation from the Board, effective January 31, 2020;

Approved Resolution 2019-6, the Chelan County Hazard Mitigation Plan;

Approved three hours of holiday leave on December 24, and to change the sick leave policy to include four hours of sick leave monthly for staff consistently working 20 hours a week.

VICE CHAIR _____

OFFICE ASSISTANT _____