

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
Zoom Meeting ID: 95955162818
14 N Mission St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday, February 19, 2021
1:30 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Josh Koempel, Chair; Junell Wentz, Vice Chair; Dillon Miller, Auditor; Amy Bridges, Member; and Jim Bartelme, Member.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Baden, WSCC; Chris Wright, NRCS; Abigail Nickelson, WA State Dept. of Agriculture; Kimi Matsushima, DOE; and the following District staff: Peggy Entzel, Valerie Hampton, Ryan Williams, and Nada Wentz. All attendees were present via Zoom Meeting / conference call.

Josh Koempel, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Abbey (Abigail) Nickelson, an Environmental Specialist in the Natural Resources Assessment Section of the Washington State Department of Agriculture, described a planned virtual tour of special monitoring work on Brender Creek, Mission Creek and Stemilt Creek. Discussions will cover pesticide disposal and new studies using growing degree-days to time Pear Psylla management. The purpose is educational assistance to orchardists and sharing information that is more accurate than what is given by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Josh asked that credit be given to growers for what they have already done to clean up and protect the water and land. A flyer with more details will be mailed out soon.

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

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

CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence regarding the District election will be discussed later in the meeting.

Josh announced that he will be resigning as of March 31, when Peggy retires.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT – Chris Wright

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) application and planning process is rounding the bend and heading toward the ranking phase. A lot of the EQIP applications are for irrigation and chipping projects. The two joint forestry program proposals from Cascadia look very promising but there is no word yet as to the ranking of the proposals. Kudos to Patrick who played a large part in the process. There is still no news about task orders with NRCS and Cascadia.

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (WSCC) REPORT – Mike Baden

Mike reported that there isn't much information on the state budget situation yet. Districts will be updated as soon as new information is known.

The COVID 19 updates will continue on the Commission website. The whole state is in Phase 2, which means public meetings can move toward 'in person' meetings at 25% capacity. Social distancing and masks are still required.

NRCS has a large Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) workload. A lot of task orders are needed to cover that work. Work identification, prioritization and funding are important in order to make the matching funds stretch further. New funding will be available July 1.

The Commission thanks the District for the all the assistance with coordination for the hazard mitigation training. The first training is coming up in a couple of weeks.

OLD BUSINESS

Conservation Commission Projects:

Implementation: Implementation projects for multiple landowners are in a waiting period until the snow melts so they can get out in the field to finish the work. Salmon recovery work under the Orca funding is divided between Salmon Safe projects and Kids in the Creek educational videos.

Irrigation Efficiencies: A funding request for an intake removal project at Cascade Orchards has begun. Another funding request was submitted to move forward with a new intake and pipelines. Washington Water Trust is assisting with other requests.

There hasn't been much discussion about the Eight Mile Lake project during the Icicle Work Group meetings.

Project Updates by Region:

Lake Chelan Basin: The FEMA application for this region will be discussed later in the meeting.

Entiat Watershed: MarySutton is back from maternity leave. She facilitated a meeting with the Entiat group yesterday. Clarification of projects, funding and project leads will be discussed at future meetings.

Wenatchee Watershed: The Wildfire Research group and the Rocky Mountain Research Station are scoping efforts for fire district staff to conduct assessments and social marketing coordination to let folks know what firewise work can be done on their property.

Patrick worked on the Upper Wenatchee Pilot Project application for NEPA funding, which is now open for comments.

Southern Chelan County (WRIA 40): There are no updates for this region.

Grant applications / Contracts:

Update & Decision Regarding Chipping Program: Ryan and the Board discussed the different chipping machines available as well as storage and maintenance needs. The Board decided that a 12 inch gas chipper was the best choice for District use. That size is well within the budget, can be hauled with the District truck and easily coordinate with partner storage and maintenance schedules.

M/S/C Amy moved and Jim seconded to approve purchase of a gas operated 12 inch chipping machine through the DOE grant program. (Unanimous)

Approve Applying for Grants as Follows:

No Child Left Inside (NCLI): This is a Recreation and Conservation Office grant that will continue funding for the Kids in the Creek (KITC) and Kids in the Forest (KITF) education programs.

Coastal Protection: This grant continues the Beaver Dam Analog work and will serve as match for the next Department of Ecology (DOE) grant.

Recreation & Conservation Office: This proposed application will be brought back to the Board for discussion at the next meeting.

Conservation Commission – Food System Support Grant: This \$5,000 grant will help with farmers markets, food banks and the connection between producers and the markets. The funding ends on June 30, 2021.

M/S/C Junell moved and Jim seconded to approve the applications for the following: No Child Left Inside, Coastal Protection, and the Commission Food System Support grants. (Unanimous)

FEMA Chelan Defensible Space Grant Resolution 2021-2: Staff submitted the FEMA Chelan Defensible Space Grant last Friday. FEMA also requires that a resolution be approved by the Board and submitted in addition to the application. A brief discussion followed. The Board was asked to approve Resolution 2021-2 and recommended that Ryan serve as the primary contact and Patrick as the alternate contact.

M/S/C Junell moved and Amy seconded to adopt Resolution 2021-2, FEMA Chelan Defensible Space Application Authorization. (Unanimous)

Approve Contract for FEMA Scout-A-Vista Project: The District qualifies to be the direct recipient for FEMA funding because of participation in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Board was asked to approve the FEMA contract for the Scout-A-Vista project.

M/S/C Jim moved and Dillon seconded to approve the FEMA contract for the Scout-A-Vista project. (Unanimous)

Watershed Action Team (WAT) Contract: The Board was asked to approve a contract with Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB) to assist with monitoring coordination.

M/S/C Junell moved and Jim seconded to approve the WAT Contract with UCSRB. (Unanimous)

Rates & Charges Update: Ryan provided information about the renewal process for Rates and Charges. FCS Group was contacted for information and a price quote. The estimate for their assistance with the process was about \$17,000. After further discussion, the Board asked for a report on the renewal process including steps needed, costs to proceed on our own and answers to other questions that came up during the discussion. Peggy recommended having a motion to move forward once the Board reviews the report at the next meeting in March.

M/S/C Jim moved and Junell seconded to approve moving forward with the Rates and Charges renewal process pending the report findings at the March meeting. (Unanimous)

Election Update: The Conservation Commission will meet on March 18 to review the District election results. The election is not eligible for certification by the Commission as the voters did not sign the Poll List before voting, which invalidates the election. Peggy and the Board discussed the next steps. A request for a ruling will need to be made in Superior Court in order to invalidate the election and receive clearance to conduct a new one. The District would then be allowed to start the election process again and hopefully have the process completed by the end of June. It is unfortunate that it happened, but the District will be proactive to fix it.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Officers: Josh nominated the following slate of officers: Junell, Chair; Dillon, Vice Chair; and Amy, Auditor.

M/S/C Jim moved and Junell seconded to elect the following officers: Junell Wentz, Chair; Dillon Miller, Vice Chair; and Amy Bridges, Auditor. (Unanimous)

Authorize Carol Cowling to Conduct Payroll Audit for 2020: Peggy recommended authorizing Carol Cowling to do the payroll audit in March.

M/S/C Jim moved and Junell seconded to approve authorizing Carol Cowling to conduct the District payroll audit for 2020. (Unanimous)

Appoint Authorized Signatories for Banking Needs: Banking authorization changes are needed before Peggy retires. Peggy and Josh need to be removed from the District bank account as signatories. District policy requires two Board signatures on checks, or one staff member and one Board member. The Board decided to have two staff be authorized to sign checks, make account transfers online, and pay taxes. To fulfill the District policy requirement, it was recommended that Ryan or Valerie be authorized to sign for the staff signature. An available Board member will continue to be the second signature on checks. Ryan would be the primary staff signer, and Valerie would be the secondary staff signer.

M/S/C Amy moved and Jim seconded to approve the following changes: remove Peggy Entzel and Josh Koempel as authorized signatories for banking needs; authorize Ryan Williams as primary signatory, Valerie Hampton as secondary signatory and authorize either Ryan or Valerie to conduct online account transfers and payment of taxes. (Unanimous)

Approve the Line of Credit Application: Currently Peggy and the Board Chair, Josh, are authorized to use the District Line of Credit. Peggy recommended removing herself and Josh from the account and replacing them with Ryan and Junell Wentz.

M/S/C Jim moved and Dillon seconded to approve the following changes to the Line of Credit account authorizations: remove Peggy Entzel and Josh Koempel from the account; and add Junell Wentz, Chair, and Ryan Williams, Executive Director. (Unanimous)

Comments & Open Discussion: Jim discussed some of the proposed changes to the Eight Mile Lake project. There have been a lot of comments made on the work proposal. It is an area that is crucial to the local folks living there. He is seeing a movement to exclude reservoirs, which are very

important for irrigation in the valley. There may be a lot of press and opposition between the residents and the Wilderness Community.

Josh commented that the District has done a good job of keeping the peace and asked that, moving forward, we remember where our food comes from.

Jim and the other Board members thanked Josh and Peggy for their hard work and their faithful service to the District.

Staff & Board Transition Meeting: Peggy, Josh and Junell set a transition meeting for February 26, from 9:30 am to 2:15 pm. They will discuss the transitions that will take place when Peggy retires from the District and when Josh resigns from the Board.

Set March 2021 Annual Planning Meeting Date and Agenda: The next Regular Meeting is Friday, March 19, 2021, at 1:30. The regular meeting business will be conducted with the annual planning meeting to follow. Junell requested that this meeting be in person if possible. Conference calls will be made available as well.

The meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved purchase of a gas operated 12 inch chipping machine through the DOE grant program;

Approved the applications for the following: No Child Left Inside, Coastal Protection, and the Commission Food System Support grants;

Approved Resolution 2021-2, FEMA Chelan Defensible Space Application Authorization;

Approved the FEMA contract for the Scout-A-Vista project;

Approved the WAT Contract with UCSRB;

Approved moving forward with the Rates and Charges renewal process pending the report findings at the March meeting;

Approved electing the following officers: Junell Wentz, Chair; Dillon Miller, Vice Chair; and Amy Bridges, Auditor;

Approved authorizing Carol Cowling to conduct the District payroll audit for 2020;

Approved the following changes: remove Peggy Entzel and Josh Koempel as authorized signatories for banking needs; authorize Ryan Williams as primary signatory, Valerie Hampton as secondary signatory and authorize either Ryan or Valerie to conduct online account transfers and payment of taxes;

Approved the following changes to the Line of Credit account authorizations: remove Peggy Entzel and Josh Koempel from the account; and add Junell Wentz, Chair, and Ryan Williams, Executive Director.

CHAIR_____

OFFICE ASSISTANT_____