

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
Zoom Meeting ID: 987 3421 1628
14 N Mission St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday, April 16, 2021
1:30 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Junell Wentz, Chair; Amy Bridges, Auditor; and Jim Bartelme, Member.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dillon Miller, Vice Chair.

OTHERS PRESENT: Chris Wright, NRCS; and the following District staff: Valerie Hampton, Ryan Williams, and Nada Wentz. All attendees were present via Zoom Meeting / conference call.

Junell Wentz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

Consent Agenda: Approve the Minutes of the March 19, 2021 Joint Regular District and Annual Planning Meeting, approve the Treasurer's Report, and authorize payment of bills.

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

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT – Chris Wright

Chris, Ryan, Patrick, and staff from Okanogan CD were on a conference call regarding the Joint Chiefs proposal for Washington, which is under serious consideration. Another meeting is planned next week.

There may be a virtual Local Working Group meeting this year, possibly in May. A proposal was made to skip the meeting for a year. Funding and support have been down. Sarah Troutman, Chris and Ryan will meet next week to discuss it and let the Board know the decision. The movement seems to be toward state-wide groups, which makes the program funding more competitive. The two local resource concerns last year were soil health and range/forest wildfire.

OLD BUSINESS

Conservation Commission Projects: Commission projects are on track. The District has received assurance that the cost share project of concern last month will be finished. Staff are waiting for good weather conditions to do the thinning portion.

Project Updates by Region:

Lake Chelan Basin: No updates for this region.

Entiat Watershed: The Entiat Watershed Planning Unit (EWPU) and the Entiat Habitat Subcommittee (EHSC) met on April 15th. Discussion topics were projects completed, projects coming up, snowpack levels for Washington State, and weather predictions based on storm tracking. Drone flights in the Entiat are planned in May to monitor projects during high flows. There is extra funding to do a LiDAR flight to view post project conditions.

Wenatchee Watershed: Follow-up continues with landowners regarding the mailer to the Chumstick and upper Wenatchee areas. The District has received several phone calls from interested folks. Ken is working on the logistics for the beaver dam analogs this summer. The Icicle workgroup meeting focused on the Peshastin pump-back project. They discussed the different stations to take water out of the Wenatchee River instead of the Icicle, as well as which ones need upgrades.

Southern Chelan County (Water Resource Inventory Area [WRIA] 40): Patrick attended the State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildfire Ready Neighbors program kickoff in South Wenatchee. Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz attended to roll out the program in Chelan County. The information was delivered in both English and Spanish. Sign-ups for home assessments were encouraged to improve property and as a precaution against wildfires. About 120 folks signed up. District staff will be working on some of the assessments in the next six weeks. The program ends in June.

Grant applications / Contracts:

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) Grant Application Authorization, Resolution 2021-4: The District is applying for a SRFB grant through the Recreation & Conservation Office. Ken is putting together a proposal for an assessment of habitat work needed in the Entiat between River Mile 7 and 8.25. The District would handle the basic administration and oversee a contract for the work. A resolution to authorize the application is needed.

M/S/C Jim moved and Amy seconded to approve adoption of Resolution 2021-4, authorization to apply for a SRFB grant for habitat assessment. (Unanimous)

Grant Contract – No Child Left Inside (NCLI): Part of the NCLI is to work with students outdoors, but the pandemic stopped all opportunities to do so. The grant was to close in June 2021. Because of the pandemic issues, an extension was granted through June 2022. There is potential to get kids out later this spring, possibly to hold weekend events for the whole family to attend. The plan is currently in development.

Contract with Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): This agreement ran out of money. The RC&D is granting an additional \$12,000 for environmental assessments through September 2021. Board approval is needed to accept the amendment to add funding.

M/S/C Jim moved and Amy seconded to approve the additional \$12,000 in RC&D funding for environmental assessment work through September 2021. (Unanimous)

Cultural Resources Task Order: There are seven NRCS projects needing cultural resources work totaling about \$39,000. There is a tight turn around to complete the work by June. Board approval for the Task Order with the Conservation Commission was requested in advance.

M/S/C Amy moved and Jim seconded to approve the Conservation Commission's Cultural Resources Task Order. (Unanimous)

Rates & Charges Update: A Zoom meeting with Commissioner Bob Bugert is scheduled on April 23. Ryan and Junell will introduce themselves and describe the District's work and how the rates and

charges money is used, as well as discuss projects that could be done together. Meetings are planned with the other two commissioners in early May.

Election Update & Resolution 2021-7, 2021 Special Election: The Commission said that a special meeting is not needed for the election resolution. The election is proposed for June 9, from 11 am to 4 pm. This date allows adequate time for advertising and candidate filing. The District's attorney submitted the request to Superior Court to invalidate the February election. A letter from Dillon was included stating he was not an injured party and did not object to the request. The judge approved the request without requiring a court appearance. This directs the District to run another election. The Board was asked to approve the Special Election resolution. Advertisements are planned for the newspaper, on the District website and in the quarterly newsletter.

M/S/C Amy moved and Jim seconded to approve Resolution 2021-7, 2021 Special Election, setting the date for June 9, from 11 am to 4 pm at Pybus Market. (Unanimous)

FY 2022 Annual Plan Adoption: Edits were made to the 2021-22 Annual Plan as discussed at the last meeting. The budget numbers were updated, and the water quality work was re-worded to be more specific. Ryan emailed a copy to the Board members for their review. The budget for the coming year was based on the expected revenue with known grants at this time.

M/S/C Jim moved and Amy seconded to approve adoption of the FY 2022 Annual Plan. (Unanimous)

NEW BUSINESS

Personnel: Ryan emailed job descriptions for his position and for Valerie's position. Both positions are new for the District. The job descriptions need a few more edits to be complete. The Board decided to wait for the final version to be approved at the next meeting.

Policies:

Resolution 2021-5, New Claims Agent & Resolution 2021-6, Public Records Officer: With Peggy retired, Ryan is re-assigning folks to serve as points of contact regarding District duties. He recommended splitting the Public Records duty to have Ryan serve as the Claims Agent for District insurance and Valerie serve as the Public Records Officer. The Claims Agent needs to be registered with the County and the fee paid to do so.

M/S/C Jim moved and Amy seconded to approve assigning Ryan as the New Claims Agent, Resolution 2021-5; and Valerie as the Public Records Officer, Resolution 2021-6. (Unanimous)

Proposed Changes & Resolution 2021-8, Payroll Policy: Ryan and Valerie have been looking into direct deposit for payroll with Numerica Credit Union. For a fee of \$15.00 a month, the District accounts could be upgraded to include direct deposit. Payroll can still be run on the 1st and the 16th of the month with only one business day for the bank to process and make the deposits to individual accounts. The option to receive a check in hand will be available as well. Staff will need to fill out an authorization form. A Board member can review and approve the payroll electronically. The Board was asked to approve the changes by adopting Resolution 2021-8, Payroll Policy.

M/S/C Jim moved and Amy seconded to approve Resolution 2021-8, Payroll Policy for direct deposits. (Unanimous)

Executive Director's Report:

Blazer Update: Ryan reported that the Blazer, which is usually kept at the NRCS office in Ephrata, was vandalized along with several NRCS vehicles. Mark removed all of his tools, and the rig is ready to be taken to the shop. Enduris requested estimates for the repairs. There will be a \$250 deductible, and more information will be available after they have the estimates.

Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) Program: Ryan commented on the changes to the NRI cost share program, listing specific questions about matching funds concerns. This could be a good opportunity to do Firewise programs with Commission funds.

Good Governance Conservation Accountability and Performance Program (CAPP): The only thing that came up for the District's CAPP report was the election snafu. The Commission advised that as long as the District takes steps to conduct a special election in a timely fashion, we will remain in good standing with the Commission. Ryan will send the CAPP report to the Board Members for their review.

Chipper Update: Enduris reviewed the use agreement between the District and Fire District 3 regarding the use and housing of the new chipper. They advised clarifying the language around liability. An attorney was contacted to assist with the needed edits. The agreement will be brought to the next meeting so the Board members can review the document. The chipper is on track to arrive by June 30.

Conservation Partners: The conservation partners are discussing proposals for irrigation efficiencies and a technical assistant. The group won't know until May if they can go further.

County Outreach: Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB) has an agreement with the District that includes educational webinars. There is \$1200 in the budget for this, but there is overlap between the proposed topics and things other agencies are doing. UCSRB will allow the District to use the funds toward a drone for monitoring instead. Discussion followed regarding the price of drones, the additional money needed to pay for the balance, and the additional requirements needed to legally fly a drone. Ken is looking into license, registration and training for certification to fly it. It could be used to assist other agencies with photos for grant applications. They also discussed drafting a policy and procedures for the use of the drone, including landowner notification as needed. The Board was asked to approve using Rates and Charges funds to complete the purchase, license, and fees associated with the drone use.

M/S/C Jim moved and Amy seconded to approve Rates & Charges funds to complete the purchase of the drone, license and fees. (Unanimous)

Exchange Time: Valerie will have the Schedule 22 and the Annual Financial Report to complete within the next six weeks. She may need to earn exchange time. Ryan asked the Board for approval. The Board said they would leave the decision in his hands.

Conservation Easements: Ryan has been approached in the past few weeks about conservation easements. He asked the for the Board's opinions and recommendation. The Board agreed that it is in the District's best interest to stay out of the easements as there is potential for problems down the road and no funding to support the work needed. They suggested directing inquiries to the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust Program.

Set May 2021 Regular District Meeting Date and Agenda: The next Regular Meeting is Friday, May 21, 2021, at 1:30.

Board Member Comments & Open Discussion: Chris commented on the Forest Service building remodel. NRCS will be sharing office space with FSA. A large metal cabinet with a District label was found in the storage room. He asked what the District wants to do. We currently have no space for the cabinet and gave Chris permission to take care of it.

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved approve adoption of Resolution 2021-4, authorization to apply for a SRFB grant for habitat assessment;

Approved the additional \$12,000 in RC&D funding for environmental assessment work through September 2021;

Approved the Conservation Commission Task Order;

Approved the Conservation Commission’s Cultural Resources Task Order;

Approved Resolution 2021-7, 2021 Special Election, setting the date for June 9, from 11 am to 4 pm at Pybus Market;

Approved adoption of the FY 2022 Annual Plan;

Approved assigning Ryan as the New Claims Agent, Resolution 2021-5; and Valerie as the Public Records Officer, Resolution 2021-6;

Approved Resolution 2021-8, Payroll Policy for direct deposits;

Approved Rates & Charges funds to complete the purchase of the drone, license and fees.

CHAIR_____

OFFICE ASSISTANT_____