

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
SPECIAL DISTRICT MEETING
Via Conference Call: Telephone 605-313-4838 Access code 488254#
14 N Mission St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday, April 24, 2020
1:30 p.m.**

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Baden, WSCC; and the following District staff: Peggy Entzel, Valerie Hampton, Mike Cushman, Amanda Newell, Patrick Haggerty, MarySutton Carruthers, Sandy Letzing, Ken Muir and Nada Wentz. All attendees were present via telephone conference call.

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

GENERAL

Consent Agenda

Approve the Minutes of the March 25, 2020 Special District Meeting, approve the Treasurer's Report, and authorize payment of bills.

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

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (WSCC) REPORT

Mike Baden said the Conservation Commission encourages districts to keep communications open as daily changes are made regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The State budget is being impacted by the pandemic as well. All state agencies are directed to reserve their internal savings as changes are made to the State budget. The MRSC website is a good resource for government agency information.

The Commission will be very strategic in their budget requests this year. The focus will be on the quality of budget packages and looking to the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) for strategies. The supplemental budget was signed last week, which retained the match needed for the Federal Emergency Management Agency grant for Hazard Mitigation. They will be working with the District to schedule some training for professionals under that project.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) task orders for this fiscal year need to be in Commission hands by April 30.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Prior to COVID, Mike had been working on a District organizational chart similar to one used by the Okanogan Conservation District. He is working on it again and is also seeking guidance for a District COVID Plan containing protocols to follow when folks come back to work in the office. Procedures will be included for working with others such as Ag and the Forest Service, as well as protocols for cleaning work areas such as office equipment and the District vehicle. The District was contacted for a possible program regarding lawn replacement plans. The District already has programs that would help with this.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

The Forest Service JVA staff are currently on layoff status until June 1. Additional funding will be in place by the time they return. The Annual Financial Report was started this week. Peggy asked for two Board Members to assist with the Schedule 22 internal audit, which also needs to be completed. Junell and Amy volunteered to assist. Valerie will prepare the Schedule 22 for their review and input.

OLD BUSINESS

Conservation Commission Projects:

Implementation (IM) and Natural Resource Investments (NRI): Both the IM and the NRI work is ongoing.

Drought: The final report for this program is close to completion. The remaining money will be turned back to the Commission. Currently, private landowners are not eligible for this funding. Changes have been requested, as improvements to private infrastructure would also benefit the public.

Task Orders 3 & 5: Task Order (TO) 3 should be finished by the end of the month. TO 5 is completed.

Irrigation Efficiencies (IE): The District is working on a project with Trout Unlimited (TU). Mike updated the board on TU staffing changes, the work is moving forward.

PROJECT UPDATES

Staff Program and Project Updates: Mike introduced staff members that volunteered to give the Board updates on the programs they are working on, along with some of the challenges and solutions due to the COVID situation.

Amanda reported that the chipping program is in the sign-up phase. So far, about 68 acres will be treated by thinning, with more signups each day. Assessments will begin soon. The absence of community events has been a challenge. Programs have been promoted through Facebook, radio station announcements and the District quarterly newsletter. She is working with the funding source to see what they are willing to support in lieu of community events. There is potential for virtual options to move the programs forward. The silver lining is that better outreach materials will be created for the District and the community to be used in the long term.

The COVID 'Stay Home, Stay Healthy' order has made it difficult to meet some contract deliverables. MarySutton said her work is focused on those deliverables and working with the funding sources for acceptable solutions. There is a potential for virtual tours and webinar sessions. Some grants have been extended. She is working with others regarding the acceptance of timeline extensions. The WSU Food Hub assessment needs as related to ag and food distribution may be a good role for the District to fill. MarySutton and Sandy are looking into grants to help with this.

Patrick reported he is also transitioning his project workload during the COVID situation. The Upper Wenatchee Pilot Project work hasn't slowed down much as contractors continue to move forward. This project covers about 75,000 acres in the Plain and Lake Wenatchee area. There have been

regular meetings with the project workgroup, and quarterly meetings with the forest health collaborative. Meetings have been conducted through Zoom calls so that information needs are met.

There are about six or seven applications in for FireWise work. There is more demand than available funding at this time. A contract extension was requested. Forest Health phone conference meetings continue on a weekly basis.

The Joint Chiefs project is working with multiple landowners to get a larger forest thinning project done. Ten landowners have completed treatment on about 140 acres. There is a little funding left over to develop additional landowner projects.

Work continues to have a free brush drop off day at the Chelan transfer station. There has been a recent statewide push to open the brush drop-off sites, as all of them are currently closed.

Temporary Part-Time Technician: A part-time technician is needed to work on tasks for the Department of Ecology (DOE) project. The job would be about 20 hours a week, from June through October. The Board was asked to approve advertising and filling the position.

M/S/C Junell moved and Dillon seconded to approve hiring a temporary part-time technician.
(Unanimous)

Example COVID-19 Remote Work: The remote work plan is close to completion. The plan is located in the COVID folder on the server and accessible to staff as they need it.

Lake Chelan Water Quality Monitoring Funding Support: The District has provided funds to support the Lake Chelan Research Institute (LCRI) for the last three years. The LCRI group is gathering data on the aquatic invasive species and water quality in the lake. They have given the District details of the samplings, frequency and findings during that three-year period. Chelan County Natural Resource Department is requesting \$5,000 for LCRI to continue the monitoring work. The Board asked for a time frame for the monitoring work as well as an agreement between the District and CCNRD.

M/S/C Junell moved and Amy seconded to approve the payment of \$5,000 and development of the agreement between the District and Chelan County Natural Resource Department for monitoring conducted by the Lake Chelan Resource Institute. (Unanimous)

Mobile Mapping Interlocal Agreement: A FEMA grant was received by the fire districts for property assessments and development of a standard form, and database to store the information. A deliverable for the District would be home assessments and participation in the development of the mobile mapping program. Approval for an interlocal agreement for mobile mapping between multiple Chelan County fire districts, RiverCom911, and Cascadia is requested.

M/S/C Junell moved and Amy seconded to approve the Mobile Mapping Interlocal Agreement.
(Unanimous)

Grant Applications / Contracts: There was a brief discussion on potential grant applications that would include jointly working with partners on resource projects and helping farmers.

NEW BUSINESS

Draft Annual Plan Review: The Board was asked to review the draft Annual Plan and let Peggy know of any edits to be included. Mike will check with staff for any updates needed. Once the requested changes have been made, the draft will be emailed to Board and staff for a final review and approval at the next meeting. The Annual Plan is due to the Conservation Commission by May 31.

Set May Meeting Date and Agenda: After a brief discussion, the next meeting will be a Special Meeting, May 22, at 1:30, via conference call.

The meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved hiring a temporary part-time technician;

Approved the payment of \$5,000 and development of the agreement between the District and Chelan County Natural Resource Department for monitoring conducted by the Lake Chelan Resource Institute;

Approved the Mobile Mapping Interlocal Agreement.

CHAIR _____

OFFICE ASSISTANT _____