

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
Columbia Conference Room & Zoom Meeting ID: 987 6961 1557
14 N Mission St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday, June 18, 2021
1:30 p.m.**

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

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

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

Ryan announced that the Public Hearing scheduled for today's meeting is cancelled. It will be rescheduled.

Consent Agenda: Approve the Minutes of the May 21, 2021 Regular Meeting, approve the Treasurer's Report, and authorize payment of bills.

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

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (WSCC) REPORT – Mike Baden

The Commission approved the budget for Implementation grants of about \$117,000 per district. The Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) revisions were also approved by the Commission. Each district can apply for equal shares of this fund with the potential to add projects later.

Additional funding of about \$1.5 million for wildfire recovery is available but there is expected to be a lot of competition between the districts for this money. As part of the Commission's Hazard Mitigation training grant, they will be providing funding to conduct home assessments starting sometime in July. The folks that took the training will be able to practice what they have learned.

Kudos to the District for getting the Commission financial reports in on time. The Commission appreciates Valerie's assistance to Foster Creek in getting their financial reports completed on time as well. It is great to see districts helping each other. As a reminder, the Orca funding report is due.

Election revisions are out for comment. Comments should be submitted by July 9. Separating the mail-in ballots versus the poll site ballots is one of the revisions. The Commission created a smaller annual report this year without individual District highlights but has decided to bring back the 1-page highlights for the next report. Expect to hear more this summer. The task order funds were increased to \$225,000 which makes available more money for match.

OLD BUSINESS

Conservation Commission Projects: Staff are wrapping up fiscal year end reports and starting work on new applications. Liz and Patrick are currently conducting assessments for some of the new applications.

Project Updates by Region:

Lake Chelan Basin: The Chelan Planning Unit met after the last District meeting. The agenda items covered were for the ‘Keep It Blue Lake Chelan’ campaign.

Entiat Watershed: The Habitat Subcommittee met yesterday but was not well attended. Ken has conducted drone flights for monitoring purposes, project photos and grant photos. The District received word that we didn’t receive the WaterSMART grant for outreach work in the Entiat.

Wenatchee Watershed: Patrick coordinated a tour of the Upper Wenatchee Pilot Project area for Representative Kim Schrier. She had not been to the project area before. There were many questions asked and information was shared about needed forestry assistance. Topics included the chipping program, the Forest Health Collaborative and air curtain burners. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the project is almost finished.

Southern Chelan County (Water Resource Inventory Area [WRIA] 40): The District recently coordinated some clean up events in this area, pulling tires and multiple dumpster loads of trash out of Squilchuck Creek.

Grant Applications:

WA State Archives Records Management Grant: A grant application period is currently open to apply for funds to help with records management. Ryan is working on the application, which is due at the end of the month.

Grant Contracts:

WSCC Addenda & NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP): The following contracts need Board approval: the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) grants for the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI), Implementation (IM), Irrigation Efficiencies (IE), and Hazard Mitigation programs; and the NRCS RCPP contract.

M/S/C Dillon moved and Kurt seconded to approve the following grant contracts: WSCC’s Natural Resource Inventory, Implementation, Irrigation Efficiencies, and Hazard Mitigation contracts; and the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program contract pending Junell’s final review. (Unanimous)

No Child Left Inside Grant (NCLI): The District received \$75,000 to continue youth education activities for the Kids in the Creek (KITC) and Kids in the Forest (KITF) programs. Ryan asked the Board to approve his signature on the contract.

M/S/C Kurt moved and Jim seconded to approve Ryan’s signature on the NCLI contract. (Unanimous)

Cost Share Contract Completion and Payment Approval: The Germain Orca project on Brender Creek has been completed and certified. The Board was asked to approve the completion and cost share payment of \$900.00.

M/S/C Dillon moved and Kurt seconded to approve the completion and cost share payment for the Germain Orca project. (Unanimous)

Annual Financial Report Updates: The Annual Financial Report to the State Auditor's Office was completed with one day to spare. Valerie also assisted Foster Creek with their report.

Election Updates: The election was conducted on June 9. More ads than the required minimum were placed in the newspaper as well as online to encourage folks to come vote. The election report was submitted to the Commission. Dillon is the apparent winner, with a total of two votes.

Blazer Update: Ryan received a quote of \$2,000 to get the Blazer running. Additional repair needs may be identified after it can be started. The District is waiting for third-party appraisal information from Enduris. Ryan and the Board discussed the available options for the Blazer and providing a vehicle for Mark to use, as well as where to store it when not in use.

Local Workgroup Meeting Update: The meeting was hosted by NRCS on June 8. Attendance was lower than in past years. The top priority chosen this year is livestock watering. The number two priority is degraded plant health, which also covers forest health. Rangeland was a priority last year but was not offered as a choice this year. The allocation of funds is changing from regional pots to state-level funding, making competition for the funds more intense.

Personnel Update:

Resource Specialist II Update: The Resource Specialist II ad has been posted in many locations and a few applications have been received. Ryan is considering extending the application deadline.

Stewardship Forester Application: The ad for this position just started circulating. Ryan will bring information about the responses to the next meeting. The Stewardship Forester position is new and will need a pay scale on the schedule. Ryan would like to mirror the Resource Specialist II and Project Coordinator II scales.

M/S/C Jim moved and Dillon seconded to approve the new Stewardship Forester position pay scale.
(Unanimous)

NEW BUSINESS

Policies: Cost Share Policy for 2021-2023 Biennium: Ryan and the Board briefly talked about the new biennium cost share policy. Ryan recommended rolling the policy forward with minor highlighting changes. There are already four or five persons interested in the Irrigation Efficiencies program. The Board was asked to approve the cost share policy for 2021-2023 Biennium.

M/S/C Kurt moved and Dillon seconded to approve the Cost Share Policy for 2021-2023 Biennium.
(Unanimous)

Executive Director's Report:

Bank Signature and Authorization Cards: The signature card for the bank will need to make the rounds to all the Board Members since we have a new Board Member. The Commission's authorization form will also need to be redone.

Chipping Insurance Update: Ryan and the Board discussed a spring chipping program error that occurred and how to remedy the situation. The Board recommended a letter of apology, payment for damages and signatures on an agreement that the matter is resolved. Future chipping

events will have changes to the contract language to include holding the contractor accountable for their mistakes.

M/S/C Kurt moved and Dillon seconded to approve a letter of apology for the chipping program error, payment of damages and a signed agreement recognizing resolution of the matter. (Unanimous)

Insurance for Educational Programs: The District liability insurance won't cover facility rental for the education program Kirk is currently working on, primarily due to language in the agreement that places primary responsibility for the students on the District rather than the school district's after-school program. The summer camp water activities were planned at the YMCA camp. The facility is well suited for the classes, with lifeguards and staff on site. There is not enough time before the scheduled outing to bring the request to the school district to rent the facility and be reimbursed for the costs. The Board recommended discussing an interlocal agreement with the school board to solve the liability problem for future activities.

Jim left the meeting at 3:05 pm.

Juneteenth Federal Holiday: Congress passed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act a few days ago, establishing June 19th as a federal holiday. Most federal employees are out today as a result. The State will also begin observing Juneteenth next year. The District generally follows the federal holiday schedule with the exception of Columbus Day. Instead, an additional paid holiday is provided the day after Thanksgiving. The Board was asked to consider whether to include Juneteenth as a paid holiday in the future.

Additional Updates: Once the decision is made regarding federal holidays, the employee handbook will be updated to reflect any changes. Grant composite billing rates and budgets will be updated to reflect the changes as well.

Ryan continues to meet with Chelan County Natural Resource Department to collaborate on resource needs in the county.

The transition to returning to in-office work is one of the topics discussed at staff meetings. Other considerations are the use of masks and keeping a simple record of those who certify they are vaccinated to fulfill the requirements of L&I. For now, the goal is to make the staff comfortable with coming back to the office.

Wenatchee World Building Update: The building will have a new owner, and they reportedly want to keep the current tenants. The District's lease agreement is through May 2022. Any potential changes will be brought to the Board's attention.

Set July 2021 Regular District Meeting Date and Agenda: The next Regular Meeting is Friday, July 16, 2021, at 1:30.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved the following grant contracts: WSCC's Natural Resource Inventory, Implementation, Irrigation Efficiencies, and Hazard Mitigation contracts; and the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program contract pending Junell's final review;
Approved Ryan's signature on the NCLI contract;
Approved the completion and cost share payment for the Germain Orca project;
Approved the new Stewardship Forester position pay scale;
Approved the Cost Share Policy for 2021-2023 Biennium;
Approved a letter of apology for the chipping program error, payment of damages and a signed agreement recognizing resolution of the matter.

CHAIR_____

OFFICE ASSISTANT_____