

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING**

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/93951572396?pwd=WIRvL1JXSjh3M3hCMUFmWTFLcDd1Zz09>

14 N Mission St.

Wenatchee, WA 98801

Friday, August 21, 2020

1:30 p.m.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Josh Koempel, Chair.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Baden, WSCC; Chris Wright, NRCS; and the following District staff: Peggy Entzel, Valerie Hampton, Sandy Letzing, Patrick Haggerty, MarySutton Carruthers and Nada Wentz. All attendees were present via Zoom Meeting / conference call.

Junell Wentz, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m.

Consent Agenda:

Approve the Minutes of the July 17, 2020 Regular District Meeting, approve the Treasurer's Report, and authorize payment of bills including the Haiduc Cost Share payment.

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

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT – Chris Wright

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for 2020 should be finished by the end of August. There are three Conservation Stewardship Program contracts for Chelan County. Chris was told that once the new fiscal year begins, there will be more money for cultural resource task order work for the District. The 2021 Farm Bill deadline for new applications looks to be this fall, around Thanksgiving. Austin Shero was hired to fill the Area Conservationist position previously held by Alan McBee.

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (WSCC) REPORT – Mike Baden

The Commission continues to monitor the budget situation. It is not looking like there will be a special session this year. The Commission settled on a \$5 million budget package request when the actual need is \$29 million. A special Commission meeting will be held to discuss a 15% cut in the budget in the next biennium. The information will be presented to districts in a webinar. For now, there is a plan to go forward to protect implementation grants as much as possible.

The changes to District elections in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) have gone through the public hearings process. The Commission will be looking at that and voting in September. Folks in control of District elections will have mandatory training. COVID related situations will be included in that training. There will be more information after the September meeting.

A memo went out to districts soliciting feedback about the State Department of Fish & Wildlife's to have a voting position on the Conservation Commission. The deadline for feedback is the end of October.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Peggy Entzel

Phil Jones, a former staff member, passed away in July. He was one of the first employees hired in the early days of the Entiat watershed project.

OLD BUSINESS

Project Updates: Implementation work is ongoing. Sandy said that one cost share project is closed out. There are two more cost share projects to complete. A Department of Ecology (DOE) riparian project is starting next week.

MarySutton reported that Irrigation Efficiencies is ongoing. The District is considering a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) proposal. It is due November 4 but it is still in the preliminary stages.

Patrick gave an update on the FEMA project at Scout-A-Vista. Environmental assessments are currently in progress. He also noted that the Upper Wenatchee project draft environmental assessment will be out for review in September.

Status Update on COVID-19 Response Plan and Possible Return to Work Timeline: The COVID status remains the same, working from home and masks required when in the building.

Program Director Hiring Update: Three interviews were conducted. The choices have been narrowed down to two candidates. The panel hopes to have a second interview with the two candidates next week, then make a choice. The Board was asked to designate a Board member to make the hiring decision. Junell offered if Josh is not available.

M/S/C Amy moved and Dillon seconded authorizing Junell to make the final hiring decision following the second interview for the Program Director position. (Unanimous)

Mission Project Amicus Brief Update: As a member of the Forest Health Collaborative, Cascadia was asked to review the document in support of a project in Okanogan County. The draft from the attorney was shared with Josh and Jim. Lorah Super and Craig Nelson of Okanogan CD were supportive of the draft. Josh was designated to make the decision, but he deferred to the Board should they be comfortable supporting the letter.

M/S/C Jim moved and Dillon seconded to approve acceptance and support of the Mission Project Amicus Brief. (Unanimous)

Grant Applications / Contracts: The RCPP and DOE applications were mentioned earlier. The Chelan County PUD is interested in putting together a master agreement that allows work orders to be developed with the District. They are interested in partnering for fire risk reduction work. The District was invited to put in a small proposal with Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) for Department of Natural Resources (DNR) funding benefiting forest health and fire response. It is a

small contract that leads to the implementation of those projects. The existing agreement covers the facilitation of local meetings.

NEW BUSINESS

Western Rivers Conservancy Request for Letter of Support for US Forest Service (USFS)

Grant Application: Patrick and the Board discussed the request, the history of the land purchased by the Western Rivers Conservancy, the concerns surrounding the short / long term goals of the community forest plan, the tax implications and the funding options. The Board asked to review the plan before making a decision. Patrick will send the plan to the Board for review.

The Board agreed that the District's role should be to continue providing technical assistance for private landowners. After further discussion, the Board decided to draft a letter stating the District's mission to provide technical assistance to private landowners. Once the plan is reviewed, the letter will be sent to all the Board Members for review. Following review and agreement of all the Board Members, the position letter will be sent out.

M/S/C Jim moved and Amy seconded to approve preparation of a draft District mission statement letter to Western Rivers Conservancy supporting their USFS grant application, pending review of the plan approval by the Board members. (Unanimous)

Set September Meeting Date and Agenda: The next Regular Meeting is on Friday, September 18, at 1:30. Information will be provided later as to whether the meeting will be in person or a conference call.

The meeting adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

- Approved the Consent Agenda;
- Authorizing Junell to make the final hiring decision following the second interview for the Program Director position Approved;
- Approved acceptance and support of the Mission Project Amicus Brief;
- Approved preparation of a draft District mission statement letter to Western Rivers Conservancy supporting their USFS grant application, pending review of the plan approval by the Board members.

VICE CHAIR _____

OFFICE ASSISTANT _____