

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
SPECIAL DISTRICT MEETING
Zoom Meeting ID: 987 6961 1557
1350 McKittrick St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday February 23, 2024
1:30 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Junell Wentz, Chair (Zoom); Dillon Miller, Vice-Chair (In-Person); Kurt Hosman, Member (In-Person).

ABSENT: Amy Bridges, Auditor; and Pete Teigen, Member

OTHERS PRESENT: Toby McKay (In-Person), Michael Scisco (Zoom), Paul D’Agnolo (Zoom); and the following District Staff were present in-person: Ryan Williams, Val Hampton, Elizabeth Jackson, and Nada Wentz.

Junell Wentz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

Consent Agenda: Approve the January 19, 2024 Regular District Meeting Minutes, approve January Treasurer’s Report and authorize paying bills.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Kurt Hosman Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE: No Correspondence

PARTNER REPORTS: Hinterland Farms – Conservation Easement – Toby McKay, Paul D’Agnolo, and Michael Scisco

Paul D’Agnolo provided a slide presentation describing the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) and how it applies to the protection of agricultural (ag) lands by way of conservation easements. Paul’s role with the Commission serves as a contact for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Sponsorship (ACES) program. This is a voluntary agreement between landowners and an entity seeking to preserve the property’s conservation values, such as protecting ag land from non-ag land developments. He talked about the agencies involved with this program, the costs, the challenges, and the time commitment it takes to get from point A to point B. Agencies involved are the Conservation Commission, the Recreation Conservation Office, the conservation district and the landowner. At the end of the process, the Commission is the easement holder and the landowner is paid for a conservation easement that preserves farmland, and reduces development potential.

Hinterland Farms is seeking a Conservation Easement. Lake Chelan is directly south of the Hinterland property. The goal is to protect the working farmlands, habitat and wildlife benefits. The District was asked to do an assessment of potential natural resource enhancements for the property. Other discussions followed regarding appraisals and landowner choices.

Ryan asked the Board members if they felt such a program was something they would like to pursue. Since the application window is only open every two years, Ryan already submitted an application. The Board agreed that it is a good program to pursue.

Paul D’Agnolo, Toby McKay, Michael Scisco and Elizabeth Jackson left the meeting at 2:41 p.m.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT: Frank Curtin
Not available for the meeting.

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (WSCC) REPORT: Mike Baden
Not available for the meeting.

GRANT APPLICATIONS, CONTRACT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

| Contracts and Grant Applications for Consideration at the February 23, 2024 board meeting | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Grant Applications | | | | | |
| Granting Agency | Title | Amount | | Activities | Action Needed |
| WSCC | Hinterlands Farms Conservation Easement | ~\$1,000,000 | | Pursue application of conservation easement | Approve application to WSCC for their sponsorship |
| WSCC | Manure Spreader Cost Share for Laurel's Crown Dairy | ~\$6000-7000 | | Pursue application for cost share on manure spreader for Laurel's Crown dairy | Approve application to WSCC for manure spreader |
| | | | | | |
| Grant Contracts | | | | | |
| Granting Agency | Contract Title | Duration | Amount | Activities | Action Needed |
| | | | | | |
| ILAs/MOUs/MOAs/Contracts | | | | | |
| Agreement Entity | Agreement Purpose | Duration | Financial Commitment | Activities | Action Needed |
| Eastmont School District | Hold Harmless Agreement | | None | Hold harmless for youth education activities with Eastmont School District | Approve Hold Harmless Agreement |
| The Nature Conservancy | Cultural Resource Services | 03/01/2024 - 06/30/2024 | ~\$14,000 | Contract to conduct survey on TNC owned property in Douglas County | Approve Executive Director Signature of Service contract |
| Landowner Agreements/Cost Share | | | | | |
| Landowner Name | Project Funding Source | Cost Share Rate | Amount | Activities | Action Needed |
| Aaron Piazza | WSCC RCPP | 47% | \$2,530 | Forest thinning on 1.5 acres | Approve Cost Share Agreement |
| James Chedister | WSCC RCPP | 22% | \$9,535.07 | Forest thinning on 11.5 acres | Approve Cost Share Agreement |
| Landowner Cost Share/Contract Payments | | | | | |
| Landowner Name | Project Funding Source | Cost Share Rate | Amount | Activities Completed | Action Needed |
| | | | | | |

Ryan and the Board discussed the contracts list.

M/S/C Dillon Miller moved to approve the grants and contracts list. Kurt Hosman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Review and Consider Updates to Cascadia Conservation District Operations Manual:

Ryan discussed the Operations Manual policies regarding potential part-time salaried positions, such as our archaeologist. Currently Kim’s position is on-call. The workload is dependent on the weather, making it difficult to work enough hours every month, especially during winter, to receive benefits as an hourly, on-call employee. Ryan is seeking to make it a salaried part-time position. Additional changes discussed included use-or-lose vacation at the end of the year, and the expectation that exchange time is to be used

before vacation time. He proposed changing the policy wording for these items, pages 43 – 69, to include a work agreement form about exchange time, update the vacation and exchange time carryover policy to allow an additional three months to use exchange time balances and vacation amounts that exceed the annual cap, and changing Kim’s part time archaeologist position to salaried with exchange time.

M/S/C Kurt Hosman moved to approve the updates to the Cascadia Conservation District Operations Manual. Dillon Miller seconded. Motion Passed unanimously.

Executive Director’s report:

Ryan emailed his report to the Board yesterday. Word was received that another DOE grant has been awarded. This one does not require matching funds. He also applied for funding for a community engagement and diversity inclusion plan with bilingual help. The Commission approved \$20,000 for this purpose. He reminded everyone about the upcoming March 13 Supervisor Election and Open House.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 3:15 p.m., the Board entered Executive Session for fifteen minutes to discuss an employee performance evaluation.

The Board resumed Regular Session at 3:30 p.m. No decisions were made.

March Meeting Date, Location and Time: The next meeting is a Regular Meeting on March 15, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. at the District office.

Ryan hopes to have an Executive Session to go over Employee Reviews at this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Grant Applications:

WSCC Hinterlands Farms Conservation Easement;
WSCC Manure Spreader Cost Share for Laurel’s Crown Dairy;

ILAs / MOUs / MOAs / Contracts:

Eastmont School District – Hold Harmless Agreement;
The Nature Conservancy – Cultural Resource Services;

Landowner Agreements/Cost Share:

Aaron Piazza – WSCC RCPP;
James Chedister – WSCC RCPP

Approved updates to the Cascadia Conservation District Operations Manual.

CHAIR_____

OFFICE ASSISTANT_____