

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
Zoom Meeting ID: 987 6961 1557
14 N Mission St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday, March 17, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Junell Wentz, Chair; Dillon Miller, Vice Chair; Amy Bridges, Auditor; M. Pete Teigen, Member.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kurt Hosman, Member.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Baden, WSCC; Frank Curtin, NRCS; and the following District staff: Ryan Williams, Valerie Hampton, and Nada Wentz. Attendees were present in person and via Zoom.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

Consent Agenda: Approve the February 17 Regular District Meeting minutes, approve the February Treasurer’s Report and authorize payment of bills.

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

CORRESPONDENCE: None

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT: Frank Curtin

Patrick and Joe have worked hard on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) boundary adjustment. National Headquarters approved the adjustment earlier this month. The work moves forward to ranking the eligible applications and getting the contracts ready for landowners.

The Inflation Reduction Act’s deadline is March 31 for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) applications. The next Local Working Group meeting is set for March 28, at 5 p.m. at the Chelan School District.

Pete requested that Frank talk about more types of projects at a future meeting.

Grant Application and Contract Review and Approval

The Board reviewed the information presented by Ryan.

M/S/C Pete moved and Dillon seconded to approve the following Grant, Services and Landowner Cost Share Contracts:

Grants and Services

Resource Conservation and Development Council for Washington State Fire Adapted Communities Network Learning (WAFAC) participation and fuels reduction;
Resource Conservation and Development Council to develop Spanish language outreach and materials.

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Task Order for Cultural Resources investigations
American Forest Management contract to prepare a forest stewardship plan for Sunitsch Canyon;
Northwest Youth Corps contract for field crew assistance with chipping and planting;

Landowner Cost Share

Bruce Long - NRI thinning;
Doug & Katherine Drew – SRF BDA / riparian enhancement
Cordelia Bradburn – SRF BDA / riparian enhancement
Julia & David O’Neill – SRF BDA / riparian enhancement
Strutzel – Fire Recovery fencing
Yonaka – Fire Recovery fencing; (Unanimous)

OTHER BUSINESS

Line of Credit: Approval from the Board is needed for the annual renewal for the Line of Credit.

M/S/C Dillon moved and Amy seconded to approve the 2023 Line of Credit renewal. (Unanimous)

Operations Manual: Ryan and the Board continued the discussion from the February meeting about edits and updates to the Operations Manual. Topic included sick leave, vacation leave carryover hours, a credit card limit increase, mileage reimbursement for Board members, the July 4 holiday as Independence Day, and setting the capital equipment inventory limit at \$5,000 as listed in existing policy instead of \$1,000.

Also discussed were the provision of cell phones for staff, the different plans available from Verizon; potential purchase of Garmin SOS emergency communications for staff when working in remote areas; and personal vehicle agreements when in use for District work. Additional changes be made at a later date as the need arises. The Board was asked to approve the Operations Manual as discussed.

M/S/C Amy moved and Pete seconded to approve the Operations Manual with the edits as discussed. (Unanimous)

Executive Director’s Report:

Ryan reported that the Conservation Commission fired executive director Chris Pettit on Thursday. Ron Schultz was named interim director. Craig Nelson, Okanogan CD director, drafted a letter thanking the Commission for listening to the concerns of the districts. Ryan was asked to sign the letter on behalf of Cascadia CD, and he asked the Board for their approval to sign. The Board agreed that it is appropriate to do so.

The House legislators decided at the last minute to divide the Riparian Buffer budget between the Commission and the Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO). The Governor didn’t agree, and the bill died. Ryan asked the Board their thoughts on drafting a letter to our legislators regarding the Riparian Buffer budget to say that the project is worth the investment and districts are the most economical way to get the work done. With Board approval, Ryan will draft a letter to send to our three representatives.

M/S/C Amy moved and Dillon seconded to approve sending the Riparian Buffer support letter to our District’s three representatives. (Unanimous)

Patrick is contacting local landfills about supporting free dump days. He has several potential areas he'd like to see join the efforts.

The Blazer is leaking oil and needs a number of repairs. Surplus or trade was briefly discussed. Ryan would like to get a truck big enough to safely haul the chipper, potentially with grant.

Staff updates include Patrick resigning from his current position sometime in June and shifting to an on-call position for approximately 1 year. After a discussion of the pros and cons, the Board agreed that Ryan should continue working with him to work remotely a few hours a month to stay connected. It would be necessary to hire someone to help with the workload of his position. Leave balances can be suspended until he returns and he would be considered a part-time/on call employee much like the District archaeologist positions. In addition, Nada asked to go to a 30 hour a week work schedule instead of full time. The Board was in agreement with Ryan approving this change.

The office space lease is awaiting attorney approval of the contract language. It is expected to be in place with a moving date sometime in August.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 3:30 p.m., The Board entered Executive Session for a half hour to discuss employee performance evaluations.

The Board resumed Regular Session at 4:00 p.m.

M/S/C Dillon moved and Pete seconded to approve employee reviews for Mark Ingman, Valerie Hampton, Nada Wentz, Kirk Beckendorf and Patrick Haggerty. (Unanimous)

Ryan will provide Annual Planning materials at the next Annual Planning meeting. Draft plans will be emailed to the Board members.

April 2023 Meeting Date and Agenda: The next Regular meeting is April 21, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved the following Grant, Services and Landowner Cost Share Contracts:

Grants and Services:

- Resource Conservation and Development Council for Washington State Fire Adapted Communities Network Learning (WAFAC) participation and fuels reduction;
- Resource Conservation and Development Council to develop Spanish language outreach and materials.

- Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Task Order for Cultural Resources investigations

- American Forest Management contract to prepare a forest stewardship plan for Sunitsch Canyon;
- Northwest Youth Corps contract for field crew assistance with chipping and planting;

Landowner Cost Share:

- Bruce Long - NRI thinning;

Doug & Katherine Drew – SRF BDA / riparian enhancement

Cordelia Bradburn – SRF BDA / riparian enhancement

Julia & David O’Neill – SRF BDA / riparian enhancement

Strutzel – Fire Recovery fencing

Yonaka – Fire Recovery fencing; (Unanimous)

Approved the 2023 Line of Credit renewal;

Approved the Operations Manual with the edits as discussed;

Approved sending the Riparian Buffer support letter to our District’s three representatives;

Approved employee reviews for Mark Ingman, Valerie Hampton, Nada Wentz, Kirk Beckendorf and Patrick Haggerty.

CHAIR _____

OFFICE ASSISTANT _____