



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: December 7, 2021; Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: Okanogan Conservation District Office, Okanogan, WA and Remotely via Microsoft Teams
FROM: Jess McDaniel, Administrative Assistant

PRESENT:

Ivan Oberg, District Chair – Present	Amy Martin, Conservation Director – Present
Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair – Present	Jess McDaniel, Administrative Assistant – Phone
Albert Roberts, District Auditor – Present	Mindy Untalan, Conservation Planner – Phone
Steve Colvin, Member – Present	Aaron Wold, Range Planner Lead – Phone
Lorah Super, Member – Present	Kim Kogler, Education Specialist – Phone
Gerri Oberg, Member – Present	Ricardo Angel, Natural Resource Technician – Phone
Craig Nelson, Executive Director – Present	Rena Shawver, Marketing & Comm. Specialist – Phone
Becky Drenner, Finance Director – Phone	Faith VanDePutte, AgForestry Leadership Program – Phone

Meeting Call to Order: Ivan Oberg called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Ivan completed a roll call of Supervisors, Associate Supervisors, staff, partners, and the public.

Agenda Approval: Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the agenda as presented. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the November 2, 2021, board meeting minutes as presented. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report #823, which covers the checking account activity from November 3, 2021, to December 7, 2021, inclusive was presented for the Board's approval, the following checks/payroll direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

Checks – numbers 11847 – 11854 totaling \$8,247.80.

Two payroll direct withdrawals – numbers ACH4127 – ACH4144 totaling \$28,508.38.

Electronic payments – numbers EFT2948 – EFT2964 totaling \$31,077.93.

Deposits totaling \$80,504.57 were made.

Albert Roberts moved to approve Treasurer's Report #823 as amended. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Albert Roberts – Albert reported having attended the WACD Annual Meeting in person along with Craig.

Ivan Oberg – Ivan reminisced about his time with the district and a decision that he considered pivotal for the organization. Ivan asked that the other board supervisors consider when they might have made a critical decision for the district's benefit.

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry reported he attended the Cattleman's Meeting and that there were a few small earthquakes over the weekend in the Tonasket area.

Lorah Super – Lorah reported having met with the Department of Ecology about the water bank grant application and confirmed the district meets the requirements of the application process. Lorah also participated in the WACD Annual Meeting. Lorah added that the Forest Health Collaborative is engaging with the forest restoration strategy again, working to bring it current.

Steve Colvin – Steve reported 4 inches of rain in November and added that the harvest went well.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

No associate supervisors were present.

Staff Report:

Craig reported that he and Rena have been working on the long-range plan, having published a survey for staff, supervisors, and the public to fill out. Craig added that, with the 2022 Prius being delivered today, the district has taken possession of its second new vehicle.

Becky reported that the 2022 budget has been completed and she will be moving on with election planning and organization. Becky also informed that when staff are out in field, they often get questions about whether the district can accept donations. Becky has been engaged with the State Auditor's Office for guidance on receiving donations and determining the best third-party option for processing donation transactions.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans

Ecology PNA Grant Award-Clean Air Alternatives to Burning – Mindy reported that staff had requested \$319,994.50 from the Department of Ecology and the district received the full funding request. The grant will be active as soon as the contract is full signed and will end June 30, 2023. Mindy explained there are three main components to the grant. The first is community chipping where the district will coordinate with municipalities and neighborhoods to implement 10 chipping events to dispose of backyard leaves and brush. There will be 3 events in the City of Okanogan, 6 events in Okanogan County, prioritizing the ORAP boundary, and 1 event in Twisp coordinated in conjunction with FAMV. The second component will consist of smoke-free yard waste disposal where the district will partner with the Okanogan County Public Works Solid Waste Division (OCPWSWD) and Fire Adapted Methow Valley (FAMV) to hold 6 smoke-free yard waste disposal seasonal events for county residents in the ORAP boundary and the Methow Valley. The third component will consist of the district partnering with a local business to purchase 7 small mulchers as well as the staff time to develop a pilot program for a

sustainable mulcher rental program as another alternative to reduce backyard burning. Currently, no businesses or organizations rent small mulchers to chippers in Okanogan County. The district will advertise the availability of the equipment rentals to residents with 8 school gardens having access to the equipment free of charge. Jerry asked about a disclosure when renting the mulchers, to which Craig and Mindy responded that the disclaimer would be provided by the business with which the district partners. Lorah Super moved to approve the Ecology PNA-Clean Air Alternatives to Burning in the Okanogan grant and authorize Craig Nelson or Ivan Oberg to sign the contract with Department of Ecology when it is has been received. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

NFWF Conservation Partner Program Agreement – Amy informed that the district has been awarded a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant for the Conservation Partners Program application titled Partnering with Producers to Restore Instream Flow in the Methow and Okanogan River Basins (WA). The project will provide technical assistance for IWM and irrigation planning in watersheds that support salmon or steelhead. District staff will coordinate with NRCS and other partners to facilitate irrigation upgrade implementation. The funds awarded total \$115,656.15 with match funding totaling \$130,000.00 from Irrigation Efficiencies and other instream flow work. The project period is from August 1, 2021 through July 31, 2024. In addition to the grant contract staff is requesting signature authorization for the NRCS Acknowledgement of Section 1619 Compliance, which prohibits disclosure of some information to be collected from individuals for their projects. Lorah Super moved to approve the NFWF Agreement #72648 and authorize Ivan Oberg to sign it. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Jerry Asmussen moved to authorize Ivan Oberg to sign the NRCS Acknowledgement of Section 1619 Compliance form. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Convis Ecology Project-Timber Barrier/Riparian Planting – Aaron informed that the Convis project location is a riparian area approximately 2 acres in size along 860 feet of Sourdough Creek. The area is within open range and is prone to heavy use by cattle, which trample and consume wetland vegetation, erode the wet hillside through hoof shear, and contaminate the water resource through defecation. Aaron went on to say that the structure and purpose of this project is to protect 2 acres of riparian vegetation from cattle on the landowner's property. The landowner will install traditional fencing along the north, west, and south boundaries of the project area (not reimbursable). With assistance from the landowner in the form of time and equipment, district staff will install a jackstraw timber barrier made up of dead and standing timber sourced from the property. The timber barrier will be located along the eastern boundary of the project area and will be constructed to a standard that will exclude cattle from the riparian area for a minimum of 10 years. District staff will monitor and maintain the timber barrier for the first 2 years. The landowner agrees to monitor and maintain the barrier for the remaining lifespan (8 years). After the fence and timber barrier are installed district staff will install riparian shrubs within the 2-acre riparian area to help jump start vegetation recovery. Aaron added that a separate cost-share agreement will be developed with a local producer to install water development that will feed a trough outside of the fencing on the landowner's property to help reduce the impact of cattle on the creek up- and downstream of the project area. Installation will occur in the spring and summer of 2022.

Jerry asked about the status of the other timber barrier projects. Aaron informed that the Cook project has been started and will need a few gaps filled but the other project has not been started. Jerry asked what types of trees would be used in the Convis project. Aaron commented that most of the trees are fir and some pine, to which Jerry added the pine will not last. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the Convis timber barrier/riparian planting project contract and authorize Craig Nelson or Ivan Oberg to sign it once the landowner has signed it. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

NRCS Report

Sarah Troutman sent her report via email, and it was presented to those present.

Partner Reports

No partners were present.

Public Comment:

Faith VanDePutte was present via Teams and expressed interest in the WACD resolution allowing cost share funds for soil carbon amendment. Faith informed that she is a farmer on Lopez Island in the San Juans. She is part of an AgForestry policy group looking at how to support biochar through policy. Lorah thanked Faith for the interest and support in the policy. Craig informed that the resolution did pass at the state level so the state will be working with NRCS to get the practice approved.

Old Business:

Water Bank Update – Craig informed the district has received funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission to hire a contractor to work with staff to get a water bank up and running. The funding is available, and staff have begun initial discussions with the legal representative of a water right holder. Craig added that it is important to show that such guidance is readily available to assure stakeholders that the district has the technical capacity, either on staff or secured through contract, to obtain a water right and see it through to the water bank and beyond. Albert Roberts moved to authorize Craig Nelson to hire a contractor for assistance with water bank development and water right acquisition. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Resolution 2021-05 Set Board Election Date – Becky informed that Steve Colvin is up for election and Lorah Super is up for appointment. The Board selected March 8, 2022, as the election date. Staff would like to begin advertising. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve Resolution 2021-05 adopting the election resolution, authorizing Ivan Oberg to sign it. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2021-06 Set 2022 District Board Meeting Dates – Craig offered that 2022 board meeting dates and times be set for the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM. Lorah Super moved to approve Resolution 2021-06 setting the 2022 board meeting dates and times, authorizing Ivan Oberg to sign it. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

2022 Budget-Final – Becky presented the final 2022 budget for board approval. There are a couple grants that are not in the budget including the COCO AIM grant for \$50,000.00 and the 3-year NFWF-CPP grant. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the 2022 final budget. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

2022 Conservation Celebration Proposal – Craig presented a proposal, written by Randy, for a 2022 Conservation Celebration. Based on concerns regarding staffing and workload Randy has offered to spearhead the organization of the event if the board wishes to proceed. Randy proposes a celebration theme of “A Quarter Century of Conservation Activities with the Okanogan Conservation District.” Lorah Super moved to authorize Randy Kelley to proceed with determining the feasibility of planning a 2022 district conservation celebration. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

NACD Annual Meeting Attendance – Craig informed that the district’s resolution regarding changes to the FSA Emergency Conservation Program passed at the WACD Annual Meeting and that being available at the NACD meeting where it will be considered would be helpful to the Washington State delegation because he is familiar with the details of questions that are likely to be asked. Craig went on to say that the total, with registration and travel, will be approximately \$2,600.00, which will be covered by Rates & Charges and a few other grants. Jerry Asmussen moved to authorize Craig Nelson to attend the 2022 NACD Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

COVID-19 Vaccination Policy – Craig informed that the Washington State Department of Natural Resources communicated to the district that Governor Jay Inslee’s Proclamation 21-14-2 COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement, requires their contractors to comply with the requirements of the proclamation. The district is one of the contractors DNR believes must comply with the rule. If the district does not file a declaration that we are requiring all project personnel and sub-contractors to be fully vaccinated or qualify for a medical or sincerely held religious belief exemption, then the district will not be allowed to charge to grants that have been awarded. As it currently stands, project implementation funded by DNR is currently on hold until a decision is made regarding whether the district will comply with the vaccination proclamation and implement the necessary policy, which will have to be developed. Craig added that if the district chooses not to implement a vaccination policy it will cancel the remainder of its current Joint Chief’s project as well as make it unlikely to have access to other grant funds provided by DNR in the foreseeable future. Lorah Super moved to authorize Craig Nelson to develop the necessary policy to require staff vaccination against COVID-19 as well as how to apply for a medical or sincerely held religious belief exemption. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session-Discuss Personnel Evaluations – Ivan called the executive session at 7:20 PM for 20 minutes. At 7:40 PM the executive director informed the board would need an additional 10 minutes, and then an additional 5 minutes. At 7:56 PM the board returned to public session. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve personnel evaluations as presented and to approve the following wage/status changes to take effect January 1, 2022:

- Ricardo Angel, salary range 44, step C, non-exempt status, \$20.78 per hour, promoted from technician to planner with the requirement of planner training completion
- Becky Drenner, salary range 60, step C, exempt status, \$30.93 per hour
- Kim Kogler, salary range 46, step E, non-exempt status, \$22.91 per hour
- Amy Martin, salary range 60, step E, exempt status, \$32.48 per hour
- Jess McDaniel, salary range 40, step D, non-exempt status, \$19.37 per hour
- Craig Nelson, salary range 65, step E, exempt status, \$37.70 per hour
- Mindy Untalan, salary range 49, step G, exempt status, \$26.01 per hour
- Aaron Wold, salary range 49, step C, regular, non-exempt status, \$23.47 per hour

Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ivan Oberg adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Summary of Motions

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the agenda as presented. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the November 2, 2021, board meeting minutes as presented. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Albert Roberts moved to approve Treasurer's Report #823 as amended. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the Ecology PNA-Clean Air Alternatives to Burning in the Okanogan grant and authorize Craig Nelson or Ivan Oberg to sign the contract with Department of Ecology when it is has been received. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the NFWF Agreement #72648 and authorize Ivan Oberg to sign it. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the Convis timber barrier/riparian planting project contract and authorize Craig Nelson or Ivan Oberg to sign it once the landowner has signed it. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Albert Roberts moved to authorize Craig Nelson to hire a contractor for assistance with water bank development and water right acquisition. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve Resolution 2021-05 adopting the election resolution and authorizing Ivan Oberg to sign it. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve Resolution 2021-06 setting the 2022 board meeting dates and times and authorizing Ivan Oberg to sign it. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the 2022 final budget. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to authorize Randy Kelley to proceed with determining feasibility of planning the 2022 district conservation celebration as proposed. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

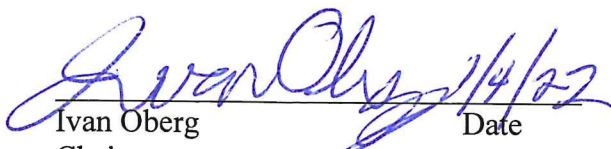
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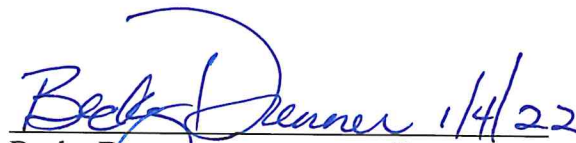
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Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.


Ivan Oberg
Chair

Date


Becky Drenner
Finance Director

Date