



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: March 3, 2020 Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: Okanogan Conservation District office, Okanogan, WA
FROM: Jess McDaniel, Administrative Assistant

PRESENT:

Ivan Oberg, District Chair
Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair
Albert Roberts, District Auditor
Lorah Super, Member
Craig Nelson, Executive Director
Becky Drenner, Finance Director

Gerri Oberg, Associate Supervisor
Hannah Coe, Conservation Planner
Kim Kogler, Education Specialist
Jess McDaniel, Administrative Assistant
Ben Carroll, Range Planner
Sarah Troutman, NRCS

Meeting Call to Order: Ivan Oberg called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Agenda Approval: Staff asked to remove the City of Okanogan Chipping ILA from the Review, Approve, and Sign Contract and Conservation plans section of the agenda, and asked to add an Executive Session for employee performance review as the last item on the agenda. Albert Roberts moved to approve the agenda as amended. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Lorah Super moved to approve the February 4, 2020 board meeting minutes as amended. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report #802, which covers the checking account activity from February 5, 2020 to March 3, 2020, inclusive was presented for the Board's approval. The following checks/payroll direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

Checks – numbers 11579 – 11596 totaling \$18,595.40.

Payroll direct withdrawal - numbers ACH3691 – ACH3714 totaling \$28,707.93.

Electronic payments - numbers EFT2667 – EFT2679 totaling \$25,069.06.

Deposits totaling \$58,971.84 were made.

Albert Roberts moved to approve Treasurer's Report #802. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry reported the first calf arrived the day before yesterday. He went on to say it is nice to be in the calving yard without all the mud. He ended his report by mentioning

that he had attended a meeting where a couple of ranchers showed interest in the Conservation District owning a no-till drill to loan out.

Lorah Super – Lorah reported that their hay had run out, but they found more. Fire season is not looking good without winter moisture. Ecology has a working group to start studying out of basin water transfers; of note there is still no protection against out of basin water transfers currently. FHC has a steering meeting where long-term stewardship contracts are being discussed with Tapash. Lorah added that she has been asked to participate with another effort taking small diameter wood and other debris to make biochar to give to farmers. She attended their first board meeting last week. Lorah concluded by adding that she is involved as a chair with the Resilient Methow group, looking at climate change in the Methow area.

Albert Roberts - Albert reported calving and kidding season has started. Roads are drying out. The soil still has enough moisture to dig holes and trenches. The County Comprehensive plan update is moving slowly.

Ivan Oberg – Ivan reported they made it home the first part of February. He stated they saw a kingbird the other day at home in Havillah and thought he spotted a robin as well, which all seems a little early.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

No associate supervisors were present.

Staff Report:

Craig Nelson reported that he will be meeting with Senator Shelly Short, Representatives Joel Kretz and Jacquelyn Maycumber and representatives of the Okanogan County Farm Bureau on Monday to discuss the status of the Okanogan Watershed Planning effort. There are concerns that the Planning Unit may not have clear guidance on expectations and requirements. They wish to meet with Craig to go over their understanding of the legislation and legal requirements so he may better assist the Planning Unit with accomplishing goals that will be approved and represent local needs.

Next week is the District election and Schedule 22. The election will be on Wednesday, March 11, 2020 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the District office. Will Keller will be assisting Becky as the second polling officer. Following the election, we will conduct our Schedule 22 – Internal Audit in the District office. We can have one more supervisor, in addition to Albert, attend the Schedule 22 with Becky, Mike Baden, and I.

Craig, Kirsten, and Mindy will be meeting with DNR and Commission staff on Thursday, March 12 at the District office to discuss CD/DNR partnerships. We are hoping to discuss with DNR how we can be better at collaborating with each other on forest health, fire preparedness, and fire recovery.

Craig added that he has contacted a gentleman whom he met at the NACD Annual meeting who invited conservation districts in shrub steppe habitat to reach out to him for funding.

Lorah Super asked where the Barkley Irrigation project stood, and Craig reported that the district has not heard anything new in about two weeks but there was still some hesitation on the part of Barkley because they do not want to sign the 25-year maintenance agreement.

Kim reported on the Conservation Celebration, stating that invitations will go out in rounds; first round has about 45-50 invitees. There are six awards being given out this year: Conservation Partner, Sustainability Star, Lifetime Conservation Achievement, Conservation Teacher, Conservation Excellence, and Wildlife Habitat Farm of the Year. Kim went on to say that Envirothon is on April 29 at Filaree Fruit and registration forms have been sent out. She concluded by informing the board that Maya Woods of Watershine Woods donated \$603.90 to the district, which was 10% of her sales of small, decorative trees made from various types of wood. Maya requested that these funds go towards riparian planting projects.

Ben reported for Amy that the Soil Health Workshop went well, was well attended, and that the speaker was animated and entertaining. On his end, Ben added that the Western SARE video interviews, which are in a farmer to farmer discussion format, went well.

Hannah presented information regarding instream habitat work and riparian planning for a pre-proposal to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. The project would be on Loup Loup Creek and we are in step one of the application process.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans

Albin Cost Share LOA – Hannah presented the project, which is a riparian planting area along Omak Creek with a 75-foot buffer, to protect steelhead in the creek. She added that we are waiting on cultural resources to occur and for ground to soften up a little bit. Lorah Super moved to approve the cost share for LD Albin for \$4,605.24 and authorize Ivan or Craig to sign the contract. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed with Albert Roberts recusing himself from this vote.

Strong Cost Share LOA – Hannah presented the project, which is a riparian planting area along No Name Creek near Omak Lake. It has a smaller buffer of 50 feet because there are no ESA species present in that creek. The plan is to first put in a small terrace for stabilization, and then plant. Albert Roberts suggested a ripper shank be used to loosen up the soil because it was used as horse pasture for an extended period so is very compacted. Lorah Super moved to approve the Strong cost share for \$6,022.34 and authorize Ivan or Craig to sign the contract. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

NRCS Report

Sarah Troutman reported that program rules have been approved. The Local Work Group needs to approve priority watersheds. Of note regarding Conservation Stewardship Program, state and federal lands are now eligible. The EQIP sign up deadline is April 3. David Rose from the Chehalis office is filling in as Acting Central Area Conservationist, which is supposed to be a 30-day appointment. Field training for CRP field check will occur April 14. National civil rights review is coming up and it is time for a refresher.

Partner Reports

There were no partners present.

Public Comments:

There was no public comment.

Old Business:

Other – There was no other old business.

New Business:

Ecology Streamflow Grant Application – Craig reported that he has been working with Angie Hubbard at the direction of the Okanogan Watershed Planning Unit to apply for grant funding for the acquisition of water for meeting the offset requirements of the planning effort. The application is to the Department of Ecology's Streamflow Program and, if funded, would be used to acquire water held in trust by the Office of Columbia River. Craig indicated he intends to apply for the funding as the grant sponsor if Okanogan County Planning cannot be the sponsor for any reason. We would apply for funding from streamflow restoration program; any watershed is eligible, though highest priority goes first to those who have a plan and then to those who are in the planning process. The application is due by the end of March with a final decision on funding in July. Jerry Asmussen moved to allow Craig to follow through on the Ecology Streamflow grant application. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Cooperative Working Agreement – Sarah Troutman, NRCS District Conservationist, reported that it is time to review the NRCS-OCDC Cooperative Working Agreement, which was initially established in 2014. She highlighted the section regarding sharing agreements for equipment and vehicles, which is still not a problem, and training, security, and records management, as well as ArcGIS software licenses, which Craig added are used daily and save the district a substantial amount of money in licensing fees. Jerry Asmussen moved to authorize Craig to sign the Cooperative Working Agreement with NRCS. Lorah Super seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners Checklist – Sarah next reviewed the USDA Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners Checklist with the board and staff present. Board members present signed the affirmation of review.

Methow CRM – Lorah Super reported that she has been discussing water issues and the need to address some building concerns and water management in the Methow. Meanwhile, a host of processes are underway for future development; however, subdivision development has been stopped because there are concerns that the county has been over permitting. The parties involved may be ready to hand in-stream flow rulemaking to the Department of Ecology to address multiple water management options. Lorah has been in discussions with Ray Ledgerwood, who is interested in having the Okanogan Conservation District be the convening agency, as well as adding planning and administrative help for a facilitator. Sage Park, CRO Director for the Department of Ecology, agreed with Ray and suggested using the CRM process.

Lorah stated that the end goals are a commonly agreed upon list of issues to be resolved, identification of tools available to solve issues, and then a plan for how to proceed in carrying out the solutions. Craig commented on the need for the tribes to be represented in the discussion, but also asked how broad the representation of other groups should be and how those represented groups will be decided upon. He added that the hope would be for the CRM requestor to have a vision for who should take part in this discussion. Lorah agreed with Craig and added that both the Methow Watershed Council and Department of Ecology be present together for decision-making.

NCWFHC Mission Project – Lorah Super reported that the Alliance for the Wild Rockies are suing the USFS over the Mission Project, which was a large landscape scale project aimed at timber sales. The American Forest Resource Council may be able to provide legal resources to the collaborative involved with the Mission project to enjoin the lawsuit on behalf of the USFS. Lorah stated that this issue will be discussed at the next collaborative meeting and, because CDs are part of the collaborative, the District should decide on its level of intervention. Lorah presented two intervention options, the first of which is filing an amicus brief and the second is to take part in the lawsuit itself. Jerry Asmussen stated that filing a brief is the safer and better level of intervention.

Executive Session – Ivan Oberg declared the board would go into executive session at 7:58 to review Ben Carroll's 3-month probationary evaluation. He declared the executive session would last 15 minutes. The board returned from executive session at 8:13 PM.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve Ben Carroll's 3-month probationary evaluation and allow him to begin using accrued annual leave per district policy effective March 1, 2020. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ivan Oberg adjourned the meeting at 8:16 PM.

Summary of Motions

Albert Roberts moved to approve the agenda as amended. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the February 4, 2020 board meeting minutes as amended. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Albert Roberts moved to approve Treasurer's Report #802. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the cost share for LD Albin for \$4,605.24 and authorize Ivan or Craig to sign the contract. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed with Albert Roberts recusing himself from this vote.

Lorah Super moved to approve the Strong cost share for \$6,022.34 and authorize Ivan or Craig to sign the contract. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to allow Craig to follow through on the Ecology Streamflow grant application. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to authorized Craig to sign the Cooperative Working Agreement with NRCS. Lorah Super seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve Ben Carroll's 3-month probationary evaluation and allow him to begin using accrued annual leave per district policy effective March 1, 2020. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.


Ivan Oberg
Chair

for Ivan 4/8/2020
Date


Becky Drenner
Finance Director

4/7/20
Date