



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: December 5, 2023; Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: Okanogan Conservation District Office, Okanogan, WA and
Remotely via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference
FROM: Cassandra Lange-Predoehl, Administrative Assistant

PRESENT:

Lorah Super, Chair
Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair
Steve Colvin, Auditor
Edd Townsend, Supervisor
Phillip Dart, Supervisor
Randy Kelley, Associate Supervisor
Craig Nelson, Executive Director
Becky Drenner, Finance Director
Cassandra Lange-Predoehl, Admin. Assistant

Eli Loftis, Wildfire & Community Resiliency Lead
Dylan Streeter, Wildfire Resiliency & Recovery Planner
Emily Bustamante, Education Specialist
Brant Rosenthal Smith, Science Data & Mon. Coordinator
Emmy Engle, Communication & Outreach Specialist
Taylor George, VSP Coordinator
Chevelle Yeckel, Water Quality & Riparian Planner
Celeste Accord, NRCS

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

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

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes: Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the November 2, 2023 board meeting minutes as presented. Edd Townsend seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report #847, which covers the checking account activity from November 3, 2023, to December 5, 2023, inclusive was presented for the Board's approval. The following checks/payroll/direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

Checks – number 12301 – 12315 totaling \$100,357.07.

Two payroll direct withdrawals – numbers ACH4651 – ACH4675 totaling \$47,428.53.

Electronic payments – numbers EFT3319 – EFT3331 totaling \$35,003.78.

Deposits totaling \$238,072.58 were made.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #847 as presented. Phil Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry reported that he was trying to figure out if they will be ready for winter.

Steve Colvin – Steve reported that he attended a meeting in Wenatchee, finding it interesting with valuable insights.

Lorah Super – Lorah encouraged everyone to attend the WACD Annual Conference next year. Lorah added that at this year's conference, there were sessions on risk management from Enduris that were very insightful, along with classes on board development and engagement that were helpful.

Edd Townsend – Edd reported it had been a normal early December and that there had been some fall grass regrowth.

Phillip Dart – Phillip reported that it had been a wonderful fall.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

Randy Kelley – Randy reported that he attended the WACD Annual Conference and expressed how good it was to see familiar faces. Randy also had a discussion with the new administrative assistant at the Okanogan County Fairgrounds and learned that a new fairgrounds manager had been hired and would be starting soon.

Staff Reports:

Emily introduced herself to the board.

Craig reported that he would be working with Emmy to reach out to the City of Oroville and the City of Twisp to discuss the possibility of annexing into the district. Craig added he will work with Emmy and get in touch with city staff and report back to the board. Craig went on to say that the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) scheduled the Legislative Day for January 25. Craig and Emmy will be attending the event and Craig invited all board supervisors to attend, in which Lorah and Phil responded they would attend if their schedule allowed. Jerry added that he will be there as well.

Eli reported that he, Dylan, and Emmy are currently going through the CWPP process. Planning meetings will start in early to mid-January, and they aim to have it completed by this coming June. Eli informed the board that they would like to have one board member be a part of the group. There will be twice-monthly meetings to go through the development of the CWPP plan. It will involve a significant amount of work for Dylan, Emmy, and Eli, but they are committed to providing Community Wildfire Protection Planning. Edd volunteered to help.

Taylor reported that she will be giving a presentation on the Voluntary Stewardship Program the next day at the Omak Mirage Theater.

NRCS Report

Celeste did not have anything to report.

Partner Reports

Mike Baden – Mike informed everyone that the new executive director started three days ago. Regarding budgets, Mike stated that they should soon receive the final reappropriation numbers for Natural Resource Investments and Salmon Recovery Funding. The governor's budget is expected to be released by January 19, and they will receive information about implementation funding. Mike also presented the State of Washington seals for Edd and Phillip.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans:

VSP Interlocal Agreement Amendment – Craig informed the board that the district recently discovered the option to directly administer the Voluntary Stewardship Program grant agreement. He added that staff discussed this with the Okanogan County Planning Department, and they expressed support for the district taking on this role. While Okanogan County will remain the overall lead and maintain responsible for the Voluntary Stewardship Program, our district will directly administer the grant. Steve Colvin moved to authorize Craig Nelson to negotiate any necessary final changes and sign the amendment upon its completion. Phillip Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

AgForestry Memorandum of Agreement – Craig reported that the district has previously supported the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation (AgForestry) under a memorandum of agreement to endorse the highest level of leadership training for natural resource industries and rural communities. The agreement enables the district to provide funding that supports the availability of this crucial training for natural resource industries and communities. The approval of this agreement will empower the board to authorize funding to the foundation in any amount up to \$1,000.00 per year. Both Albert Roberts and Craig are graduates of the program. Phillip Dart moved to approve the AgForestry Memorandum of Agreement and authorized Craig Nelson or Lorah Super to sign it. Edd Townsend seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Water Bank Update – Jordana reported that the second appraisal for the first water right will be back soon. Emmy assisted Jordana in coordinating a presentation on the water bank with the Methow Watershed Council and it went excellent.

2024 Final Budget Approval – Becky presented the 2024 budget, mentioning that all staff are fully funded with this budget, and there is room for more employees. Steve Colvin moved to approve the 2024 budget. Phillip Dart seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

DDT Remediation Project – Craig reported that the district has been asked to locally lead a cost-share program funded by the Washington State Department of Ecology to remediate high levels of DDT and other legacy agricultural chemicals in soils found on cannabis farms in southern Okanogan County. The district would work collaboratively, in its usual non-regulatory manner, with already identified and affected landowners to develop approved remediation techniques and enter into cost-share contracts where appropriate. The district would also oversee the implementation of practices and make payments as necessary to fund projects. Total program costs are anticipated to be less than \$2 million but may be as high as \$4 million. Craig added that Taylor would lead this project. The topic was discussed at length. Edd Townsend moved to authorize staff to negotiate and enter in a contract with appropriate agencies to implement the

DDT remediation program, with the exception that what will be done is actual remediation, not a temporary solution such as placing the plants into containers to grow instead of remediating the DDT and other legacy agricultural chemicals in the soil. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Salmon Creek Well Remediation Project – Craig reported that Joseph Perrault, residing a few miles from Okanogan along Salmon Creek, depends on a well to meet the needs of his home, a small livestock herd, and for irrigating some smaller acreage pasture. The well is situated between Salmon Creek Road and Salmon Creek itself. The pipeline from the well to the pumphouse traverses approximately 100-125 feet of a riparian zone before crossing the creek channel itself, then an additional 10 feet or so of riparian area, and finally, the last 150-200 feet of open space leading to the pumphouse. The identified resource concern is the water pipeline, left suspended in open air where it crosses the stream channel due to the stream undercutting it in recent years from higher-than-normal flows. The property owner implemented a temporary fix for this winter to prevent freezing. However, next year, extensive excavation is planned to bury the pipeline, potentially heavily disturbing an otherwise functional riparian system. Steve Colvin moved to authorize staff to seek funding from the Conservation Commission while having a landowner seek bids for the project. Edd Townsend seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Eagle Bluff Fire Emergency Watershed Protection Program – Craig reported that the engineering staff of the Natural Resources Conservation Service identified eight properties that likely qualify for assistance through the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service Emergency Watershed Protection Program. If accepted by the landowners, this assistance would provide structures to deflect flash flooding and/or mudflows from homes and other community/public infrastructure in the event of burn scars. The program necessitates a local sponsor, a role the Washington State Conservation Commission has fulfilled on our behalf in recent years with an agreement that our district would be the local, on-the-ground technical staff that implement the program. Craig added that district staff would have to reach out to the property owners, determine their interest, and, if they are willing, work with contractors to implement the program. It would also require the Conservation Commission to help us find the required 25% local match. Phil Dart moved to direct staff to request assistance from the Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement the program for the 2023 Eagle Bluff Fire. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session – Discuss Personnel Evaluations – Lorah called the executive session to order at 7:51 PM. At 10:04 PM, the board returned to public session. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the following personnel evaluations as presented and to approve the following wage/status to take effect January 1, 2024:

- Becky Drenner, salary range 67, step C, exempt status, \$82,056.00 per year
- Jordana Ellis, salary range 50, step D, non-exempt status, \$26.45 per hour
- Emmy Engle, salary range 57, step D, non-exempt status, \$31.49 per hour
- Kim Kogler, salary range 67, step C, exempt status, \$82,056.00 per year
- Cassandra Lange-Predoehl, salary range 50, step D, non-exempt status, \$26.45 per hour

- Eli Loftis, salary range 57, step D, non-exempt status, \$31.49 per hour
- Dylan Streeter, salary range 50, step D, non-exempt status, \$26.45 per hour
- Aaron Wold, salary range 57, step E, non-exempt status, \$32.27 per hour
- Chevelle Yeckel, salary range 50, step E, non-exempt status, \$27.14 per hour

Phil Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super adjourned the meeting at 10:06 PM.

Summary of Motions

Phillip Dart moved to approve the agenda as presented. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the November 2, 2023 board meeting minutes as presented. Edd Townsend seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer’s Report #847 as presented. Phil Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to authorize Craig Nelson to negotiate any necessary final changes and sign the amendment upon its completion. Phillip Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Phillip Dart moved to approve the AgForestry Memorandum of Agreement and authorized Craig Nelson or Lorah Super to sign it. Edd Townsend seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve the 2024 budget. Phillip Dart seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to authorize staff to seek funding from the Conservation Commission while having a landowner seek bids for the project. Edd Townsend seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Phil Dart moved to direct staff to request assistance from the Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement the program for the 2023 Eagle Bluff Fire. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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Phil Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

 1/4/2024

Lorah Super
Chair

 1/4/24

Cassandra Lange-Predoehl
Administrative Assistant