



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: May 4, 2023; Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: Okanogan Conservation District Office, Okanogan, WA and
Remotely via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference
FROM: Cassandra Lange, Administrative Assistant

PRESENT:

Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair

Steve Colvin, Member

Lorah Super, Member

Randy Kelley, Associate Supervisor

Bob Clark, Associate Supervisor (P)

Dale Swedberg, Associate Supervisor (P)

Craig Nelson, Executive Director

Becky Drenner, Finance Director

Cassandra Lange, Administrative Assistant

Justin Stanley, VSP Coordinator

Aaron Wold, Range Planner

Emmy Engle, Communication & Outreach Coordinator

Dylan Streeter, Wildfire Resiliency & Recovery Planner

Celeste Accord, NRCS

Edd Townsend, Public

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

Agenda Approval: Jerry Asmussen stated that the agenda would stand approved as amended.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes: Lorah Super moved to approve the April 6, 2023 board meeting minutes as presented. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report #840, which covers the checking account activity from April 7, 2023 to May 4, 2023, was presented for the Board's approval, the following checks/payroll/direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

Checks – numbers 12143 – 12166 totaling \$71,526.03.

Two payroll direct withdrawals – numbers ACH4483 – ACH4507 - totaling \$42,515.61.

Electronic payments – numbers EFT3206 – EFT3220 totaling \$24,306.84.

Deposits totaling \$212,915.03 were made, including a transfer of \$100,000.00 from Savings to Checking to cover cost share payments until reimbursement.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #840 as amended. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Ivan Oberg – Ivan was not present.

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry reported just over a week ago he had frost at his ranch, and that Bonaparte creek has been raging beyond control.

Steve Colvin – Steve reported that he received a water survey from Washington State University. Steve went on to say it is dryer outside than people realize, especially with the wind and the near 90-degree weather.

Lorah Super – Lorah reported that the Methow river is quite high, and she recently enjoyed a raft trip down the river. Lorah added that the Watershed Council has put her on their outreach committee, and they are currently planning to have an irrigators round table. Lorah stated that she was asked to meet with a cooperater who was interested in getting a drone survey and noted that they had great questions, and the cooperater will probably be in touch with the district. Lorah asked if Craig and Jordana would attend an upcoming Water Resources Meeting in May in which they agreed to.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

Bob Clark – Bob reported that the tree he had been fighting with all winter was finally removed from his yard.

Randy Kelley – Randy reported that he has been planning the Conservation Celebration with Emmy, Cassie, and Craig and they are fine tuning details now.

Dale Swedberg – Dale reported that he has been busy building fence on the farm. Dale added that there is an upcoming “Burn and Learn” event will take place in Leavenworth, and that if anyone is interested in the event agenda, he would send them the details.

Staff Reports:

Craig reported that most of his report is in the staff report. Craig noted that the celebration of life for Albert is still being scheduled and he is working with Carey to discuss what will be included. Craig added that he is working with Aaron to possibly purchase a manure spreader for the district, similar to how they purchased the seed drill. Dale stated that he has a manure spreader that he would be willing to donate to the district.

Emmy reported that she enjoyed her time in Japan, but she is happy to be back.

NRCS Report

Celeste Accord was present and reported that the Inflation Reduction Act program was now closed and NRCS is interested to see if they have any preapproved applications in the batch. Celeste added that the Okanogan office is getting a career development student who will be working with them for eight weeks. Celeste went on to say that Sarah will be back in the office following week.

Partner Reports

There were no partners present.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans

Lesamiz Phase 2 LOA – Justin reported that the district will install approximately 300 willow and cottonwood poles deeply within the riparian buffer zone on Jordan Lesamiz’ property. The property has been in agricultural production for over 100 years. The riverbank along the Lesamiz property is experiencing severe undercutting and sluffing leading to loss of agricultural land. These areas within the riparian buffer lack sustainable woody vegetation. A cattle exclusion fence has been installed through previous funding and is maintained on a continual basis. Previous revegetation efforts included containerized plants, which did not survive, and other deep staked willows, which had much greater success. District staff assumed success was due to the 10-foot poles installed 6-feet deep that were able to reach the water table during low-flow seasons. With the assistance of Colville Tribal F&W staff and a bobcat with an auger attachment, 10-foot poles will be leaving 4-feet above ground, so the stakes reach above the reed canary grass growth. No irrigation will be delivered to the site to reduce costs and promote self-sustaining planting. Installation of additional deep willow stakes will promote the most successful woody vegetation on site. The district is aware that plantings alone will not begin to slow or prevent erosion and staff plans to continuously engage with Jordan Lesamiz to mitigate the severity of the erosion with future funds. Lorah Super moved to approve the Lesamiz Phase 2 contract and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the Landowner Agreement. Jerry Asmussen asked if there was any discussion on the motion, and hearing none, the motion passed unanimously.

CCC Engineering Interlocal Agreement – Craig reported that the Chewuch Canal Company (CCC) is seeking to pipe the remaining portion of their water delivery system. The project would pipe six miles of irrigation ditch from a diversion point on the Chewuch River to the connection of the existing pipe system along with a back flow section that facilitates the fill of Perrigin Lake. The project requires a conceptual and final engineering design along with assistance in acquiring the necessary permits. The services are being sought through an Interlocal Agreement with engineer Lance Horning through the Columbia Conservation District and engineer Carly Lemon with the Underwood Conservation District. Steve Colvin moved to approve the Chewuch Canal Company project engineering interlocal agreements between Columbia and Underwood Conservation Districts and authorized Craig to sign them when in hand. Lorah seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

WSDA Pollinator Habitat Contracts – Craig reported that the goal of the WSDA-SCBGP grant is to install and improve native pollinator habitat in and around orchards. Staff developed a OCD Cooperator Cost-Share contract for Patrick Colbert and Richard DeLap, and each contract includes an operation and maintenance plan as well as a project description for the installation of pollinator habitat adjacent to the orchards. The contracts ensure that planting takes place this season to meet the grant objectives and utilize USDA funds. Both contracts include the planting of container plants that will take place in late spring 2023 along with the seeding of the pollinator seed mix that will take place in the late summer of 2023. The seed will be dry seeded as recommended by BFI Native Seed Distributor. Lorah Super moved to approve the Patrick Colbert WSDAP Pollinator Habitat contract and the Richard DeLap WSDA Pollinator Habitat Contract and authorized Craig Nelson to sign them. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Okanogan County Water Bank Contract – Craig reported that the district is working with Okanogan County to establish the Okanogan County Water Bank (OCWB). OCWB will serve to help water right holders protect their water rights from relinquishment and ensure their water rights will remain in the basin of origin for the long-term security of the local communities and local agricultural. The district is seeking to utilize available funding from the Department of Ecology Water Banking Grant Program to purchase water rights to seed the bank. Steve Colvin moved to approve the Okanogan County Water Bank contract and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the contract. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

AVR Watering Facility Landowner Agreement – Aaron reported that the district will install a watering facility at Antoine Valley Ranch using the Ecology AVR Grant and Mule Deer Foundation funds. The project location is along Antione Creek outside the now completed exclusion fence. This area was prone to heavy use by cattle, which trampled and consumed wetland vegetation, eroded the bank through hoof shear, and contaminated the water resource through defecation. Protecting this area from range cattle will be critical to the success of restoring the wetland habitat. Jerry asked if this was an NRCS approved practice, and Craig confirmed it was. Lorah Super moved to authorize Craig Nelson to sign the AVR Watering Facility Landowner Agreement with the Tribes. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Water Bank Update – Craig reported that he will be scheduling a meeting with Okanogan County Commissioners to discuss the Water Bank. Craig added that they will submit the application for the Barkley Irrigation Company acquisition. Craig added there might be a 2-million-dollar cap per applicant, no matter the biennium or physical year which they are currently trying to contact Ecology about.

CCC Pipeline Project Update – Craig reported that most of the update was covered with the engineer interlocal agreement. There is an upcoming site visit on May 11 with engineers and CCC. Craig gave a huge kudos to Jordana for all the hard work she is doing. Craig noted that Irrigation Efficiencies has been around for over 20 years and the district has done four projects prior to Jordana being there, and Jordana has twelve projects that are highly likely to occur. Since the program rules have changed, so many people are eligible and Jordana has been getting people set up, in order, and ready to go.

Conservation Celebration – Emmy reported that she brought a draft agenda and presented it to board members. Emmy added that she and Cassie will set up the day of the event, and she was informed by Randy that the air conditioning in the Agriplex is not working. Emmy went on to say that there will be tables set up with outreach material, and the keynote speech will be around half an hour long. Emmy discussed the layout of the draft agenda and script for all present and invited all to come to the office and practice. Jerry asked what the current RSVP count was, and Emmy informed him that there was around 130 RSVPs the last time she checked.

Annual Work Plan – Craig reported that the Annual Work Plan is required to be submitted to the Conservation Commission by statute. RCW 89.08.220 (7)b. states, “The district shall also prepare an annual work plan, which shall describe the action programs, services, facilities,

materials, working arrangements and estimated funds needed to carry out the parts of the long-range programs that are of the highest priorities.” Craig noted that the presented draft Annual Work Plan meets these statutorily required elements. Steve Colvin moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Work Plan and directed staff to submit the plan to the Conservation Commission. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Vacant Supervisor Position – Craig reported that Albert Roberts held an elected position with the Okanogan Conservation District until his untimely passing on April 9, 2023. Per Washington State statute, Washington State Conservation Commission WAC, and district policy, the remaining board members have the authority to fill the position following a few specific requirements. First, the board must declare the position vacant by resolution. Second, the board must designate an advertising period that must be a minimum of four weeks to accept applications for the position. The advertising period cannot begin for a minimum of seven calendar days following approval of the resolution. Following the required advertising period, the board may appoint any person of their choosing that meets state statutory restrictions as well as the district policy of having attended three of the most recent five board meetings. Approval of resolution 2023-01 declares the position open, sets a 6+ week advertising period, identifies the method required to apply for the vacancy, and authorizes the board to fill the position at any time starting with the July 6, 2023 board meeting. Steve Colvin made a motion to rescind the 2002-02 dealing with the timeline and requirements for observing 3 board meetings. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Lorah Super moved to approve resolution 2023-01 Declaring a Board Position Vacant and Setting Appointment Process. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Custom Jacket – Cassandra reported that district staff would like to give Ivan Oberg a customized Carhartt jacket for his years of service. Lorah Super moved to approve the purchase of Ivan’s custom Carhartt jacket. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen adjourned the meeting at 7:48PM.

Summary of Motions

Lorah Super moved to approve the April 6, 2023 board meeting minutes as presented. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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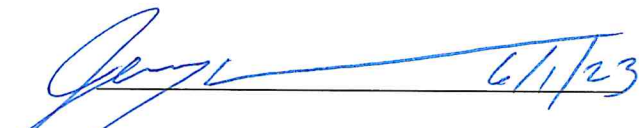
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Jerry Asmussen
Vice Chair

Date


Becky Drenner
Finance Director

Date