



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: December 8, 2020 Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: Teleconference – (509) 422-0855, ext. 7
FROM: Jess McDaniel, Administrative Assistant

PRESENT:

Ivan Oberg, District Chair – Present	Becky Drenner, Finance Director – Present
Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair – Phone	Jess McDaniel, Administrative Assistant – Phone
Albert Roberts, District Auditor – Present	Amy Martin, Conservation Director – Phone
Lorah Super, Member – Phone	Kim Kogler, Education Specialist – Phone
Steve Colvin, Member – Phone	Mindy Untalan, Conservation Planner – Present
Gerri Oberg, Associate Supervisor – Present	Kirsten Cook, Community Outreach Director – Phone
Randy Kelley, Associate Supervisor – Phone	Ben Carroll, Range Planner – Phone
Bob Clark, Associate Supervisor – Phone	Hannah Coe, Conservation Planner – Phone
Craig Nelson, Executive Director – Present	Mike Baden, WSCC – 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: Lorah Super moved to approve the agenda as presented. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Lorah Super moved to approve the November 3, 2020 board meeting minutes as presented. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report #811, which covers the checking account activity from November 4, 2020 to December 8, 2020, inclusive was presented for the Board’s approval. The following checks/payroll direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

Checks – numbers 11684 - 11700 totaling \$29,495.64.

Payroll direct withdrawal - numbers ACH3886 – ACH3906 totaling \$28,660.98.

Electronic payments - numbers EFT2789 – EFT2804 totaling \$31,788.08 .

Deposits totaling \$98,423.60 were made.

Albert Roberts moved to approve Treasurer’s Report #811. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Albert Roberts – Albert reported that the ground is only frozen a couple inches down, so he is still putting out fence posts. He went on to say that moisture goes down about 6 inches then it gets dry again, but it has been nice weather to work outside in. Albert informed that he attended

the WACD Annual Meeting virtually, and thought it went well for their first time conducting the meeting virtually. He added that Lorah did a good job on the out-of-basin water transfers presentation. Albert concluded his report by saying that work finally caught up to him and he received a certificate of occupancy for his house.

Lorah Super – Lorah reported that she concurred with Albert that the WACD Annual Meeting went very well considering the use of new technology and that there was a lot of constructive conversation in the chat bar feature. She added that she gave a presentation on water transfers and it seemed to be well received. Lorah also informed everyone that the USFS Twisp Restoration project is moving along and there is an environmental assessment out for comment until mid-December. She added that the NWFHC is trying to get consensus on a letter describing their thoughts regarding the project because it is following a very different trajectory than the Mission Project did and the general lack of involving the Collaborative is concerning. She added that the Collaborative members are feeling somewhat left behind because the coordinators do not seem to be considering the restoration portion of the project adequately.

Steve Colvin – Steve reported that he was happy for those who were able to attend the WACD Annual Meeting and apologized that he was not able to make it this year. He went on to say that the ground is not frozen, and moisture is still being absorbed.

Ivan Oberg – Ivan did not give a report.

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry reported that he is enjoying the mild winter and the cows are still out.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

Neither Randy Kelley nor Bob Clark had anything to report.

Staff Report:

Craig reported that he enjoyed seeing many familiar faces during the WACD Annual Meeting, though it was not nearly as effective as in-person. The District's resolution regarding the use of technology for training purposes passed without too many concerns during the committee discussion. Lorah gave a great presentation on out of basin water transfers, which was well received. Craig went on to say that he presented on running efficient board meetings via telephone. Most of the conference's heavy discussions centered upon appropriate diversity, equity, and inclusion policies and practices for districts as well as the topic of supervisor elections.

Craig also reported that the Washington State University, in partnership with about a dozen other universities and organizations, is working on a project they call 'Technology for Trade'. Craig informed that he was approached about this project a couple years ago. The original focus of the project was the Okanogan River watershed along with the Yakima and Walla Walla River watersheds. The premise of the project is to determine if irrigators in these watersheds would use improved irrigation systems coupled with more detailed and accurate streamflow forecasting as a basis to participate in partial water rights trades amongst other irrigators in their basin.

This project was kicked off in 2019 with a local meeting but then not much happened. In early 2020 the project coordinators were going to start collecting information by doing on-site visits with irrigators. When COVID restrictions were put in place the researchers pretty much disappeared again. However, about a month ago they popped back up, having expanded the project to now include the Methow River watershed. When asked why they added the Methow they replied that it was to get more participation in the region. Craig informed that, while that may be true, he strongly suspects it has a lot to do with last fall's Seattle Times article on out of basin water transfers. The researchers are asking District staff to share information about the survey they are trying to conduct to get a better feel for how comfortable irrigators are with irrigation technology, streamflow forecasting, and water trading. Lorah added some concern about the timing of the survey for this project so it does not interfere with the District's current efforts regarding water conservation. Craig informed he would work on setting up a phone meeting with the coordinators of the project and would include Lorah.

Craig also added that he forgot to mention in his written report that he signed the CCT Lasilla / K-12 grant, which will help fund the District's education program and provide match for the design work to be done for the Lasilla restoration program.

Lastly, Sarah, Celeste, and Craig attended a meeting with the County Commissioners where they presented on fire recovery actions because there was some concern that livestock producers have not been adequately assisted post-fire. However, the commissioners were happy to hear about what the various agencies have done to provide support, though were a little dismayed with how few producers have reached out for assistance. Feed is still needed for the winter.

Amy reported that she is plugging away on the VSP 5-year report, which is due at the end of the month. She added that as she has been sifting through projects and information collected from Smartsheet, she has discovered that the District has processed almost \$68,000 in cost-share and reimbursements to landowners this year through various riparian restoration projects, the save water save energy project, and Firewise projects. She concluded her report by informing that staff has logged about 170 assistance requests this year, a portion of which are post-fire requests.

Mindy reported that she and Kirsten are working on a few smaller grants from Community Foundation and Icicle Fund to support the District's Firewise program.

Becky reported she attended the WACD Annual Meeting and was impressed with how smoothly it went, adding that Lorah's presentation was great. Becky added that the elections topics were of specific interest to her though no real determinations were made regarding 4-year terms, whether elections would be every other year and/or held any time of the year, as well as whether district elections would be on the general ballot. Becky did express a little bit of disappointment that the discussion did not include many of the survey topics that were asked at previous elections workshops. Becky concluded her report by informing that the District elections resolution would be brought to the Board at the January meeting but that the tentative election date is set for March 23, 2021 and logistics are still being considered, including the possibility of a drive through election due to ongoing concerns with the pandemic.

Ben reported that the Carroll household is still on baby watch with a due date of December 24, though he and his wife have already had a few false starts to the hospital. So, hopefully by next month's meeting there will be another kiddo around.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans

OCD-Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation Coop Agreement – Craig presented an agreement that would formalize the partnership between the District and the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation. This agreement would allow both agencies to work collaboratively on conservation projects, allowing for shared staff time and the ability to bill each other. Lorah Super moved to approve the cooperative agreement between the District and the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

WSCC Hazard Mitigation Award – Craig presented a WSCC hazard mitigation funding award that would fund District staff time and supplies to conduct a one-time, two-day, virtual workshop this coming spring to provide other conservation district's staff training on how to conduct post-wildfire site assessments. Lorah Super moved to approve the use of the hazard mitigation award. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Albin Cost-share Approval – Hannah presented the final Albin cost-share project costs, which are part of the Department of Ecology's NPS-Fire grant. The final costs exceeded the original cost-share agreement, due to increased fencing costs to protect the potted plants that were installed. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the final Albin cost-share changes and approve the reimbursement check to the landowner. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Albert Roberts abstained due to conflict of interest.

Husseman Webinar Contract (Vanderwal and Hoag) – Amy presented a Purchased Services Contract for Julie Vanderwal and an amendment to the previously approved contract with Chris Hoag, both of whose services are funded through an Ecology Husseman grant to conduct technical webinars, design consulting, as well as graphic design and/or outreach related to riparian and streambank bioengineering practices. Lorah Super moved to authorize Ivan Oberg or Craig Nelson to sign the Purchased Services Contract for Julie Vanderwal and the contract amendment for Chris Hoag. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Steve Colvin abstained due to conflict of interest.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Application – Mindy presented information regarding a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant titled "Okanogan County Wildfire Resilience Program," for which staff submitted a preproposal on November 25, 2020. The estimated cost submitted was \$750,000.00 over a 3-year period. Mindy informed that the District hopes to hear back regarding submission of a full proposal, with the Board's approval, by mid-December. Albert Roberts moved to authorize staff to submit a full grant proposal for the Okanogan County Wildfire Resilience Program. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

2021 Veterans Conservation Corps Intern – Ben presented material and key points regarding the Veterans Conservation Corps internship program. After discussion with other District staff several projects were identified for the 2021 field season that would benefit from the help of a

seasonal intern. After researching other possible service organizations VCC was identified as the most compatible program for the District's needs. Albert Roberts moved to authorize District staff to submit an internship announcement for the 2021 Veterans Conservation Corps internship program. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

WA RC&D Subcontract Amendment – Kirsten presented an amendment to the subcontract between the District and C+C Consulting and WA RC&D Council that would extend the agreement to June 30, 2021 because the Wildfire Ready Neighbors social marketing campaign was cancelled this fall due to COVID-19. Lorah Super moved to authorize Ivan Oberg or Craig Nelson to sign the amendment to the original agreement between C+C Consulting and the WA RC&D Council. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

NRCS Report

Sarah Troutman was not present and did not submit a report.

Partner Reports

Mike Baden added to Becky's comments regarding the ongoing elections discussion, reporting that the Commission has not made any decisions on the various suggested changes but that a motion was made to develop a committee to present final recommendations on election changes to the Commission in September of 2021. Mike reported that the Commission was able to award the final half of the implementation grant funds, adding that the state budget does not look nearly as dire as it did back in the summer. Everyone is keeping their fingers crossed that the continued restrictions do not negatively impact new budget requirements for the future. Mike informed that the Open Public Meetings Act was extended through January 19th. He also added that district supervisor development modules have been rolled out on the Commission website and there is a lot of hope that district supervisors will take advantage of those tools as they move forward with governing their districts. Finally, Mike concluded his report with a big thank you for the District's help with the hazard mitigation grant that was awarded.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Old Business:

2021 Budget Approval – Becky presented the final draft of the 2021 Budget for the Board's approval, which did not have any changes from the draft that was presented at last month's meeting. Becky did add that, in developing their 2021 budgets, the planners included 800 hours for an intern. Albert Roberts moved to approve the 2021 District Budget. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Executive Session-Discuss Personnel Evaluations – Ivan called the executive session at 7:10 PM for 30 minutes. At 7:41 PM the board returned to public session. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve personnel evaluations as presented and to approve a one-step wage increase for Amy Martin. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ivan Oberg adjourned the meeting at 7:44 PM.

Summary of Motions

Lorah Super moved to approve the agenda as presented. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the November 3, 2020 board meeting minutes as presented. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Albert Roberts moved to approve Treasurer's Report #811. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the cooperative agreement between the District and the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the use of the hazard mitigation award. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the final Albin cost-share changes and approve the reimbursement check to the landowner. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Albert Roberts abstained due to conflict of interest.

Lorah Super moved to authorize Ivan Oberg or Craig Nelson to sign the Purchased Services Contract for Julie Vanderwal and the contract amendment for Chris Hoag. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Steve Colvin abstained due to conflict of interest.

Albert Roberts moved to authorize staff to submit a full grant proposal for the Okanogan County Wildfire Resilience Program. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Albert Roberts moved to authorize District staff to submit an internship announcement for the 2021 Veterans Conservation Corps internship program. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

