



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: June 7, 2022; 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	Bob Clark, Associate Supervisor – Phone
Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair – Present	Craig Nelson, Executive Director – Present
Albert Roberts, District Auditor – Present	Becky Drenner, Finance Director – Present
Steve Colvin, Member – Present	Chevelle Yeckel, Water Quality & Riparian Planner – Phone
Lorah Super, Member – Present	Kim Kogler, Education Specialist – Phone
Gerri Oberg, Associate Supervisor – Present	Jess McDaniel, Administrative Assistant – Present
Randy Kelley, Associate Supervisor – Present	Sarah Troutman, NRCS – Present

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.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

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

Approval of Minutes: Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the May 3, 2022 board meeting minutes as amended. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report #829, which covers the checking account activity from May 4, 2022, to June 7, 2022, inclusive was presented for the Board's approval, the following checks/payroll direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

Checks – numbers 11933-11954 totaling \$39,564.01.

Two payroll direct withdrawals – numbers ACH4242– ACH4261 - totaling \$28,441.79.

Electronic payments – numbers EFT3034 – EFT3046 totaling \$27,862.83.

Deposits totaling \$187,269.05 were made.

Becky informed check number 11951 will be voided because it was made out to the wrong entity but would be replaced with check number 11954 made out to Dale Smith, the correct entity.

Albert Roberts moved to approve Treasurer's Report #829. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Albert Roberts – Albert reported receiving over 3 inches of rain since the last board meeting, adding he has more springs and creeks now than after snow melt and has not yet started irrigating yet. Otherwise, the grass is growing fast and is ready to be cut, but the alfalfa is not yet ready, and the cows are happy. Albert noted that he did not see any pine beetles on Mother's Day this year, so he is hoping they were cold, and the moisture drowned many of them, leaving fewer trees at risk.

Ivan Oberg – Ivan reported just over 2 inches in the rain gauge, which he put out in the middle of May.

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry reported 1.5 inches of rain in a three-day period. Jerry showed pictures of the mudflows at Bonaparte and Lightening Creeks as well as before and after pictures of last year's fire. He also added that he has seen black henbane, which is extremely poisonous so advised all to be cautious if they run across any.

Steve Colvin – Steve reported rain just like everyone else, even shutting irrigation off last week. He added that his grass is so tall he had to search for a calf he thought was lost but turned out only to be hidden in the grass.

Lorah Super – Lorah reported she has not hooked up her irrigation yet either and it is the longest she has ever gone without even thinking about doing so. She has had lots of help on the farm and is looking forward to growing several things this year. Lorah stated the report on the water bank is positive and that she has been talking with members of the Methow Watershed Council and that next Thursday she and Craig will give them a full report. Lorah also added that she facilitated the Forest Health Collaborative last Friday where Craig sat in, and the members focused on how the collaborative is governed because a lot of protocols are not being honored and or not relevant anymore because of the departure of previous members. Lorah is hopeful that by the end of summer there will be a fresh set of protocols to govern the collaborative.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

Randy reported having given some thought about the Conservation Celebration. He has also been working with Sarah on some status reviews in north Douglas County and enjoying himself doing so.

Bob reported programing his irrigation system but still not having needed to turn it on.

Staff Report:

Craig reported having gotten a phone call today from an individual in the Methow who is interested in selling their water right and that he will follow up with them. Craig also informed that he had a good meeting with Andy Hover regarding how the district and the county would operate the water bank. The Aspect team put together a good draft flow chart to facilitate the discussion of the process. There is also talk about possibly adding a page on the website with links to definitions and meanings of certain portions of the process. The goal is to have the grant application submitted to Department of Ecology by the end of the month after a pre-application meeting next Wednesday. Craig concluded his report on the water bank by stating that he would

like to have a conversation with Lorah and Albert regarding the potential for obtaining a water right from the east side of the county.

Craig went on to report that interviews for the irrigation planner were conducted and an offer was extended to Octavio Ayala, whose plan is to start sometime in the first part of July. Steve asked about his education to which Craig replied that Octavio's degree is in forestry and that one of his major projects involved biochar and composting and the use of those products in farming operations.

Craig commented on the flood damage that occurred last Friday in the Bonaparte Lake and Lightening Creek areas. There were 3 homes that were damaged. The most heavily damaged was one the district had looked at for EWP, but it was deemed indefensible at that time. That home's neighbor was moderately damaged, but it was not mentioned by NRCS staff during the evaluation period. Craig will follow up with Mike Baden to see if there are any funds in fire recovery to help those folks with debris removal. However, there is a lot more of material up above that property that could potentially be brought down in another event.

Lastly, Craig reminded everyone that next week the office would be closed Monday through Wednesday for the WADE training.

Becky stated that she attended a few meetings and a webinar about office culture and work environment, which were very positive. She added that taking part in the interview process was good and she was feeling very hopeful about Octavio starting. Otherwise, Becky reported having submitted the Annual Financial Report about a week early and is tracking closing grants and delegating hours to staff for successful closeouts.

Eli reported Okanogan Days was very pleasant and reported about 50 or 60 visits to the OCD booth. He and Dylan visited the Chiliwist Community and had a good opportunity to meet with those community members.

Dylan introduced himself, informing that he recently graduated from the University of Idaho last month.

Chevelle reported recovering from COVID and doing well. She has been working remotely on several of the projects in her wheelhouse, specifically preparing to re-enroll cooperators in CREP.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans

UCSRB Contract Amendment – Craig informed that due to staff changes and a busy spring season for environmental education, staff will not be able to complete the deliverables for the UCSRB project. The district was granted an extension via the contract amendment attached. This amendment will extend the project to September 30th. The extra time will be used to complete the remaining two storm drain events, write articles to promote the results, and finalize a video summarizing the project. There will also be time for district staff to attend four community events. Lorah Super moved to approve the UCSRB Contract Extension Amendment

and authorize Ivan Oberg to sign the contract. Albert Roberts seconded the motion the motion passed unanimously.

NACD Memorandum of Agreement – Craig stated that the district received the NACD Urban Agriculture Conservation grant for fiscal year 2022. The project, “Herb Your Enthusiasm! Increasing School Garden Use with Technical Assistance and Targeted Outreach” will increase conservation technical assistance to school gardens, educators, and students as well as address air quality and climate change community concerns and increase access to local, healthy food to low income, low access, and historically underserved families, students, and educators. Grant activities will begin the date the agreement is signed, and the district will have 12 months from that date to complete grant activities. NACD awarded the district \$50,000.00 to compete grant activities. Most funds will go towards personnel costs, training for garden teachers (National Children and Youth Garden Symposium), and a Classroom in Bloom contract for services. Kim provided a spreadsheet containing project goals and timeline. Albert Roberts moved to approve the NACD MOA and authorize Ivan Oberg to sign the contract. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Husseman Grant Amendment – Craig informed that the current Husseman grant agreement with the Department of Ecology expires June 30, 2022. Staff are currently pursuing an amendment to remove some of the deliverables in the statement of work and associated funds. The project scope of work will be reduced by producing 3 instead of 4 webinars, removing the small demonstration restoration project, and a sign at the Tonasket Creek WDFW property will not be installed. Methow Beaver project is working with WDFW to implement a large project on the same site in one or two years, making it more cost effective and efficient to de-obligate the Husseman funding, which should not impact future grant applications. The expectation is to return approximately \$10,000.00 of the total \$28,354.00. Steve Colvin moved to approve the Husseman Grant Amendment closing off the grant and authorize Craig Nelson or Ivan Oberg to sign it when the contract is available. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

NRCS Report

Sarah Troutman was present and reported receiving 2.5 inches of rain over the weekend in the Bridgeport area. A lot of homes in Bridgeport have water in them and orchard adjusters were out at the orchards in the Jack Wells area and said the trees were 100% loss because the hailstorm that went through shredded the leaves.

Sarah went on to inform that NRCS is wrapping up several EQIP applications, specifically the Whitestone WaterSmart project. The intention was to enter into an agreement with them, but Whitestone misunderstood how funding is implemented. However, there are some positive options that are still to be explored. Whitestone’s intention was to move forward with NRCS, but the capital outlay is a bit much for them. Otherwise, CRP plans are in full swing with over 300 plans that are supposed to be finished by the end of July. CRP grassland offers are also expected, which takes quite a bit more work. Otherwise, not much of an update for Cascadia’s RCPP.

Sarah commented that the Forest Service is not interested in submitting a Joint Chiefs application.

On the personnel side of things, resource conservationist selection was made but waiting to hear from the state regarding the selection to go forward. Isaac and his wife are going to Africa to work with their church doing some agriculture work. His last day will be July 1st. Jeff has about a year under his belt. Ryan is still getting up to speed.

Partner Reports

There were no partners present.

Old Business:

Water Bank Update – Lorah commented that it might be helpful to discuss the parts of the draft flow chart created by Aspect to get feedback from the board. Craig gave an overview of the flow charts that were provided by Tyson and the team at Aspect describing the process of water mitigation and water use permitting. Lorah wanted to ensure that the board understands where their involvement will be necessary, specifically with the interlocal agreements and what the roles for each agency will be.

Conservation Celebration Review – Randy commented that a caterer with more experience should have been acquired. Buffet style food was decidedly nice, but a line on either side of the table would have worked better. Outdoor venue was nice, though a little chilly. Randy also commented on how accommodating Naomie Peasley from the fairgrounds was. The bee hotels were a huge hit with those in attendance. Making the 5-year plan and annual plan of work available was important. Everyone agreed that there were great discussions before food was served. Suggestions for future events might include presenting awards throughout the presentation period at relevant points. Craig also commented that a dedicated photographer needs to be designated. Front-loading the district portion of the event followed by the keynote speaker might be something else to consider. Another suggestion was instead of a designated caterer could be a food truck or trucks. Personal invitations should be sent out much earlier with an RSVP a month before the event, then advertise publicly to open the event up to the community. Randy also commented that a biannual event could be an option.

New Business:

Partial Project Cost-Share Reimbursement – Eli informed that multiple cooperators with cost share contracts receiving funding under the Commission's fire recovery funding for fiscal year 2022 have encountered several unforeseen issues. Wetter and cooler weather, increased material costs (posts, wire, etc.), and issues locating contractors, all compounded by the late fall awarding of contracts, has led to uncertainty of project completion for some cooperators. Most cooperators are working diligently to complete their projects on time. There is a possibility that some cooperators may be able to submit reimbursement materials for the portion of projects that have been completed as of June 30, 2022, despite the practices not being completed fully as planned. The benefit of making partial payments include reducing the amount of funds being returned to the Commission in addition to relieving some of the financial burden on the cooperator. The hope is that partial payment reimbursements will not be necessary, however it may be an option if the need arises. Staff is seeking input and/or feedback from the board on

whether payment for partially completed practices in these exceptional circumstances could be allowed. All board members in attendance felt that partial payment was a reasonable solution to such exceptional circumstances.

Officer Elections – Craig informed that June is typically the month that officers are elected. Lorah and Steve both agreed that roles should stay the same. Steve Colvin moved to maintain the board supervisor roles. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ivan Oberg adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM.

Summary of Motions

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

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Albert Roberts moved to approve Treasurer’s Report #829. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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Ivan Oberg
Chair


Becky Drenner
Finance Director