



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: September 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:

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| Lorah Super, Chair | Jordana Ellis, Irrigation Planner |
| Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair | Emmy Engle, Communication & Outreach Specialist |
| Steve Colvin, Auditor | Dylan Streeter, Wildfire Resiliency & Recovery Planner |
| Randy Kelley, Associate Supervisor | Eli Loftis, Wildfire & Community Resilience Lead |
| Craig Nelson, Executive Director | Aaron Wold, Range Planner |
| Becky Drenner, Finance Director | Taylor George, VSP Coordinator |
| Cassandra Lange-Predoehl, Admin. Assistant | Phil Dart, 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 the agenda would stand approved as amended.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes: Lorah Super moved to approve the August 3, 2023, board meeting minutes as amended. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report #844, which covers the checking account activity August 4, 2023, to September 5, 2023, inclusive was presented for the Board's approval. The following checks/payroll/direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

Checks – number 12244 – 12256 totaling \$55,194.28.

Two payroll direct withdrawals – numbers ACH4577 – ACH4600 totaling \$46,417.74.

Electronic payments – numbers EFT3273 – EFT3284 totaling \$28,471.51.

Deposits totaling \$64,283.07 were made.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #844 as presented. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Supervisor Reports:

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry reported that the rain they got was very needed. Jerry added that it is now fair season and he encouraged everyone to go to the fair later in the week.

Steve Colvin – Steve reported that it rained hard. Steve added that he recently went on a sailing cruise near the San Juan Islands.

Lorah Super – Lorah reported that she has been working on drought planning and response with Jordana and other organizations. Lorah added that she had a productive conversation with the governor's policy advisor on climate issues. Lorah went on to say that she talked to Phil's references, and she will discuss that later in the meeting.

Edd Townsend – Edd was not present.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

Randy Kelley – Randy reported that he had been helping NRCS prepare for the office move that will happen later in the month.

Staff Reports:

Craig reported that the appraisal for the first water bank grant application was nearing completion. The application for the second water right is still being considered by Ecology and a decision won't be made until October. Craig added that he will work with Jordana and Lorah to try and get a quicker response from Ecology regarding the application as the lawyer for the second water right holder has been asking for a faster turnaround.

Craig added that the Rates and Charges Hearing with the Okanogan County Commissioners is scheduled for Monday the 11 at 11:00 AM. Craig welcomed two new staff members, Taylor George, who will be the new VSP Coordinator, and Brant Rosenthal Smith, who is the new Science Data and Monitoring Coordinator. Craig added that Justin Stanley's last day of work was August 31 and he is now employed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Craig went on to say that despite making a job offer to three people for the Education Specialist position, no one accepted the job. After meeting with staff to discuss what action to take next it was decided that the job would be reposted with a set wage scale that would be clear to applicants. Craig mentioned that the office move would be occurring in the last week of September and that he had appointed Kim and Cassandra to handle the office move. Lastly, Craig thanked everyone for letting him fully take two weeks off from work to enjoy a vacation with his family.

Becky reported that she was acting Executive Director while Craig was on vacation, and she enjoyed taking on the different role that Craig has. Becky added that currently staff have gathered over thirty letters of support for the Rates and Charges increase. Becky attended a Commission meeting remotely regarding the CREP program and learned that FSA is auditing past projects and have found some are not meeting standards. Becky ended by saying that the staff has been amazing as they have helped onboard Taylor and Brant, Chevelle stepped up and handled the internet issue, and she was glad Craig had a good vacation.

Eli reported that he has been working with Dylan doing postfire assessments in the Eagle Bluff Fire area. Eli added that he has been working with DNR to possibly do some aerial reseeding. Eli attended a meeting in Buttermilk that went well.

Taylor introduced herself to the board. She had previously worked for the Noxious Weed Board for three years.

Emmy reported that she was busy preparing all materials for the fair booth.

NRCS Report

Celeste Acord sent out a report, which was included in the board packets.

Partner Reports

No partners were present.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans

Save Water Save Energy Memorandum of Understanding – Jordana reported that the district currently has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Okanogan County PUD for the management of the Save Water Save Energy (SWSE) program. The SWSE program offers rebates through the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for updating and improving agricultural systems that provide water and energy savings. The current MOU is expiring in September and the PUD would like to renew the MOU for another two years. The agreement allows for district staff to perform site visits to facilitate the participation in the SWSE program for cooperators that are PUD customers. The agreement would provide the district with \$12,000.00 for staff time and mileage. Lorah Super moved to approve the Save Water Save Energy Memorandum of Understanding and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the agreement. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Jerry Asmussen abstained from the vote.

OCD-OCC ILA for the Okanogan County Water Bank – Jordana reported that the district would like to enter into an interlocal agreement with the Okanogan County Commissioners for the formation of the Okanogan County Water Bank. Aspect Consulting assisted the district in creating a draft agreement between the district and the Commissioners. The partnership will facilitate and guide the creation of policy and governing rules that will best serve the interests of the Okanogan County community. Steve asked if this draft included the updated termination period that would be a year instead of thirty days in which Craig responded yes. Craig noted that the point of this board decision packet is to have the board review the draft for approval and for approval to share the draft with the public. Steve Colvin moved to approve the draft of the OCD-OCC Interlocal Agreement and authorize staff to share the agreement. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Wehmeyer Project – Aaron reported that the Wehmeyer property is located just north of Riverside on Tunk Creek road. The landowner recently purchased the property to use for hay and fall grazing. The west side of the property is bordered by the Okanogan River and a wetland has formed in part of the hayfield due to the lack of agriculture activities in the past few years. The landowner is interested in fencing out the wetland and the river and putting in a watering facility

to protect the water quality and wildlife habitat along with planting 200 native trees to create more wildlife habitat. Aaron noted that there is a preexisting irrigation system that will supply water to the plants. Aaron added that the project had been funded by the Washington State Conservation Commission's Salmon Recovery program at a 75:25 cost-share rate. Steve Colvin moved to approve the Wehmeyer project, authorize staff to submit the addendum, and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the cost-share contract. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ellemehan Wildlife Area Watering Facility – Aaron reported that Ray Dagnon uses a 1,400-acre grazing lease in the Ellemehan Wildlife Area. Ray runs around 120 pairs in divided pastures from June until the first snow. There is one source of water within each pasture, but the water is the limiting factor to optimal grazing utilization. Aaron added that there is an ephemeral creek that is degraded due to heavy use. Aaron noted that the natural resource concerns for this project are the inadequate water for livestock, surface water contamination, and riparian degradation. To address the resource concerns Ray and WDFW would like to relocate and construct a watering facility out of the ephemeral creek with water supplied by gravity from an existing spring. They would also like to plant fifty potted plants and seed two acres with native seed mix. Lorah Super moved to approve the use of up to \$4,501.32 of NRI funding for up to a 75:25 cost share agreement to address the natural resource concerns on Ray Dagnon's grazing permit on the Ellemehan Wildlife Area and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the CPDS cost-share contract. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Buzzard Lake Fencing Project – Aaron reported that Buzzard Lake is a significant ecological area renowned for its multifaceted role in accommodating both recreational enthusiast and wildlife populations. Spanning across 120 acres, a riparian zone is distinctively set apart within the 850-acre wildlife area. The riparian area is encircled by traditional barbed-wire fencing, designed with the primary purpose of excluding livestock from Buzzard Lake and its adjoining meadow. The northernmost portion of the exclusion fence is the boundary between the meadow and the adjacent permitted grazing area. When livestock are granted access to the designated grazing zone, they exert substantial pressure on that portion of the fence in their pursuit of forage within the exclusion area. This heightened pressure often culminates in breaches of the fence, leading to unintended livestock in the riparian habitat, thereby impacting the ecological integrity of Buzzard Lake. Aaron added that the natural resource concern is surface water contamination and riparian degradation. To address the resource concerns WDFW and the lessee would like to replace the barbed wire fence with a fence using continuous steel fence panels along the northern part of the exclusion fence. Steve Colvin moved to approve the use of up to \$6,385.05 of Natural Resource Investment funding for up to a 50:50 cost-share agreement to address natural resource concerns at Buzzard Lake and to authorize Crag Nelson to sign the CPDS cost-share contract. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Water Bank Update – Jordana reported that the appraisal for the first water right is due back the third week of September. Natalie, the lawyer for water right sellers, would prefer to wait for the appraisal to come back before they agree to do the change application. Jordana added that the second water right application is still being considered by Ecology.

CCC Pipeline Project Update – Jordana reported that earlier in the day she received the signed Engineering Interlocal Agreement that was approved at the May meeting. The Underwood Conservation District wanted to have an interlocal agreement with all engineers. Jordana submitted a technical assistance budget to the Conservation Commission for the project that was for \$262,000.00, which is double the current Irrigation Efficiencies technical assistance budget.

Rates and Charges Update – Craig reported that the Rates and Charges Hearing is on September 11 at 11:00 AM, and he invited everyone present to come. Lorah asked if there was anything the board members could do to help, in which Craig replied getting letters of support signed and having people show up in support of the district online or in person at the hearing.

Prescribed Burn Association – Craig reported that he did not have an update on the prescribed burn association. Eli added that the funding opportunity that was discussed at the last meeting was not applied for due to the short time window. The topic will be revisited at the next board meeting.

Vacant Supervisor Appointment – Craig reported that all requirements had been met and the application deadline for the midterm elected position had passed. Per Resolution 2023-02, the board could choose to appoint an applicant to the board at the meeting. Becky added that one candidate had applied and was eligible to serve on the board. Craig stated that this appointed position would last for 9 months until the natural election process would take place in 2024. Lorah Super moved to appoint Phillip Dart into the vacant supervisor's position. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

WACD North Central Area Meeting – Craig informed that the district has until the October board meeting to finalize any resolutions for consideration at the WACD Area Meeting on October 19. Craig added that if there are any policy issues members feel should be addressed, it should be discussed. Resolutions can be approved at the current meeting or at the October meeting. Any supervisors and associate supervisors that wish to attend need to RSVP by September 22 by notifying Cassie and Becky. Craig and staff of his choosing would also attend the meeting. Steve Colvin moved to approve attendance and payment to the Adams Conservation District for the supervisors and associate supervisors who wish to go, including Craig and selected staff he chooses to bring, and acknowledged that RSVPs need to be in by September 22. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen adjourned the meeting at 7:41 PM.

Summary of Motions

Lorah Super moved to approve the August 3, 2023, board meeting minutes as amended. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #844 as presented. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the Save Water Save Energy Memorandum of Understanding and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the agreement. Steve Colvin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Jerry Asmussen abstained from the vote.

Steve Colvin moved to approve the draft of the OCD-OCC Interlocal Agreement and authorize staff to share the agreement. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve the Wehmeyer project, authorize staff to submit the addendum, and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the cost-share contract. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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10/5/2023

Lorah Super
Chair

Date



10/5/23

Becky Drenner
Finance Director

Date