

Walla Walla County Conservation

District March Board Meeting

Date: March 13, 2017 Time: 5:00 p.m. Place: District Conference Room

Presiding Officer: Ed Chvatal

Supervisors Present: Jim Kent, Todd Kimball, Rick Jones

Representatives of Other Agencies: Jess Davenport, WSCC; Keith Harrington, NRCS; Ed Teel, NRCS (late)

Also present: Jeff Schulke, Renee Hadley, Greg Kinsinger, Joanna Cowles, Lynda Oosterhuis, and Audrey Ahmann.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Ed Chvatal

Minutes: The Board reviewed the February minutes. **Motion by Todd Kimball and second by Jim Kent to approve the minutes as presented, motion passed.**

Financial Report: The board reviewed the March Financial Report. **Motion by Jim Kent and second by Todd Kimball to approve the March financial reports and pay the bills, motion passed.** Checks included 12678 to 12704 total all accounts: \$409,489.90

As of this date March 13^h 2017 the Board by a majority vote does approve for payment checks included in the March financial report and further described as follows: Checks 12678 through 12704 Total Accounts Balance: \$409,489.90

New Business:

- 1. NRCS Soils Mapping:** Keith Harrington, NRCS, described soils mapping work done by NRCS. The maps in current use were developed in 1962. Walla Walla was the first county mapped in the state; Harrington has little confidence in the accuracy of these maps. For example, areas designated as "Walla Walla" soils didn't distinguish between areas with the needed depth of soil to be truly "Walla Walla" soil and those with only a foot or two above bedrock. Harrington emphasized the extensive time needed to perform soils mapping. He is hoping to update a few areas in the county and wanted to inform the board and district in case producers ask about his accessing their fields.
- 2. Update on the Commission:** Jess Davenport reviewed information from the Commission. She is working to ensure Jeff Schulke's appointment goes through. The Commission may call on the district to explain further our budget requests. The financial staff is updating the grant procedure manual.
- 3. Budget 2017:** The board reviewed the proposed 2017 budget. Almost all is contingent on the state budget which has not been passed. Ahmann mentioned that the numbers on the right of the first sheet represent income for 2017 that actually is from 2016 spending (reimbursements). She also pointed out that the budget includes McCaw but we are not certain to construct it this year; the grant goes to 2020. She mentioned that VSP (if funded) can help keep people working while we seek other grant sources. **Todd Kimball moved and Rick Jones seconded to accept the 2017 budget as presented, motion passed.**

4. **CREP maintenance cost hold-downs:** Hadley reviewed the draft hold down rates and how they were developed. After review, **Jim Kent moved and Todd Kimball seconded to adopt the new hold down rates as presented, motion passed.**
5. **Water Quality monitoring:** Cowles explained that 15 sites are currently being monitored and it takes about 2 days a month to collect and record the data: temperature, flow, and turbidity. These sites were set up under an Ecology grant and she plans to continue to send the information to Ecology. Jess Davenport mentioned that at one district, data collected since 1995 was now being used in successful grant applications as the data supported local conservation efforts. The board advised Cowles to continue monitoring for another year and will revisit it then to see if the effort is justified.
6. **Legislative visit:** Cowles went to Olympia with members of the Nature Conservancy to inform legislators of the Floodplains by Design work and raise awareness of the program.
7. **Performance Reviews:** Hadley has completed the employee evaluations; Chvatal and Schulke will return Wednesday to complete board reviews.

New Projects for Board Approval

1. **SFSRB projects, RCO funds:** Like other grant sources, the Snake River Salmon Recovery Funding Board (and RCO) requires a formal board resolution approving projects as part of the grant application process. Hadley reviewed the three projects as described in the handouts. The three projects are for 7 screens, the Mill Creek permanent fix, and the installation of Beaver Analogues in 3 locations. **Todd Kimball moved and Rick Jones seconded to approve the three project applications as described, motion passed.**

Program Updates

1. **Screens/Meters:** Kinsinger reported that weather has delayed project installations. There is an opportunity to use a WDFW screen on the Byerley project which is more expensive but a better solution on several levels (ease of use, fish-protection).
2. **CREP:** Cowles informed the board of two issues. The first is the moving of the CREP application deadline for renewals to July 14th; all renewals must be signed and entered in the FSA system by the end of July. The second is that the employee in charge of CREP for the county resigned her position which leave only one person (Kelly Betts) able to complete CREP and CRP contracts for the two counties.
3. **VSP:** Hadley plans to have a 90% complete draft ready by the end of June. Much depends on funding decisions by the legislature. She also reported that 30 people attended the mini-sessions and referred the board to her report that has more details.

Joint Agency Meetings

1. **WW Water Management Partnership Activities**
 - a. **Partnership Board:** Chvatal reported that problems with Ecology's monitoring water usage (of water in trust, water sold, water transferred, etc.) continue. The Partnership is also at risk of being reduced or eliminated in the state budget.

- 2. **SFRFB meeting:** Cowles reported that NOAH asked the state to come up with a new way to allocate funds, as the current system rather heavily favors Puget Sound. Under the new system developed, Puget Sound again takes the lion's share of the funding and the Lower Columbia is cut almost 50%. Steve Martin was heading to Olympia to argue instead for a 5% across the board cut. The proposed \$500,000 allocation leaves little for actual project implementation.
- 3. **Riparian Symposium:** Cowles attended and was familiar with most of the techniques described for successful riparian restoration. In Chelan Lidar was used to measure shade and focus efforts to areas most in need of work.

NRCS report: Ed Teel came in late and reported on a decrease in direct seed sign ups. One issue is dealing with residue under a no-burn restriction. The Local Work group would like to increase the payment from 14.00 to 21.43 per acre for mowing. Letters are being drafted in support of this; the board agreed to review and support the letters.

Public Comment Period: There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 without a formal motion.

Respectfully submitted

		
Audrey Ahmann Assistant Manager, Finance	Ed Chvatal Chairman	Jim Kent Treasurer

Next meeting: April 10, 2017

Motions:

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| To approve the Jan. minutes as written: | Motion: T. Kimball
Second: J. Kent
Motion passed |
| To approve the February Financial report: | Motion: J. Kent
Second: T. Kimball
Motion passed |
| To approve the 2017 budget as presented: | Motion: T. Kimball
Second: R. Jones
Motion passed |
| To adopt the CREP maintenance hold-down rates as presented: | Motion: J. Kent
Second: T. Kimball
Motion passed |
| Resolution: to approve three projects as presented for SFRSB grant funding: | Motion: T. Kimball
Second: R. Jones
Motion passed |