

Walla Walla County Conservation

District Nov. Board Meeting

Date: November 13, 2017

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Place: District Conference Room

Presiding Officer: Ed Chvatal

Supervisors Present: Jim Kent, Pat McConnell, Jeff Schulke

Supervisors Absent: Todd Kimball, Associate Mike Hagerman

Representatives of Other Agencies: Ed Teel, NRCS; Ray Ledgerwood, SCC; Martyn Quinn, DOE

Also present: Renee Hadley, Greg Kinsinger, Joanna Cowles Cleveland, Lynda Oosterhuis, and Audrey Ahmann, WWCCD; and members of the public: Annie Byerley, Seth Small

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Ed Chvatal.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the October minutes. **Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Pat McConnell to approve the minutes as presented, motion passed.**

November Financial Report: The board reviewed the November Financial Report. **Motion by Pat McConnell and second by Jeff Schulke to approve the November financial reports and pay the bills, motion passed.**

Checks included 12950 to 12973, total all accounts: \$393,342.07

As of this date November 13, 2017 the Board by a majority vote does approve for payment checks included in the November financial report and further described as follows: Checks 12950 through 12973 Total Accounts Balance: \$393,342.07

Introductions: The board welcomed guests Seth Small and Martyn Quinn.

New Business:

1. **Ray Ledgerwood** reported that the change in the Senate doesn't necessarily mean a special session will be called before January. The Commission is continuing to implement cost saving measures and looking for means to assist districts at risk for losing staff. Some districts have already furloughed employees. Cattlemen and the Wheat Growers Associations consider the Hirst fix as their highest priority. Ecology funds are also held up. NRCS is working to change task order rules to allow 75% NRCS match to 25% Commission funds; when this is finalized Ed Teel plans to implement a task order with the district. (This is a Doug Allen decision.) NACD has funds for about 5 district staff in the state to do EQIP and farm plans with NRCS.
2. **Martyn Quinn** reported the Walla Walla TMDL effectiveness monitoring report is delayed. This report identifies Ecology's restoration priorities for grant funding. Lack of a Capital budget may affect currently approved projects and recent applications, in that projects approved for funding but delayed, and projects of the next budget cycle, may run concurrently when the impasse is over; managing two years' worth of projects in one period may be problematic. Quinn reported Ecology may do some follow-up work with letter recipients in the coming year.

3. **Seth Small** came to request full payment on a maintenance bill submitted on behalf of Greta Hassler. Initially the District agreed to pay for some of the work. Small's position is that the work should be considered routine maintenance and needed to be done. The board understood this and also recognized that funding more water system work could expend funds needed for the riparian buffer itself, as both count toward the per acre cap. Given the complexity of the issue, the board decided that Ed Chvatal and Jeff Schulke will represent the board in determining, along with Small, Hadley, and Cowles Cleveland, what can be paid.
4. **Annie Byerley** gave a presentation on the importance of pollinators. She described the value of pollinators and how the presence of several bee species and their lifecycles affect producers' decisions on insect control practices.
5. **CAPP Guidelines:** Hadley and Ray spoke of the CAPP guidelines developed by Commission staff and being revised this fall. As per the guidelines, the board completed their annual review of the Personnel and Internal Procedures Manual and whether to add a section on the role of supervisors to the Internal Procedures Manual. **Pat McConnell moved and Jeff Schulke seconded to add to the Internal Procedure Manual the addition describing the role of supervisors, motion passed.**
6. **Election Resolution:** The board agreed to hold the Annual Meeting and Election concurrently on January 18th. The text of the election resolution was reviewed. **Jeff Schulke moved and Jim Kent seconded to adopt the resolution as presented, with Audrey Ahmann as the election supervisor, motion passed.**
7. **SCC Policy Initiatives:** Ray described the five policy initiatives from the SCC (see SCC website), developed with input from districts at the all-district policy meetings. Ray explained the CD building initiative is to assess district building needs and seek funding. On developing long-term sustainable funding, he described the Missouri example where districts joined with state parks to pass a statewide tax to support CDs and parks. The tax sunsets every 5 years and enjoys wide taxpayer support. The Habitat Projects, Permits & Approval initiative seeks to help districts with a streamlined process for permitting projects, while another initiative seeks to protect VSP participant plans and self-assessment tools from FOIA requests, like Farm Plans which are currently protected. The most controversial initiative is an attempt to make District voluntary landowner conservation work a statutory responsibility of conservation districts, which some agencies view as an attempt to dilute their role and responsibilities under statute.

Old Business:

1. **Screen Budget:** Although the construction contract was signed, BPA decided our cultural resource review procedure doesn't meet BPA's requirements and is delaying installation until their reviews are complete. This is significant because the projects need to be installed during the winter irrigation hiatus.
2. **Agency Lead, Presidential portraits:** In response to the letter from our board, the district was informed that the official portraits have been released and are being printed.

Program Updates

1. **Screens:** As per above, the cultural resource delay is a concern, but designs are continuing.
2. **Meters:** Kinsinger expects the program to transition smoothly with plenty of new meters in process. There are no new meter projects to approve at this meeting.
3. **CREP:** Cowles Cleveland reported on the general slowdown and delay of projects due to the Capital budget issue. Hyland's project was not approved at County Committee even after his appeal; he is elevating his appeal. At issue is extreme weed pressure in a very arid site that is considered to have a high possibility of planting failure. (Several nearby projects were not successful.) The district has no role until FSA approves the contract. Jensen's installation is going well and the grant was extended to the end of January.
4. **VSP:** Todd Kimball accompanied Hadley at the second review October 24th and it appears that with changes the plan has a good chance of approval at the November 17th meeting.
5. **Soil Grant:** Testing is halted until the spring.
6. **Education Outreach:** Annual meeting prep is underway. Burbank elementary asked us to present at their science night this spring.

Employee Reports: Employee reports were provided to the board prior to the meeting.

Joint Agency Meetings

1. **SE Area Meeting:** McConnell attended and noted that Ed Teel was awarded Conservation Partner of the Year, an honor well-deserved.
2. **WW Water Management Partnership:** Mary Verner was introduced as the head of Ecology's Water Resource Program.
 - a. **Policy Advisory meeting:** Reviewed the draft report to the legislature.
 - b. **Water Resource Panel:** story remains the same, wanting more instream water but without funding sources to facilitate this.
3. **SFRFB meeting:** Cowles Cleveland participated on a committee to recommend changes to the scorecard to help better match the scorecard results to final project ranking. Their suggested changes will be up for a vote at the December meeting. The board added a funding policy that has two tiers of match requirements: 15% for up to the first 400,000 of a project and 50-50 for costs between 400,000 and 750,000.

Misc. Discussion and Public Comments:

Hadley informed the board that a producer who was in arrears with a screen cost share payment was being considered for another project. The board recalled that a policy was adopted for this situation some years ago, but staff was unable to locate documentation of such a policy. **Pat McConnell moved and Jim Kent seconded that landowners who have defaulted on cost share**

for their projects are ineligible to participate in future District cost-shared projects until paid in full; motion passed. ¹

Ed Teel was asked for any further comments. He remarked that an after-burning status review was conducted and showed the producer met the residue requirements.


Ray Ledgerwood mentioned that when the Capital budget passes, the Commission expects districts to be ready to proceed on projects quickly so to be sure the CPDSystem is up to date.

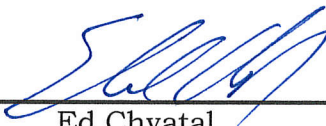
Hadley informed the board that Greg Kinsinger was retiring December 15th, and there would be an Open House on that date. The board expressed their appreciation of his dedication to the district success and landowners.

There were no public comments.

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

Respectfully submitted


Audrey Ahmann
Assistant Manager, Finance


Ed Chvatal,
Chairman


Jim Kent
Member

Next meeting: December 11, 2017

Motions:

To approve the October minutes as written:	Motion: Schulke, Second: McConnell Motion passed
To approve the November Financial Report	Motion: McConnell, Second: Schulke Motion passed
To adopt the addition related to the role of supervisors as presented to the Internal Procedures Manual,	Motion: McConnell, Second: Schulke Motion passed
To adopt the Election Resolution as presented and name Audrey Ahmann as Election Supervisor,	Motion: Schulke, Second: Kent Motion passed

¹ After the meeting, the following policy, adopted November 13, 2006, was found in the official minutes: "Policy statement 2: A landowner's past performance on contracts and/or binding agreements with the District or its cooperators will be considered and may affect their eligibility for additional technical or financial assistance by the District. Applications for defaulting landowners will be handled on a case by case basis and the determination of their eligibility will be at the discretion of the District Board of Supervisors."