

Walla Walla County Conservation

District Nov. 2018 Board Meeting

Date: November 13th, 2018

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Place: District Conference Room

Presiding Officer: Pat McConnell

Supervisors Present: Pat McConnell, Jeff Schulke, Ed Chvatal, Jim Kent and Associate Annie Byerley

Supervisors Absent: Todd Kimball, Associate Mike Hagerman

Representatives of Other Agencies: Ed Teel, NRCS

Also present: Renee Hadley, Lynda Oosterhuis, Joanna Cowles Cleveland and Audrey Ahmann

Members of the Public: Leo Pauly, Kirsten (DNR)

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Pat McConnell.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the Oct. minutes. **Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Jim Kent to approve the minutes as presented, motion passed.**

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

Checks included 13349 to 13378, total all accounts: \$244,906.58

As of this date November 13th, 2018 the Board by a majority vote does approve for payment checks included in the November financial reports and further described as follows: Checks 13349 to 13378, Total November Balance: \$244,906.58

New Business:

- 1. NRCS Update:** Ed Teel reported that NRCS is reviewing CSP contracts for 2018 payments. Of the 130 about half will be reviewed. There can be no renewals until the new budget is passed. Only limited CSP modifications can be completed. EQIP is fully funded but funds for planning are not available. Staff can only work on existing contracts. As for the new Farm Bill, the approaching holidays will impede progress and there is little other news.
- 2. Election Resolution:** The proposed Election Resolution was presented to the board for review. After review, **Jeff Schulke moved and Ed Chvatal seconded to approve the resolution as presented** (with the phone number updated), **motion passed.**
- 3. Discussion of negotiating overhead rate:** Ahmann is working with RCO to negotiate an overhead rate that will also be applied to Ecology contracts. Overhead rates are determined by dividing the base (wages and benefits of staff) by indirect costs such as lease, utilities, and some admin time. The proposed rate is 26.5% and she is waiting for RCO's response. The Commission allows a maximum of 25%; some entities do not allow an overhead rate.

4. **Resignation of Associate Supervisor:** Due to cost-share limits for associate supervisors, Nick Pucker resigned his position. The board expressed a hope that he will continue to attend meetings and participate.
5. **CREP maintenance rates:** Cowles Cleveland reported on implementing the board's policy that raised the local maintenance cap for projects but kept the hold-down rates in place at a contract's signing in effect for the duration of the contract. She reported that landowners and contractors have found it hard to track different hold-down rates on multiple projects. In addition, the current rule results in rates set in 2008 being applied to 2016 contracts. (The board allowed higher rates in 2017.) In light of these issues, and recognizing that the state sets a maintenance cap which Walla Walla will not exceed, the board agreed to have one set of hold down rates apply to all contracts. **Jeff Schulke moved and Jim Kent seconded to apply the most current hold down rates to all contracts that are in play for CREP maintenance, motion passed. Ed Chvatal moved and Jim Kent seconded to review and then set hold down rates for maintenance for the coming year at each December board meeting, motion passed.**
6. **Returning funds for project:** The landowner informed the district that he sold his property but has not disclosed the new owner's name. Despite numerous efforts, the new landowner's identity is still unknown. It may be that the livestock issue is now moot. **Ed Chvatal moved and Jeff Schulke seconded to that due to the change in ownership and a lack of response from the landowner, the project be canceled and Ecology informed, motion passed.**
7. **For board information:** Hadley informed the board that WACD posted the area resolutions at their website. Jeff Schulke and Jim Kent are attending the conference.

Public Comment: Annie Byerley and Kirsten described their Ag-Forestry Leadership class and are in Walla Walla for a reception and a "crime tour" of Walla Walla area jails, detention centers and the state penitentiary. At a later date, they will travel to Ecuador to learn about additional Ag-Forestry concerns before completing their program.

New Projects:

1. **Streamflow grant applications:** There was a four week application window for funds from the Hirst fix. Many types of projects qualify. Hadley applied for the Stiller Pond and Locher Pit aquifer recharge monitoring and GFID Upper Canal piping and siphon replacement. If funded, these projects will account for most (75%) of the funds available. The siphon must be replaced if the upper pipeline is completed.
2. **Other:** Hadley also mentioned that VSP projects will be selected for implementation by the Work Group at their December meeting. These are stand-alone projects that address a VSP identified issue and are funded with the remaining VSP grant.

Program Updates:

1. **Oosterhuis:** Reported that the Food System Coalition has released a one-pager that explains the Food Hub. She is attending meetings and assisting with mapping. The

Wildhorse Grant work is beginning; the goal is renovation of two older CURB projects at the schools. Oosterhuis also met with Pheasants Forever which might forego their policy of requiring landowners to allow hunting access in exchange for habitat restoration work.

2. **Cowles Cleveland:** There are three new CREP projects proceeding to installation this fall and next spring. One of the contracts has some false indigo which may delay complete installation, so the landowner might need a PIP loan. (Pip loans cover installation in phases so the contractor or landowner don't have to carry the costs.) There are some folks interested in signing up for CREP but these are delayed until the Farm Bill passes. She attended a meeting with FSA and NRCS. The FSA hold-down rates were discussed. The rates were set by a state committee with the intent of reining in contractors but at this point the rates are so low contractors are turning down work because they are losing money on the installations. Brian Cochran is spearheading trying to get these rates reconsidered.
3. **Hadley:** The Jones project is largely installed though not totally wrapped up. Changes were made at the direction of the landowner. Area VSP districts met to discuss implementation and view a presentation by the sub-contractor who developed their counties' work plans. She also reported that Lisa attended a burn program meeting where special circumstance burns were discussed. Under special circumstances, Ecology has the flexibility to issue a permit that doesn't meet the usual criteria.

Joint Agency Meetings

1. **WW Water Management Partnerships:** no report.
2. **SFRFB meeting:** The co-leads met and discussed the ranking system and caps, deciding to leave both as-is. Hadley noted this includes using the ranking system instead of distributing funding equally among participating counties. All projects submitted this year will be funded.
3. **SE Area Meeting:** Hadley reported that the Center for Technical Development will offer certification credits/classes at the June WADE conference. The SCC submitted the budget request totaling about 115 million, which includes funding VSP implementation. SCC reported that all agencies have greatly increased their budget requests. For example, Ecology is requesting a 50% increase.

Misc. Discussion and Public Comments:

In response to a question from the public, Hadley explained that it was not the change in ownership that resulted in the canceled project, rather, it was the difficulty in contacting the new landowner to arrange for the continuation of the project. Hadley also mentioned that the District is listed in the county's new Hazard Mitigation Plan, which means in case of a disaster we are eligible to apply for funds to assist.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 without a formal motion.

Respectfully submitted


Audrey Ahmann
Assistant Manager, Finance


Pat McConnell,
Chairman


Jeff Schulke
Member

Next meeting: December 10th, 2018

Motions:

To approve the Oct. minutes as written:

Motion: Schulke
Second: Kent
Motion passed

To approve the Nov. Financial report:

Motion: Chvatal
Second: Schulke
Motion passed

To approve the election resolution: that a poll site election for an open position on the District board of Supervisors be held on January 22 from 8:30 until 12:30 at the WW Regional Airport. The current elected position expires May 2019 and is held by Jim Kent. An appointed position that also expires May 2019 will be advertised at a later date. Interested candidates must be registered voters who reside within the boundaries of the District. Candidates may be required to be landowners or operators of a farm, depending on the current composition of the District Board of Supervisors. The filing deadline for candidates to file their candidate information is noon on December 14, 2018. Interested candidates must file their candidate information at the following location: 325 N. 13th Ave, Walla Walla, WA. Eligible voters are registered voters who reside within the boundaries of the District. The last day and time that voters can request absentee ballots from the District is January 4th. Absentee ballots can be requested from Walla Walla County Conservation District, Audrey Ahmann, 325 N 13th Ave, Walla Walla, WA., or by calling (509)956-3753 during normal business hours 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The election supervisor is Audrey Ahmann, contact information above.

Motion: Schulke
Second: Chvatal
Motion passed

To apply the most current hold down rates to all contracts that are in play for CREP maintenance,

Motion: Schulke
Second: Kent
Motion passed

To review and then set hold down rates for maintenance for the coming year at each December board meeting,

Motion: Chvatal
Second: Kent
Motion passed

That due to the change in ownership and a lack of response from the landowner, the project be canceled and Ecology informed,

Motion: Chvatal
Second: Schulke
Motion passed