LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
NRCS / FSA MEETING ROOM-DAVENPORT WA
Wednesday, June 10, 2015

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 8:30 AM by Chairman, Mike Carstensen. Those attending the meeting were as follows: Eddie Johnson, Alan Stromberger, Jim Baye, and Jeff Schibel - LCCD Supervisors; Mark Stedman, County Commissioner; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association; Melissa Michael, FSA; Elsa Bowen, Kathy McQuade, Lea Shields, and Dean White - LCCD staff

Mike welcomed Jeff as a newly appointed Board member. Elsa passed around the list from the Conservation Commission congratulating Jeff and 27 other conservation district board members across the state appointed by the Commission.

A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:

- ***1. Eddie noted that a motion authorizing the Manager to advertise for a Communications Coordinator after the Board came out of executive session was missing from the May 13 minutes. Eddie had moved and Jim had seconded this motion. Eddie moved to approve the May 13 minutes as amended with the addition of this motion. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.***

B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:

- ***2. Eddie moved to pay and approve vouchers #9469 to #9500, with 5 EFT's, totaling $80,518.12. Jeff seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.***

- ***3. Eddie moved to submit voucher #5 for the Fort Spokane Fuels Reduction grant in the amount of $364.08 to CWPP – Forest Service. Jim seconded. Motion passed.***

- ***4. Eddie moved to submit voucher #6 for the Fort Spokane Fuels Reduction grant in the amount of $50.03 to CWPP – Forest Service. Jim seconded. Motion passed.***

- ***5. Eddie moved to submit voucher #5 for the Passive Rehydration 3 grant in the amount of $65,520.03 to DOE. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.***

- ***6. Eddie moved to submit voucher #22 for the 14-39-IM grant in the amount of $3,680.74 to the Conservation Commission. Jim seconded. Motion passed.***

- ***7. Eddie moved to submit voucher #9 for the EA-14-39-03 grant in the amount of $2,118.48 to the Conservation Commission. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.***

- ***8. Eddie moved to submit voucher #2 for the EA-14-06 CSTWP grant in the amount of $7,833.56 to the Conservation Commission. Jim seconded. Motion passed.***

- ***9. Eddie moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for April 24, 2015 through May 26, 2015 be approved. The total amount owed was $218.22. Jeff seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.***

- ***10. Eddie moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Cenex credit card with a closing date of May 10, 2015 be approved. The total amount owed was $282.22. Jim seconded. Motion passed.***

After review, the board initialed each page of the Bank statements for the checking and money market accounts.

The board reviewed the report of the current annual leave/sick leave balances for the District employees.

11. Eddie moved to approve the Treasurer's report and the Grant's report as presented. Jim seconded. Motion passed.

C. AGENDA

County Commissioner Report

Mark Stedman noted that work is progressing on the new Public Works shop next to the Public Works building. Two meetings were recently held in Odessa and Davenport to review the final draft version of the updated Shoreline Management Plan for Lincoln County. The updated SMP plan should be approved and in place by the spring of 2016. At the Odessa meeting, discussion was held about reducing the width of the flood plain on the flood map for the town of Odessa. The mayors of the towns in Lincoln County are planning on meeting with Ecology in the near future to reduce the width of the flood plain on the FEMA flood plain maps for their cities. Mark will be meeting later today with Kevin Lindsay with GSI in Harrington to discuss municipal water issues. T-Mobile is scheduled to have service up and running on 5 cell phone towers across the county by the end of the month. If the coverage is better through T-Mobile, the county will switch to T-Mobile to provide cell phone service. The county will not chip seal any asphalt roads this year but instead will focus on sealing cracks, and will switch in the future between sealing cracks and chip sealing in alternate years. The county is spraying roadsides this year along roads that haven't been sprayed in years, and 2 new mowers are on order to mow down roadside vegetation. The governor will be coming to Eastern Washington to sign the bill to fund some repairs to the Palouse/Coulee City railroad system. A letter from the Inland Northwest Land Trust asking for support from the Lincoln County Commissioners for the

purchase of a 150 acre parcel of rangeland with small ponds to add to the adjacent Reardan Audubon Lake Wildlife area was included in the board member packets. Commissioner Stedman was asked about the county commissioner's position regarding the acquisition of this land. The county commissioners are not in favor of additional purchase of private land with public money.

Expanded Enduris Coverage

Elsa announced that Enduris had increased the District's liability coverage up to $20 million dollars with a rate increase of 5%.

Policy Manual

The proposed Prohibited Items policy text was copied from the Lincoln County policy manual. Prohibited items include knives with blades longer than 4", dangerous chemicals and explosives. If employees wish to carry a concealed handgun, they must possess a valid Washington State Concealed Pistol License. However, no guns are allowed inside the office anyway since the building is rented by the federal government.

12. *Eddie moved to approve the Prohibited Items policy as presented. Jim seconded. Motion passed.*

The proposed Cost Share Allocation Plan for Conservation Commission and Special Assessment policy text was discussed next. Up to $50,000 per year of Special Assessment funding would be allocated for cost share on projects. For Conservation Commission funding, up to $10,000 per project would be allocated at 50% cost share maximum. Any entity with a project with a potential relationship to federal funding must have DUNS and SAMS registration completed before cost share would be made available.

13. *Jim moved to approve the Cost Share Allocation Plan for Conservation Commission and Special Assessment policy as presented. Eddie seconded. Motion passed.*

The proposed Water Conservation Program policy text was discussed next. Up to $15,000 per year of Special Assessment funding would be allocated for cost share on water conservation projects. Mike proposed that the program be widened to include all resources and be renamed as the Resource Conservation Program.

14. *Jeff moved to approve the Resource Conservation Program policy as amended. Jim seconded. Motion passed.*

Cover Crops

A letter from Leslie Michel and other information on the cover crop grant being administrated by Okanogan CD was included in the board member packets. The board decided by general consensus that it would not request Leslie to give a presentation on the cover crop grant at the July board meeting.

2015 Cooperative Extension Crop Tour Schedule

The summer Cooperative Extension crop tour schedule was distributed to the board members. The Harrington tour will be on June 10, the North Lincoln County/Creston

tour will be on June 23, the Almira tour will be on June 24, and the Reardan tour will be on June 25. There will be no tour on the Wilke Farm this year, as a tour is only held on alternating years.

NACD Summer Board Meeting in Spokane

The NACD Summer Board Meeting will be held this year in Spokane at the Davenport Hotel on July 10 – 13 (Friday through Monday). A tour of the Palouse hosted by Spokane CD will be held on Monday, July 13.

15. *Eddie moved to authorize board members and District staff (at the Manager's discretion) to attend some or all of the NACD Summer Board Meeting in Spokane on July 10 – 13. Jim seconded. Motion passed.*

Passive Rehydration 3 Grant Report

The preliminary Passive Rehydration grant report with 175 pages is out for review. The Board must approve the report by the end of June before the fiscal year ends.

Washington State Conservation Commission Capital Funds Policy

Elsa emailed the WSCC Capital Funds Policy to the board members for comment. This policy limits the maximum amount of cost share per individual project to $50,000. All conservation districts will now have to follow a cultural resources review similar to that used by NRCS, but this is already required now by a separate order from the Governor.

NRCS Report

Ann was on family leave and was not available to provide a report. NRCS staff still has extensive work to do on CSP and EQIP applications and contracts.

Washington State Health Care Authority

Because LCCD is currently a member of the Washington State Health Care Authority, its employees are required to take the HCA health insurance, with the one exemption that employees can opt out if they want to be on their spouse's health care policy. If a District employee doesn't take the HCA insurance, and they are not on their spouse's health care plan, the District still has to pay $145.90 per month to the HCA, even though the employee has obtained other private plan health insurance.

The District has been out of compliance with the HCA due to Stacey having non-HCA insurance. In addition, new full time employees are to be offered health care insurance right away and do not have to wait for any 6 month probation period. Part time employees are also to be offered health care benefits through the district if they work more than 8 hours per month for over 6 months. Stacey has resigned and no longer works for the District, but the HCA is requiring that the District reimburse Lea for any health care claims she incurred during her first 6 months of employment with the District.

Elsa handed out a list of the health insurance plans that are available for District employees living in Lincoln County. The only plans available are from the Uniform Medical Plan or from Group Health. The District could decide to opt out of the Health Care Authority. The District currently offer employees a stipend of $270 per month to help pay for health insurance, and this stipend has remained at $270 for at least the

past 14 years. Other conservation districts across the state pay up to 80 to 85% of health care premiums, with the employee paying the other 15 to 20%. The question was raised whether to pay a dollar amount or a percent of the health care premiums for District employees. Mike suggested that a percent of the health care premiums be paid by the District, and that the percentage paid be reevaluated every year.

16. *Jim moved that the District pay 85% of the employee subscription cost if an employee elects to accept health care insurance through the Washington State Health Care Authority, and that the percentage of the employee subscription cost paid by the District be reevaluated every year. Eddie seconded. Motion passed*

Report from Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association

Jack Field spoke in depth about the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) for sage grouse in Washington State. The Washington Cattlemen's Association has been asking the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife to develop a CCAA for sage grouse to help protect ranchers before the United States Fish & Wildlife Service may decide to list sage grouse on the federal endangered species list. The CCAA must be developed and individual agreements signed with each rancher before the sage grouse is listed as an endangered species in order to protect the ranchers who sign the agreement from adverse action due to incidental take/killing of a sage grouse on the rancher's land. A CCAA has already been developed for sage grouse in Harney County, Oregon, and has been used as a template for the development of a CCAA for sage grouse in Washington. A habitat protection plan for sage grouse and pygmy rabbits has already been developed for ranchers in Douglas County, Washington. The CCAA would not provide any cost share. Other programs like EQIP would have to provide cost share to implement activities agreed upon in a CCAA.

Jack has concerns that an individual grazing plan would have to be developed for each individual rancher, that predators like coyotes and ravens would need to be controlled, that fires would have to be controlled, and that ranchers and farmers might be restricted from using some pesticides. A CCAA for sage grouse in Washington might be available by this September. Jack recommends that ranchers with land within the historical range of sage grouse (most of central and eastern Washington with sagebrush) sign up for the CCAA if and when it becomes available, even though the remaining pockets of sage grouse are currently only in Yakima County, Grant County, Douglas County, and the Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area in Lincoln County.

Jack also noted that the Clean Water and Livestock Operations: Assessing Risks to Water Quality guide that has been debated and refined by the Ag & Water Quality Advisory Board for the last year has just been posted this June on the Ecology website. This guide was developed using the indicators of grazing and water quality developed by Tip Hudson, Extension range specialist stationed in Ellensburg. Copies of the 7 page document were printed out and distributed to the Board and to the staff. Jack noted that Ecology has formally recognized that exclusion is not the only tool to protect streams, but Ecology still prefers exclusion over other management tools.

FSA Report

Melissa reported that a year extension is available for eligible expiring CRP contracts, and that the next general CRP signup will be held from December 1, 2015 through

February 17, 2016. Field checks may be difficult to do during this winter time signup period. Reconstitutions will start next week. Acreage reporting continues, and enrollment for ARC/PLC begins June 17, 2015 and will end Sept. 30, 2015. A new director for the county committee is needed from the Wilbur – Creston – Almira area.

Executive Session

The Board went into executive session under option 1(g) of RCW 42.30.110 at 11:30 AM for about 2 hours to discuss personnel issues and conduct interviews for the Communications Coordinator. The board came back out of executive session at 2:30 PM.

17. *Alan moved that at the Manager's discretion, the Communications Coordinator position be offered to the selected candidate and at a negotiated wage within the advertised salary range. Jim seconded. Motion passed.*

Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Baye, Secretary

Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:
All 17 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the May 13 minutes as amended.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #9469 to #9500, with 5 EFT's, totaling $80,518.12.
- 3. M/S/P to submit voucher #5 for the Fort Spokane Fuels Reduction grant in the amount of $364.08 to CWPP – Forest Service
- 4. M/S/P to submit voucher #6 for the Fort Spokane Fuels Reduction grant in the amount of $50.03 to CWPP – Forest Service.
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- 8. M/S/P to submit voucher #2 for the EA-14-06 CSTWP grant in the amount of $7,833.56 to the Conservation Commission.

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- 11. M/S/P to approve the Treasurer's report and the Grant's report as presented.

- 12. M/S/P to approve the Prohibited Items policy as presented.

- 13. M/S/P to approve the Cost Share Allocation Plan for Conservation Commission and Special Assessment policy as presented.

- 14. M/S/P to approve the Resource Conservation Program policy as amended.

- 15. M/S/P to authorize board members and District staff (at the Manager's discretion) to attend some or all of the NACD Summer Board Meeting in Spokane on July 10 – 13.

- 16. M/S/P that the District pay 85% of the employee subscription cost if an employee elects to accept health care insurance through the Washington State Health Care Authority, and that the percentage of the employee subscription cost paid by the District be reevaluated every year.

- 17. M/S/P that at the Manager's discretion, the Communications Coordinator position be offered to the selected candidate and at a negotiated wage within the advertised salary range.