



**Grant County Conservation District
Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2022 – 7:00 PM
In-Person and Teleconference – Phase 3**

Attendance:

Supervisors – Dave Stadelman (Chair), John Preston, Richard Leitz, Glenn Burkholder

Staff - Kristina Ribellia, Harold Crose, Elliott DeLong (Recorder),

Agencies –Mike Baden (WSCC)

Guest – None

Call to Order and Introductions:

D. Stadelman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Public Input:

No public input.

Approval of March 8th, 2022 Monthly Board Meeting Minutes:

Motion by G. Burkholder to accept the March 8th, 2022 minutes as presented, seconded by J. Preston, motion carries.

Monthly Financial Reports:

No Financial report – Financial will be completed for the May 10, 2022 board meeting and will include financials from 3/8/-5/10/ 2022.

Agency Reports:

NRCS– From NRCS; Delivered by DeLong - April 18th set as a return to physical offices as the COVID transition draws to a close by May 2nd. All employees are scheduled to return to work except those in remote work positions. Local Working Group has a survey in conjunction with WSCC /NRCS for concern. LWG input will be used to wrap up the data collection tool changes and submitted to the state office. State Technical Advisory Committee is meeting on April 21, 2022 from 9:30 am-2:15 pm and the meeting will be held both remotely and in person. Meeting information was forwarded to CD managers and others that expressed interest in attending by contacting either Erin Kaczmarczyk, Anna Lael, or Kristina Ribellia.

A second sign-up for WaterSMART is forthcoming. Five pre-approved applications remain with the possibility of at least one more application cancellation. There are \$648,785 remaining WaterSMART funding pools. A new RCPP agreement with Yakama Nation has been signed and subsequently supplemental agreements are being worked on with additional partners. Spring installations are well underway and new RCPP proposals are due April 13, 2022.

One CSP application is currently in. Applicants continued to cancel or defer their applications due to economic uncertainties. EQIP has 20 pre-approved/approved applications, four cancellations since contracts were offered due again due to the economic uncertainty. CTA reporting from NRCS projects as well as partner project work. These projects can be completed, planned, or partially completed. CTA helps to fund our task orders which helps NRCS get conservation on the. The Ephrata office has the

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following positions still open Civil Engineering Technician, Program Assistant, and a Resource Conservationist. Currently, there is a review for a recent graduate application for Soil Con position. Additionally, if any civil rights or other training is requested, please contact Erin Kaczmarczyk.

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC)–Baden– The Current Legislative session has been completed, and several positive outcomes for Conservation Districts. There have been no changes to elections during this session, so until then elections will continue as normal. The Conservation Commission will likely take up a similar stance as this year with election reforms, something likely to be discussed at the annual meeting. The Legislation did include a significant change to the supplemental budget (10 million for Riparian improvements, engineering funds, etc.) Additional changes will be forthcoming on programs including Sustainable farms and fields, VSP, cost shares, and additional commission programs. Some changes have been implemented that could affect some conservation districts, though GCCD is currently doing most if not all of these currently. Changes include public comment, emergency meeting procedures, 24-hour advanced postings of agendas, and physical space requirements. A final note, the Conservation Commission is developing a budget survey that will be going out to districts soon and the Schedule 22 and Annual Plan is due May 31st.

Old Business:

GCCD Elections Update – Ribellia – Based on the responses from the requested ballots, Glenn Burkholder was re-elected as a member of the GCCD Board of Supervisors and should be certified by the Commission in the May meeting. The application for the appointed position currently held by Richard Leitz is open however, as of the deadline no other applications have been submitted that we know of.

Building Update- Ribellia – Draft of the agreement has been sent to Wyman Law office for review and suggested edits. The building continues to progress however, no firm move-in date has been established as of April 12, 2022. However, equipment and furnishings have been procured through the Freeform contract. All materials are currently being warehoused in the Freeform facility in Spokane and will be installed once the building has been completed.

Moses Lake Watershed Council (MLWC) – Ribellia – GCCD continues to look for funding sources to support lake improvement efforts. As of late, GCCD completed an appropriations request from Dan Newhouse's office. The appropriations request was to support the application of a lanthanotid bentonite clay to address the phosphorus in the Rocky Ford Arm of the lake. The appropriation submitted would equate to approximately \$3 million and was submitted on April 11, 2022. Moses Lake Irrigation and Rehabilitation District and GCCD have been working to update gaps in the sampling and monitoring program used on Moses Lake. This would address the gaps in data that would better help address algae concerns and better manage Moses Lake going forward.

VSP – Crose – VSP continues to move forward in both Grant and Adams Counties. New possible VSP plans are likely to come for the 13 growers currently on the 79.2 as part of the OGWRP. Going forward Adams VSP will continue outside the OGWRP producers and look to focus on the Cow Creek Corridor. Evaluation determined that in Adams County the focus will be on acreage over number of plans largely due to grower size. In Grant County, plans continue to progress as well. Most recently M&B Farms has been completed and conversation led to the repair of the culver along Corfu Rd as well as training



opportunities for Britton Baker. In addition, the training Deanna Elliott has received has shown significant benefit to the district and will likely continue as she completes her final semester in the GIS program.

OGWRP Update—Croze/Ribellia – East Columbia Basin Irrigation District (ECBID) has a high level of interest in GCCD continuing to help support the OGWRP going forward. Support continues to grow with growers as well and all agencies involved are working in the right direction, particularly with the PL-566 watershed planning statement of work going out for contract soon. ECBID is still sponsoring the project but will likely have GCCD help provide project management with NRCS assisting in the process.

Credit Card Update – Ribellia/DeLong – Currently the GCCD credit card is still frozen and there is no way to reissue cards or perform account changes with the card still in Dale Wentworth's name. The current card is through Chase Bank and was originally issued to Upper Grant Conservation District. As requested, the process of canceling the current card and opening a new credit line has begun. D. Wentworth will be coming into take care of it. Currently, considerations are being made with US Bank, Chase Bank, and Banner Bank. Both Chase and Banner have provided some information however, clarification on details is ongoing and will be brought to the board once clarifications can be determined.

Name Change Resolution – Ribellia – Grant County Conservation District is considering a name change to better address and clarify the district as a whole. After much deliberation Columbia Basin Conservation District is a name that both staff and administration have found to be the best going forward. The name change requires a resolution and petition be submitted to the Conservation Commission. Once the Commission has approved the change, the petition will go to the Washington Secretary of State's office for the final acceptance. In order to move forward, the GCCD board would need to pass a resolution and sign a petition to approve the proposed name change.

Motion by R. Leitz to move forward with a resolution and petition to change the Grant County Conservation District's name to Columbia Basin Conservation District. Seconded by G. Burkholder, motion carries.

New Business:

GCCD Salary Schedule - Ribellia – Currently conservation district salaries are not standardized across districts or even within districts. Some districts have taken it onto themselves to come up with a salary schedule that best fits their operations and goals. Developing a schedule would help make hiring and wage increases consistent across the district and account for cross-training, experience and education. The schedule would be developed similar to the state schedule but more applicable to conservation districts, such as the one developed by Okanogan Conservation District. Going forward, district staff and the board could work together to develop an outline that is acceptable for both administration and staff. Once established the schedule will be used going forward.

Adjournment-

Motion by G. Burkholder to adjourn. Seconded by J. Preston, motion carries. The meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.



Chair Approval

Recorder Signature

Date

Date

Summary of Motions:

Motion by G. Burkholder to accept the March 8th, 2022 minutes as presented, seconded by J. Preston, motion carries.

Motion by R. Leitz to move forward with a resolution to change the Grant County Conservation District's name to Columbia Basin Conservation District. Seconded by G. Burkholder, motion carries.

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