



Columbia Basin Conservation District

Meeting Minutes

August 9, 2022 – 7:00 PM

In Person and Teleconference

Attendance:

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

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

Agencies – Holly Taylor (NRCS)

Call to Order and Introductions:

D. Stadelman called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Public Input: No public input.

Approval of July 12th, 2022, Monthly Board Meeting Minutes: Correction - Para Feedlot not Para Dairy

Motion by J. Preston to accept the July 12th, 2022 with the above-mentioned correction to the minutes, seconded by D. Roseburg, motion carries.

Approval of August 9th, 2022, Monthly Financial Reports:

Presented by E. DeLong – Reviewed monies owed or owing and current grants through July, including fiscal year 22. Financial topics including burn permits, funds received, grant funding, DOE, WSCC, EPA and NACD grant, cost share allocations, pass-through money, implementation grant, livestock funding, NRCS, RCPP, and DOE Burn Applications.

Motion by G. Burkholder to accept the August 9th, 2022, Financial report as presented, seconded by J. Preston, motion carries. Grant County checks #10871-10914 totaling \$81,598.43. Payroll checks #10872-10880 totaling \$18,571.29 and #10896-10907 totaling \$24,115.23 included in the above amount.

Agency Reports:

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC)– None

NRCS– Taylor – Erin Kaczmarczyk's last day with the Big Bend Team was 7/29/2022. The position has been posted and closed without additional details. Currently H. Taylor is acting in the position Erin previously occupied.

The second application period for WaterSMART- KRD produced 2 eligible applications that made it through assessment and ranking and have been pre-approved for funding. Approximately, \$210,000 will be spent from the remaining \$630,000 of WaterSMART KRD FY2022 funds. Remaining funds will be returned to national. A new WaterSMART proposal for irrigated land serviced by Quincy-Columbia Basin



Irrigation District in Grant County. If selected for funding the proposal will bring approximately 11 million dollars to the QCBID targeted area over the next 5 years.

No update on Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). no Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) applications at the current time. Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) requests are starting to come in for EQIP wildfire as vegetation continues to dry out. NRCS will continue to take wildfire applications as requests come in however, no wildfire EQIP sign up announced.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has completed planning on nearly 15,000 acres of CRP and is currently getting signatures and delivering conservation plans to FSA. Planning continues for CRP, SAFE, and Grasslands CRP. Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) needs continued work with local NRCS staff to provide partner projects for CTA. These projects can be completed, planned or partially completed.

Staffing updates are as follows:

- Civil Engineering Technician (Ephrata)- Vacant
- Program Assistant (Ephrata)- George McKinney to start 8/29/2022
- Resource Conservationist (Ephrata)- No eligible applicants
- Recent Graduate (Ephrata) – Kyle Reardon slated to start 9/11/2022
- District Conservationist (Ephrata) – Job posting closed 7/25/2022, no announcement
- Konrad Bomberger has been selected as the new Central Area Resource Conservationist
- State EQIP coordinator – Vice Alan Fulk- No announcement on selection

Old Business:

Building Update- Ribellia – Carpeting and flooring is in the process of completion but will likely add additional time delaying move in. Furniture is likely to be in sometime in early September. Aside from flooring, Water and HVAC are still incomplete with an unknown completion date. It is likely that there will be an additional delay on the move in date. Grant County Fire District 5 has met and review the latest changes to the agreement and currently have no issues.

Moses Lake Watershed Council (MLWC) – Crose – Activities with the Watershed Council has been focused on funding. Currently there is a proposal going out to the ARPA funds for a citizen scientist program to supplement the current algae sampling. The current status of the federal funding for the in-lake treatment is still not confirmed. NRCS may have a pathway for the funding however, the exact process may still need to be clarified in the coming months. District staff will be conducted outreach on August 6th and reached 125 individuals through the “Search for Yarely” play conducted in Moses Lake. The play was a good partnership with the Watershed Council members and helped promote the coming state of the lake meeting in September.

VSP – Crose – Columbia Basin Conservation District is amid the 10-year report window. Currently there are four plans under review and the report will be key to the success of the VSP program as a whole. Current focuses will shift to areas in the OGWRP and Cow Creek Corridor and focus on the groundwater areas. Additionally, VSP funds for cost shares will be available soon and could be a source of usable funding in the future. The next quarterly meetings will be in early September (9/8 – Grant VSP, 9/15 – Adams VSP).

OGWRP Update-Ribellia/ Crose – The budget package for the OGWRP has been designed and completed to include pumps, pipeline and other necessary materials, hopefully lining up with the funding coming in. NRCS has signed an agreement with the East Columbia Basin Irrigation District



(ECBID) and we are waiting to get the agreement for CBCD's agreement with ECBID for our portion of the project. The conservation district will be handling the contracting process for the OGWRP and developing the Request for Proposal (RFP) for address the actual on farm portions of the project. NRCS and ECBID along with CBCD would be reviewing any RFP that were received and making the final decision. Currently the next step requires a formal interlocal agreement between the conservation district and ECBID which should be forthcoming in the next couple of weeks and the board will receive a copy for review before the document is signed and the agreement is official.

Logo – Ribellia – The original logos received from the contractor has been less than ideal. Staff worked to perfect the logo for presentation to the board. The updated logo will be used for the website, future letterhead, and communications material.

Motion by R. Leitz to accept the Columbia Basin Conservation District Logo as presented, seconded by J. Preston, motion carries.

Springbrook Update – Ribellia/ DeLong – The newest quote from moving to the Springbrook platform has considerable higher than original 27,000 first year cost and as such does not provide a benefit for the district. However, with contact from Intuit and an independent individual outside the district, there may be a similar program in QuickBooks online to get the majority of the needs without the excessive cost. QuickBooks online would allow for the same financial process CBCD is currently using. The online version is slightly more expensive (\$80-\$100) monthly than the desktop but allows many more features that Springbrook also touted as a key to its platform. Ideally the conservation district would move to the online version of QuickBooks in the near future.

Motion by G. Burkholder to move from QuickBooks Desktop to QuickBooks online as the primary accounting software for the Columbia Basin Conservation District, seconded by R. Leitz, motion carries.

Job Description – Ribellia – First round of job descriptions that were approved in the July 2022 board meeting. They are being provided for GIS Coordinator, Operation Manager, NRCS TA, and Administrative Assistant. They include salary ranges, job description, duties, expected educational requirements and additional job details. The general layout is the same for all job descriptions however, each will likely be individual specific. These will also be the template for all future job postings. Additionally, the inclusion of a Communication/Outreach position has been included as a new position. The need for a full-time communications position is required to manage not only the direct correspondence but the websites, mailing list and other communication platforms the district is currently using to distribute information to our partners and the community. There is currently a part-time temporary position being filled for this role but it would need to be full-time to meet current district needs. The job would be posted and open and ideally candidates would be determined by the September board meeting for board approval.

New Business:

22-49-IMP addendum - DeLong – The fiscal year 23 addendum for the 22-49-Implementation funds will be divided into five outcomes. Basic Allocation, Cost Share, Technical Assistance, Outreach and Insurance & Dues as it has been in previous years. Basic allocation remains the same and will be distributed once the addendum is approved by the board and submitted to the Conservation Commission. CBCD staff work together to make the FY 23 Implementation grant support district activity as best as possible.

Motion by J. Preston to approve the 23-49-IMP Addendum as presented, seconded by R. Leitz, motion carries.



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Annual Plan Review/Mitigation – Crose – Reviewing and updating some of the information in the annual plan of work maybe beneficial to the district going forward. The document can be adjusted by the board as needed and looking more in detail to the specific areas could help guide the district going forward. Assessing the Shrub Steppe components of the county to determine where shrub steppe can be improved. Part of the improvement may come from the agreement CBCD has with Grant County for Mitigation of New development on Shrub Steppe. The mitigation, which has been in place since 2022, is designed to identify area where Shrub steppe can be adapted to improve the existing habitat back to a more pristine and natural condition. Mitigation would rely on the CBCD board, WDFW, County and Grant PUD) as some of the largest holders of the shrub steppe in the county. Rangeland would also be addressed as part of assessing and managing the shrub steppe components throughout the county. This mitigation is an alternative to the direct mitigation that WDFW would require and provide a more contiguous portion of Shrub Steppe compared to other mitigation efforts. The overall benefit to Shrub Steppe under this mitigation and its possible expansion is a net gain for management of the Steppe for Grant County as a whole.

Handley Cost Share - Gadberry – Frank Handley lives south of Moses Lake and is currently flood irrigating pasture for approximately 20 head of cattle. The flood irrigation has erosion issues and is highly inefficient, the hope is to get the irrigation converted to K-Pods that are more mobile and efficient. The total project cost would be approximately \$35,000.00 dollars and the conservation district would be covering \$10,000.00 through the cost share program.

Motion by R. Leitz to approve the Handley Cost share for \$10,000.00 as presented, seconded by G. Burkholder, motion carries.

Ribellia Cost Share - Gadberry – Richard Ribellia is looking for assistance with proscribed grazing and low water use native plantings. The area is relatively small and is grazed by no more that 3 steers annually. Currently there is a more basic grazing plan that works but is not efficient. The idea would be to provide four section that would be grazed 7-10 days maximum before rotating allowing for sustained grazing through the year. This will be supplemented by what is hayed off the first cutting of the field in question. The overall cost of the planting and fencing would be approximately 5,000.00 and the conservation district would be cost sharing \$2,500.00 of the total.

Motion by J. Preston to approve the R. Ribellia Cost share for \$2,500.00 as presented, seconded by R. Leitz, motion carries.

Goodrich Cost Share - Gadberry – Elliott Goodrich is looking to complete the pipeline that was constructed as part of the Craghead Cost share last fiscal year. Currently the Craghead pipeline ends at an open ditch at the head of Goodrich's property. The excess water in the culvert has the potential to cause erosion particularly when weed growth gets excessive. The pipeline would replace the ditch and guide excess water to the pond currently being used by E. Goodrich to manage extra water already. The total const on engineering and pipe would be \$ 5,900.00 and the district would cost share 50% total \$2,950.00 for the project.

Motion by R. Leitz to approve the Goodrich Cost share for \$2,950.00 as presented, seconded by G. Burkholder, motion carries.



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WACD Dues – DeLong – Washington Association of Conservation District annual dues have been sent out. In the past CBCD has always elected to continue paying the dues to WACD. FY 23 Dues are the same as the FY21 & FY22 amount and would require a board motion in order to complete the dues process.

Motion by R. Leitz to approve payment of 2023 WACD Dues, seconded by G. Burkholder, motion carries.

Cost Share Ranking – Gadberry – Currently the cost share program is managed through a first come - first serve basis. The process has worked but is less than ideal as more people reach out for cost share. Ideally there would be a ranking system to evaluate the new cost shares coming to the district in the future. The process of ranking could be similar in premise to the ranking NRCS uses with more conservation "scoring" higher in the ranking. This would allow for more funding to go to other projects and increase the conservation benefit the cost share provides. It would also allow for other individuals who have not received cost share before a chance to benefit from the program. The current cost share method would work for this fiscal year but having a developed ranking system would be ideal going into the 2024 fiscal year in June.

Executive Session: D. Stadelman announced that there is a need to have an executive session for 15 minutes to discuss policy and hiring.

Motion by R. Leitz to enter into executive session for 15 minutes. Seconded by J. Preston, motion carries. Board entered executive session at 9:02 PM.

Motion by R. Leitz to return to regular session. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries. Board returned to regular session at 9:16 PM.

Motion by R. Leitz to develop a policy for standard of conduct involving spouses or significant other in the workplace, to be presented to the board for approval. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Adjournment- Motion by R. Leitz to adjourn. Seconded by G. Burkholder, motion carries. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.



Columbia Basin
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Chair Approval

Recorder Signature

Date

Date

Summary of Motions:

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