

Columbia Basin Conservation District

Meeting Minutes

July 12, 2022 – 7:00 PM

In Person and Teleconference – Phase 3

Attendance:

Supervisors – Dave Stadelman (Chair), John Preston, Dan Roseburg, Glenn Burkholder

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

Agencies – Mike Baden (WSCC), Kaley Wisher (Pheasants Unlimited)

Call to Order and Introductions:

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

Public Input: Kaley Wisher is present at the July board meeting as a biologist from Pheasants Forever. K. Wisher is observing the board meeting as part of the partnership with NRCS.

No public input.

Approval of June 14th, 2022, Monthly Board Meeting Minutes:

Motion by J. Preston by to accept the June 14th, 2022, minutes as presented, seconded by D. Roseburg, motion carries.

Approval of July 12th, 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 July 12th, 2022, Financial report as presented, seconded by J. Preston, motion carries. Grant County checks #10825-10870 totaling \$116,424.44. Payroll checks #10830-10838 totaling \$18,217.77 and #10845-10856 totaling \$25,574.12 included in the above amount.

Agency Reports:

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC)– Baden – Fiscal year 2022 has closed out and commission staff are working on the process, but it will be slow. New implementation funding has been allocated and once the addendum is complete funds can be release to the conservation district. Additional fiscal year 2023 funding will be rolled out slower than expected. This includes additional VSP funds, Sustainable Farms and Fields (SFF) and the Salmon Recovery funding. Not uniformed rollout for future funding has been defined yet. Funding from NRCS for task orders has also been added to the

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workload. Future funding will be focused on range health, Natural Disaster, Fire mitigation and other funds.

The Conservation district managers roundtable will be occurring again July 28th, 2022. It is something that the district may want to take advantage of if possible.

NRCS– Ribellia – Ribellia provided report submitted by Erin Kaczmarczyk: The second application period for WaterSMART produced two eligible applications that made it through assessment and ranking and have been pre-approved for funding. Approximately, \$180,000 will be spent from the remaining \$630,000 of WaterSMART FY2022 funds. Remaining funds will be returned to national. The state NRCS office has submitted the SRA for FY2023; 1.8 million was requested for WaterSMART. The Big Bend Team submitted a new WaterSMART proposal for irrigated land serviced by Quincy-Columbia Basin Irrigation District. If selected for funding the proposal will bring approximately eleven million dollars to the QCBID targeted area over the next 5 years.

No new applications for Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) as of July 2022. Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are starting to come in for EQIP wildfire as vegetation continues to dry out. NRCS will continue to take wildfire applications as requests come through no wildfire EQIP sign-up has been announced. EQIP pre-planned applications are being made a priority in the state however, not RMS level planning. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is 90% complete with the FY2022 CRP workload. Planning is still ongoing however most of the CRP workload should be complete by 7/30. Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) focused on CTA reporting from NRCS projects as well as partner project work. CTA helps to fund our task orders which helps NRCS get conservation on the ground and is a necessary component to WA's business model.

The following NRCS positions remain unfilled in Ephrata:

- Civil Engineering Technician
- Program Assistant
- Resource Conservationist

The Recent Graduate position is likely to be filled by Kyle Reardon who is slated to show 9/11/2022. Konrad Bomberger is acting Central Area Resource Conservationist for the next 120 days he will continue work with RCPP.

Old Business:

Building Update- Ribellia – Progress on the building continues both the inside and outside of the building. Fixtures are ready to install but have not gone in uniformly. There is no confirmed move-in date but likely sometime after August. Work also continues with the agreement though no formal agreement has been reached as of July 12th, 2022.

Moses Lake Watershed Council (MLWC) – Crose – The Newhouse appropriation has moved forward. The appropriation comes after 3.5 years of work with the council. The treatment covers in-lake treatment for the management for nutrient control. The funds would come to the district in late 2023 with the federal fiscal year. The funds will likely come down through NRCS however, no direct line has been certified yet. More information will likely become available later this year.

VSP – Crose – VSP is more focused on Range and Shrub steppe going forward. As part of the focus, smaller acreage farms will be part of the plan. These are significant areas shrub steppe, range, and critical areas that may be a concern. This includes areas around Crab Creek and Cow Creek. Monitoring and acreage remain important. GCCD in a good position for the 10-year report.

OGWRP Update–Ribellia/ Crose – East Columbia Basin Irrigation District has drafted an interlocal agreement for work done on the OGWRP but has not been received by the conservation district at this time. The agreement would cover the scope of work for the PL-566 and to cover a NEPA or SEPA request. The agreement would cover the cost of GCCD district as project management, essentially continuing the role the conservation district has now. GCCD will be responsible for contracting the engineering, but ECBID and NRCS will have the final say in all PL-566 agreements. Ideally, the agreement would have GCCD's portion of the engineering contract completed within 12-18 months of contract signature.

Name Change – Ribellia – The name change from Grant County Conservation District to Columbia Basin Conservation District was made official by the Washington Secretary of State's office. The turnaround was surprising, and no logo has been solidly narrowed down as of July 12th, 2022. Logo work for the district will be completed before moving into the new building.

Account Update – Ribellia/ DeLong – New debit cards were issued for E. DeLong and K. Ribellia. The card issued under Richard Leitz can be canceled as soon as Richard chooses to close out the card. New accounts and cards will be opened and issued once the new paperwork from the Secretary of State arrives.

Investments – Ribellia – Short term investments are relatively safe with returns from CDs. Long term bond market has a larger return but slightly higher risk. All investments would need to be lower risk due to the status of the Conservation District. Investment opportunities are likely to be similar to those offers at both Banner Bank and Edward Jones Investments, but further research will be required.

Outreach Update – Ribellia – GCCD will be holding an outreach event on August 6th, 2022. This will be the first major outreach event since closures due to COVID 19 in 2020. The outreach materials have been extensive as both an advertising and educational tool. GCCD staff will be providing support on the day of the event

The heritage garden continues to grow as an expansion into the more urban areas around Moses Lake. The program focuses on water conservation and pollinator habitat. The project will continue to be funded through June 2023 via a NACD Urban Agriculture grant. The grant provides the technical assistance and advertising for the program.

New Business:

Palouse Conservation District Dairy Plan Agreement - Ribellia – The agreement with Palouse CD has been progressed to the point where the Palouse CD board will be passing by the board at their meeting this evening. The agreement will be for \$3,100.00 dollars and contract Lyle Stoltman for the single dairy plan. The total expected workload is no expected to exceed 1.5 weeks of work. Palouse will handle

everything outside the contract including additional funds for any additional dairy work as of this board meeting date. The agreement would need to be signed as soon as information is received to expediate

the project. K. Ribellia requests the ability to act as a signatory on the agreement.

Motion by G. Burkholder by allow K. Ribellia to sign the agreement between GCCD and Palouse CD when it is received, seconded by D. Roseburg, motion carries.

Springbrook Financial Software – DeLong – GCCD has used QuickBooks as our accounting system for an extensive period of time, however due to recent information provided by M. Baden and the State Auditors Office, QuickBooks may have some issues generating reporting. This can be overcome if a user is experienced however, current staff has less experience with the program than in previous years. Springbrook is designed to help address the reporting issues with other programs and allow for more ease of use with increased numbers of staff. The program would provide an increase ease of access for hour reporting, payroll and annual reporting. The transition would be significant requiring training for district staff and supervisors to allow for transitions away from other programs. The drawback is the cost to the district would be significant, with exact numbers between \$11,000 to \$26,000 annually. The program change would require the board support to begin the transition process and iron out all the details for the August 2022 board meeting.

Motion by D. Roseburg to approve beginning the switch to Springbrook from QuickBooks, pending further information about annual costs, seconded by J. Preston, motion carries

Gould Cost Share - Gadberry – Jeff Gould has been a cost share recipient in the past and been on the cost share list for a while. Gould has roughly 20 head of cattle, and the cost share would be used to provide irrigation improvements for range and a water facility improvement. The improvements would provide increased irrigation to crop trees. The watering facility treatment would seal the current pond to prevent leakage. The total cost share would total \$4,500.00 with a 50% cost share coming from the conservation district.

Motion by J. Preston to approve the \$2,250 cost share for irrigation improvements and improved watering facilities, seconded by G. Burkholder, motion carries

Rowen Cost Share - Gadberry – Ella Rowen wants to plant low water usage plants and pollinator plantings. The property is in Soap Lake and is roughly ¼ acre that would be converted into low water use plant, based on the heritage garden template with an added pollinator component. The planting would be all native and cost a total of \$6,000 dollars for plants and labor to install. GCCD cost share would be 50% with \$2,000 for plants and \$1,000 for labor.

Motion by D. Roseburg to approve the \$3,000 cost share for native habitat and pollinator planting, seconded by G. Burkholder, motion carries

Para Gould Cost Share - Gadberry – Mike Para owns a feedlot outside of Othello. In previous years Para has received cost share in the past and is looking for assistance with a concrete pad. Currently the silage for the dairy is stored directly on the ground. The concrete pad would allow for the silage to be stored on a pad to increase the recovery of the silage. The total cost of the project would be \$30,000 for the pad. GCCD would be cost sharing on the cost of material not to exceed \$10,000.

Motion by J. Preston to approve the \$10,000 cost share on a concrete pad for silage, seconded by G. Burkholder. Motion carries.

Folks Cost Share - Gadberry – Heather Folks wants to plant low water usage plants and pollinator plantings to help with habitat and weed control. The property is in Quincy and is roughly 1/2 acre that would be converted into low water use plant, using the heritage garden template but less focused on the pollinator component. The planting would be all native and cost a total of \$4,500 dollars for plants and improvements to the irrigation system. GCCD cost share would be 50% with \$2,250 for plants, site preparation, labor and irrigation updates.

Motion by G. Burkholder to approve the \$2,250 cost share for native planting for Heather Folks, seconded by J. Preston, motion carries

Executive Session: D. Stadelman announced that there is a need to have an executive session for 30 minutes to discuss personnel.

Motion by D. Roseburg to enter into executive session for 30 minutes. Seconded by J. Preston, motion carries. Board entered executive session at 9:13 PM.

Motion by J. Preston to enter into executive session for 30 minutes. Seconded by G. Burkholder, Motion Carries. Board returned to regular session at 9:50 PM.

Motion by D. Roseburg to accept the Job classification as presented. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by D. Roseburg to accept salary schedule for Grant County Conservation District as presented. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by J. Preston to adopt the standard of \$0.50 at ix month of employment and an additional \$0.50 at the one-year evaluation. Seconded by G. Burkholder, Motion Carries.

Motion by G. Burkholder raise Dinah Gadberry and Britton Baker's hourly rate to \$26.00 as conservation planner II. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by D. Roseburg raise Yazmin Mejia's hourly rate to \$22.00 as an administrative assistant. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by D. Roseburg raise Sebastian Saliwanchik's hourly rate to \$22.00 as a conservation planner I. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by D. Roseburg raise Deanna Elliott's hourly rate to \$31.00 Program Manager. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by D. Roseburg raise Ronald Scerbicke's hourly rate to \$31.00 and include a \$0.50 retro payment from the 6-month review to June 30, 2022. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by G. Burkholder raise Elliott DeLong's hourly rate to \$34.00 as Operations Manager. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Adjournment-

Motion by G. Burkholder to adjourn. Seconded by J. Preston, motion carries. The meeting adjourned at 10:14 PM.

Chair Approval

Recorder Signature

Date

Date

Summary of Motions:

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Motion by D. Roseburg to accept the Job classification as presented. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by D. Roseburg to accept salary schedule for Columbia Basin Conservation District as presented, with \$2.00 increases (\$20 to \$22)for two of the job classification - now starting at \$22.00/ hour Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

Motion by J. Preston to adopt the standard of \$0.50 at six months of employment and an additional \$0.50 at the one-year evaluation. Seconded by G. Burkholder, Motion Carries.

Motion by G. Burkholder raise Dinah Gadberry and Britton Baker's hourly rate to \$26.00 as conservation planner II. Seconded by J. Preston, Motion Carries.

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