



Grant County Conservation District

Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2022 – 1:00 PM

In Person and Teleconference – Phase 3

Attendance:

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

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

Agencies – Erin Kaczmarczyk (NRCS)

Call to Order and Introductions:

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

Public Input:

No public input.

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

Motion by G. Burkholder by to accept the April 12th, 2022 minutes as presented, seconded by R. Leitz, motion carries.

Approval of May 10th, 2022 Monthly Financial Reports:

Presented by E. DeLong – Reviewed monies owed or owing and current grants including the Financials from April 2022. Financial topics included; 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 J. Preston to accept the May 10th, 2022 Financial report as presented, seconded by G. Burkholder motion carries. Grant County checks #10692-10776 totaling \$127,220.57. Payroll checks #10697-10704 totaling \$14,174.24, 10713-10722 totaling \$17,443.54, 10739-10747 totaling \$16,105.04 and #10755-10765 totaling \$22,886.02 included in the above amount.

Agency Reports:

NRCS – Erin - Ephrata NRCS office is under remodel and is currently open by appointment only. Some of the cost share rates remain out of date due to supply chain issues and other factors. Progress has been made to updating cost share rates with technical assistance coming from Anna Leal at Kittitas Conservation. Rates will be applied across the state as a whole for all sections (forestry, irrigation etc.). All rate updates are under consideration and will be review before being made official. The hope is that there will be few cancelations with rates being cost reflective and accurate going forward. Additional EQIP funds has been allocated and will mostly go to the CARP program (Coronavirus Agricultural Relief Payments). Planning for early EQIP request has been added for additional contracts. Earlier registration allows for the ability to handle more contracts. CRP enrollment had all contract accepted in Washington with 14,500 acres not including SAFE and Grasslands. CRP would be very difficult without GCCD support and the TASK Orders remain very important in managing this extra workload.

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) – Baden – None



Old Business:

Building Update — **Ribellia** - The building continues toward completion and conversation point to a completion date of late June. This would put the GCCD move in date somewhere around mid-July. The AV equipment and furnishings are already purchased and waiting for confirmation of completion to complete the installation process. Work continues with Wyman Law office to get the contract review and complete for final signatures.

Moses Lake Watershed Council (MLWC) — **Croese** — Monthly meeting with the Watershed council continue to have significant participation from GCCD and other members. GCCD staff are working to complete the draft Moses Lake Comprehensive Management Plan by June 30th. This will be a part of the greater Moses Lake Watershed Management plan that GCCD is working with on through the USBR WaterSMART grant. Based on discussions it likely that USBR will push a similar amount of water through Moses Lake to keep up with demands from the South District.

Additionally, the funding request for Infrastructure through Newhouse's office has been forwarded to the next level. The development of outreach materials will be the primary responsibility for GCCD with treatment being contracted out, monitoring is still something that GCCD is looking into to determine if the current measures are all that is needed or if monitoring needs to be increased. Further development of the outreach materials could be done in conjunction with the city of Moses Lake and would be a significant benefit to the relationships on the council.

VSP — **Croese** — Staff are working on VSP and the program is currently on track with our internal plan. May need adjustments but they will likely be relatively minor. The five-year report has been completed, reviewed and accepted for both Grant and Adams County. The next focus will be on the ten-year report but that is a couple years away. VSP has shifted to focus on critical areas along Crab Creek and Cow Creek watersheds, and monitoring of areas in shrub steppe, rangeland and wetlands. The improvements to GIS and district apply to use GIS will remain and important factor as will the use of the Drone imagery.

OGWRP Update—**Ribellia/ Croese** — Odessa PL-556 was approved February and officially recognized as a watershed, allowing for further progress in the planning process to be made. Currently a principle group has been developed and there is an RFP in development to contract out the Watershed Plan for the area. As of now a Statement of Work should be forthcoming. The target of 100 well ans 90,000 acres on to Columbia River Water via the laterals, remaining as the initial goal. Half the project should be completely operational by 2025, meaning four of the eight total laterals. Project completion is estimated to be approximately ten years. Several laterals have been engineered and are at the 30% completion point. Funding with be handled through East Columbia Irrigation District and the NRCS. RCPP should cover some on the ground costs and requires a grower's plan and mapping to be eligible. Currently the cost is completely on the growers. GCCD will likely continue to act as an intermediary and assist in outreach as the project progresses.

Staffing Update — **Ribellia** — Currently GCCD has 8 full time and 3 part time staff members. Dinah Gadberry official leave the NACD TA Grant position to take over the Cost share and Livestock position June 1st. With the amount of work and training required Lyle Stoltman has agreed to return to the district on a part time basis to assist in the livestock plan updates and training as required by the Conservation District. L. Stoltman would likely be returning at a similar rate to his previous position however, would be working 15-20 hours a week.

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Additional district needs are being continually assessed to make sure all positions are being filled as required. It is likely that in the near future, developing an outreach and communications position will be required. This is due to the significant expansion the district has been seen with the OGWRP, Moses Lake Watershed Council and expanding district programs, requiring a full-time position to handle uniformed communication.

Motion by D. Roseburg to approve the rehire of L. Stoltman to assist in training and livestock management applications. Seconded by J. Preston, motion carries.

NACD Update – Moved to June Board Meeting

District Name Change – Ribellia – The GCCD board of Supervisors ratified the district name changing in April and the petition will go to the Washington State Conservation Commission on May 19th. Currently K. Ribellia, R. Leitz and E. DeLong will be attending representing the Conservation District. If approved by the Conservation Commission, the paper work will be provided to the Washington Secretary of State for finalization. The finalization will be decided by Secretary of State and could take anywhere from several weeks to several month.

Banks and Credit Accounts – DeLong – The Chase credit card account has been deactivated and paid off. Currently, the only access to funding the conservation district has is a debit card issued to R. Leitz. Additional account access requires signatures from the board of supervisors and any additional staff who would require access. Currently one staff member and one supervisor signature are required. Once both signatures are received, additional cards can be issued for use by GCCD staff.

The Credit card has been narrowed down to a Capital One or Chase Business Liability Card. Both have requirements that have changed since March are need to be reassessed as options. Currently only these to Cards allow for issuing of card help solely in the Conservation Districts Name, all other require a Supervisor and Manager to be the person responsible for all debts. Corporate liability card, on the districts scale, are limited at the current time.

Salary Schedule – Ribellia – Continuing development of the salary schedule based on job families, experience, education and certifications. The premise would mimic the State and federal system with a step advancement process but not be tied to state or federal rates. More work needs to be done to determine the benefit and rates to maintain long term sustainability, to maintain the district's finances stable. Additionally, looking back into the option for financial investments could be an additional option to help sustain the district long term as well as looking for more suitable funding sources. These processes will be continually addresses and accessed to maintain what the district sees as reasonable.

New Business:

Finance Committee Recommendation – Ribellia – R. Leitz was recommended as a member of the Finance Committee for eastern Washington to assist with developing sustainable funding sources for conservation districts across Washington state. Hopefully sustainable funding for all districts in the future.

2022 Annual Plan - Ribellia – Currently the Annual plan of work is complete and only requires minor editing for grammar and similar concerns. The annual plan of work is based of the same style that had



been used in the past. The previous plan of work represented the expectations of the district and the hope is that this plan does the same for the 2023 fiscal year as well. Information is shown for all our grants, with labor division (FTE hours), grant goal and applicable area of focus. Staff was essential in making sure this document reflected the direction the district was heading. The plan also outlines projects and concepts that will not be limited to just the 2023 fiscal year but continue well beyond allowing the district to sustain the conservation concepts in grant county.

Motion by R. Leitz to approve the annual plan of work with provision to update to the May 30th, deadline. Seconded by D. Roseburg, motion carries.

2022 Schedule – 2022 -DeLong – The 2022 Schedule 2022 was completed prior to the May Board meeting. Despite some difficulties in the process with other aspects of the annual report, the Schedule 22 for the conservation district self-audit went smoothly with the assistance of G. Burkholder. The Schedule 22 is one of the five scheduled reports due to the Office of the State Auditor by May 30th. There were no concerns for the schedule 22 based on the questions answered during the review process. All documents were completed and uploaded. The remaining reports are expected to be completed by May 23rd and submitted well before the deadline.

Motion by D. Roseburg to approve the 2022 Schedule 22 as presented. Seconded by J. Preston, motion carries.

Grand Coulee Fish Passage – Ribellia – The possibility of future fish passage over Grand Coulee has come to the attention through conversation with East Columbia Basin Irrigation district and other partners. The process is still new but conversation has taken place between the upper confederated Tribe, the State of Washington and the Federal Government. Salmon populations continue to be an issue in eastern Washington and the Grand Coulee being within the district's area of operation, getting more involved maybe something to pursue to make sure GCCD can provide support and assist in the process. Staff is in the process of starting to look more into the project and will be able to provide more information as it becomes available.

Quarterly Commission Meeting - Ribellia – The quarterly commission meeting will occur at Spokane CD on May 19th, 2022. At the Commission meeting Mike Baden will present the GCCD name change petition. Currently K. Ribellia, R. Leitz and E. DeLong will be in attendance as representative of the district to address any concerns that may come up. If passed by the Commission, the name change will move forward to the Secretary of State for the final decision. Additionally, the commission will be presenting on the proposed 2023 Fiscal year budget, additional funding sources and new fiscal year projects and programs.

Drone Update - Ribellia – The VSP drone suffered some minor technical issues and is in the process of repair, delaying plans for a couple of weeks. The issue is internal with the drone and is covered by the manufacturer, and was likely a faulty piece in the communication relay. The drone should be back in service fairly quickly.

Adjournment-

Motion by R. Leitz to adjourn. Seconded by D. Roseburg, motion carries. The meeting adjourned at 9:18 PM.



Chair Approval

Recorder Signature

Date

Date

Summary of Motions:

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