

Adams Conservation District
118 East Main Ave., Ritzville, WA 99169
Special Board Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2019

Attending: Curtis Hennings; Michael Broeckel; Ron Hennings; Gary Cook / Guests: Ann Swannack, NRCS

The meeting was called to order by Curtis Hennings at 8:00 pm.

Reports from Guests/Partner Agencies/Manager:

- Ann Swannack, NRCS
 - NRCS was not on furlough and kept their service center office open when FSA was closed due to budget limitations.
 - **Farm Bill 2019** signed on December 20, 2018.
 - waiting for guidance but told to expect EQIP guidance by 2/28/19 and CSP guidance by 3/28/19
 - no word on how CSP contracts that expired in 2018 will be handled. In the past they had the option to renew without competing with general sign-up applications. Waiting for guidance.
 - **New NRCS Chief-** Matthew Lohr. Roylene Rides-at-the-Door has told her staff that he will be a good fit into the NRCS culture. Attached is a recent notice from him about the NRCS Priorities as he sees them.
 - **Local Work Group Meeting-** held in Davenport on Feb. 15th. All members on the LWG email list will be provided minutes from the meeting as soon as they are available.
 - **EQIP LWG application DEADLINE April 19, 2019.**
 - Funds available for soil quality, soil erosion, effective use of irrigation water, livestock watering facilities, range pest management, forest fire prevention and wildlife habitat establishment.

- Mike Baden, WSCC – Notes provided from email
 - **Annual Plan of Work:** Just a reminder to be thinking about your Annual Plan of Work for FY 2020. This is due to the Commission at the end of May. Make sure that you plan ahead so that the board can approve the new plan prior to the due date.
 - **Annual Financial Report:** The annual financial report submission is also due to the State Auditor's Office by May 30th. This includes the Schedule 22 so just a reminder to be thinking ahead about this as well.
 - **Grant Spending and Returned Funds:** A message recently was sent out to districts from our Acting Executive Director regarding the status of grant spending and request for information regarding unspent funds. I know that the district has been thinking about grant spending ahead of June 30th and I know there are some variables being considered

and that there are a lot of moving parts and there is likely a good chance all funds will be able to be spent.

Minutes: Gary moved to approve the meeting minutes for January 17, 2019. Ron seconded the motion; motion passed.

Financial Report: Michael moved to approve the financial report for December 2018 showing end balances of \$113,869.40 (money market) and \$101,244.98 (checking), and to approve checks numbered 13972 - 13981 and all ACH/EFT transactions from December 21st – January 18th. Total deductions \$6,610.19 and liability \$48.06. Ron seconded the motion; motion passed.

Michael moved to approve the financial report for January 2019 showing end balances of \$113,874.24 (money market) and \$107,200.33 (checking), and to approve checks numbered 13982 - 13991 and all ACH/EFT transactions from January 19th – February 20th. Total deductions \$6,686.00 and liability \$95.79. Ron seconded the motion; motion passed.

Old Business:

- **Elections:** All election requirements have been met and appropriate paperwork submitted. Since Ron was the only one to apply and received 27 eligible signatures on the petition, we were able to cancel the election and automatically re-elect him. WSCC will make it official at their May meeting.
- **Budget:** Feb-Jun we have \$48,174 remaining in our WSCC 19-27-IM grant. After taking out estimated salaries and other expenses, we'll have about \$14,850 remaining. Potential expenses for the remaining \$14,850 are considered below:
 - o Ducks Unlimited: Cara emailed Tina with Ducks Unlimited to let her know we had some money if they were available to do more water monitoring. If they could do another run in June Cara thinks it would cost about \$2,200.
 - o 2019 WADE Conference: It costs about \$500/person to attend WADE if anyone is able to attend.
 - o Cara's Work Time: If Cara's health improves, her hours will increase.
 - o Ron Hennings's Project: A pruning project along Cow Creek similar to Rex Harder is in the pipeline and further discussed in new business.
- **Surplus Equipment:** A check for \$2,500 was received from Central Washington Machinery for the consignment of the backhoe attachments.
- **VSP:** Cara received a draft contract from Loren Wiltse and will review that and discuss with him and Grant CD how best to handle responsibilities between districts. She hasn't heard back from Elsa as to where Lincoln CD is at in the VSP process.

- Projects:
 - o McRae: Cara checked in with McRae and he said the well driller would hopefully be out this week, he's been on the wait list since August.
 - o Rex Harder: Once the Harder cost-share agreement is approved and cultural resource requirements have been met, then the pruning crew can commence work.

- SAO Audit: The exit review with the SAO was conducted on 1/15/19. The report noted that there were no audit findings for the period audited.

New Business:

- Pat Tremaine's Employee Review: The board reviewed Pat's employee review prepared by Cara and had some discussion. Pat is meeting all of the required benchmarks set forth by her manager and therefore, no action is needed by the board.

- Rex Harder Pruning Project: The board reviewed and discussed a cost-share agreement for Rex Harder to prune overgrown vegetation along Cow Creek, which would help minimize flooding issues at Sprague.

Ron made a motion to approve the cost share agreement for Rex Harder's pruning project along Cow Creek as presented. Gary seconded the motion; motion passed.

- Ron Hennings Pruning Project: It was discussed that Ron Hennings is interested in doing a pruning project along Cow Creek similar to that of Rex Harder's project referenced above. Cara will be looking into this request.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm by Curtis Hennings.

Minutes approved by: _____ Date: _____

Minutes prepared by: _____ Date: _____

The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 21st, 2019 at 7:30 pm.



Chief Lohr's Priorities February 2019

NRCS staff will work collaboratively to target these three priorities.

1. Implement and deliver the 2018 Farm Bill to our nation's farmers, ranchers, and private foresters.

- Develop rules and regulations in a timely manner to efficiently and effectively deliver NRCS programs to our customers and carry out the will of Congress.
- Solicit and respond to input from key stakeholders and tribal nations.

2. Streamline our processes and program delivery to best serve our customers.

- Integrate conservation planning and program delivery into a seamless business process to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of field office operations.
- Initiate IT deployment of a streamlined business practice to more efficiently develop conservation plans.
- Continue to adjust our agency's annual program delivery cycle to mitigate the potential for carryover of national conservation investments.
- Identify proper staffing levels, staffing locations, and staffing expectations through appropriate pre-determined metrics.

3. Better understand customer needs and improve overall customer service.

- Clarify the expectations we have for serving our customers and build those into performance evaluations.
- Consistently consider the individual needs of those we serve. Every action taken should be rooted in the goal of improved understanding and delivery.
- Expand our strategic partnerships with both outside stakeholders and sister agencies within FPAC to maximize opportunities for our nation's farmers, ranchers, and private foresters.
- Mindfully seek out opportunities to better serve young, beginning, small, minority, veteran, and other underserved producers.

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