



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
October 3, 2013**

Supervisors Present: William Caster
Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
Jerry Melaragno
Dan Williams

Absentees: LeRoy Candelaria
J. Brian Greene
Richard Shovelin

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, District Manager
Sherrill Bradford, land owner
Bill Bryan, land owner
Inez Perkins, land owner
Rand Perkins, land owner
Albert Sanchez, land owner
Lorretta Sanchez, land owner
Katheryn Taylor, District Volunteer

CALL TO ORDER:

The Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District (CPSWCD) regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors was called to order by Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman at Alpine Alley, located at 210 N Summit in Mountainair, NM at 8:05 a.m.

Welcome Attendees:

The Chairman welcomed those present and thanked them for taking the time to attend.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Board reviewed the agenda. **ACTION TAKEN:** Jerry Melaragno moved to approve the agenda. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of public meeting from September 9, 2013: **ACTION TAKEN:** Jerry Melaragno moved to approve the minutes. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

Minutes of the regular meeting from September 9, 2013: **ACTION TAKEN:** Jerry Melaragno moved to approve the minutes. Dan Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

The District Manager explained there was an incorrect treasurer's report inadvertently included in the Board packet and that she would distribute the correct report for action in November.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

None.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA):

The District Manager highlighted several announcements in the report: several due dates for various reports, and workshops conducted by New Mexico Attorney General Gary King's office on compliance with the Open Meetings Act and the Inspection of Public Records and on changes to the Governmental Conduct Act.

NRCS Field Office Report:

Mr. Lujan's report is included in the Board packet. The District Manager pointed out that delays in payments due to the government shut down may occur.

District Manager's Report:

The Chairman referred the Board to the written report. The District Manager added that she met with Alan Clute and asked him to update the District's web site. She reported on actions that she took to comply with the government shut down and the effects on District operations caused by the closure of the NRCS office.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The District Manager explained the letter of September 17, from Chairman Lovato to J. Xavier Montoya, State Conservationist, regarding the Trigo Fire Emergency Watershed Program – Agreement Numbers: 68-8C30-08-003 and 69-8c30-08-0011.

UPDATE ON GRANTS:

The District Manager reported on grants listed below, meetings attended, progress on projects, status of proposals to funding agencies, and RFPs issued by funding agencies.

Estancia Basin Watershed Health and Restoration Monitoring (EBWHRM) Project – Water Trust Board and State Forestry Grants (NFL,) Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance, and the Central New Mexico Cooperative Weed Management Area:

- The District Manager reported that she attended a Water Trust Board (WTB) meeting where the WTB approved changes in its policy. Questions remain about what soil and water conservation districts will have to submit with their proposals. Julie Maitland from the NM Department of Agriculture asked the District Manager to meet with representatives of the NM Finance Authority because some districts are having problems getting their reimbursements approved. She met with Angela Quintana, and they decided that training on requests for reimbursements could be included in special trainings for soil and water conservation districts focusing on submitting proposals. The District Manager has helped one district straighten out its request for reimbursements. The WTB and state forestry grants are proceeding, and Vern is going on check outs. He is also planning projects, but he can't finalize the practice plans until he can get maps made.
- The District Manager submitted pre-proposals to the WTB for the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance and Estancia Basin Watershed Health and Restoration Monitoring projects. The District Manager and Fred Rossbach spent several days conducting site visits for contractors. Six hundred thousand dollars remains to be spent.
- Regarding the Central New Mexico Cooperative Weed Management Area, the District Manager will work with the Edgewood SWCD on a proposal for funds for a noxious weed grant from New Mexico State Forestry.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program:

Ojo Peak Restoration:

- The District Manager passed her camera around to Board members to show pictures of the natural looking structures being built in Ox Canyon. Several district employees along with Cody Stropki from SWCA and Aaron Kauffman from Southwest Hydrology are working on the project. All of the material is coming from the local area. The work for the fall will be completed within the week and will be continued in the spring. The structures can be seen from Forest Road 422. The balance of the money will be used to thin ponderosa pines on as many acres as possible, using District crews.

Red Canyon Project:

- The District Manager said that anyone who transports wood must have a permit or a bill of sale to prove to law enforcement officers that the wood was legally obtained. She will update the current permit form and inform land owners that they have to give them to contractors

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Future Directions Committee – District Property, Building Progress

Several site visits were conducted for 15 contractors and subcontractors. Mr. Williams assisted with the visits. The closing date is tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. The District Manager disseminated the scoring system for selecting the contractor. Three Board members will meet to discuss the contractors' proposals. Approximately \$349,000 remains to be spent on finishing the building.

Land Use Plan

The District Manager will invite Kim Kostelnik to meet with Board members again to work on the Land Use Plan.

Envirothon Competition

Kenneth Lujan and the District Manager will meet with the high school science teacher and the new agriculture teacher to plan for the event.

NEW BUSINESS:

Report on Livestock Removal from US Forest Service:

The District Manager read her report of meetings with the US Forest Service Mountainair Ranger District personnel concerning the removal of livestock from the forest service allotments. Among several other points, she said that forest service personnel are especially concerned about the review conducted by the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) on the allotments every ten years because the Forest Service District wants to keep the same stocking rates that are currently used. If precautions aren't taken now, the stocking rates could be reduced during the NEPA review.

Mr. Williams thanked the District Manager for making the report, but he felt that the forest service personnel had sufficient time to submit their own report before the government shutdown occurred.

Draft – Resolution Opposing the Blanket Removal of Livestock from the Mountainair District of the Cibola National Forest:

A group of allotment owners attended the meeting to ask the Board to support their resolution, which was presented at the September Board meeting. Several permittees spoke to issues concerned with the livestock removal from US Forest Service land. Bill Bryan disseminated pictures of rangeland and a letter from Nick Ashcroft, Range Management Specialist, of the NM Range Improvement Taskforce to Karen Lessard, District Ranger of the Mountainair Ranger District. Discussion occurred regarding:

- goals of the permittees in respect to working with the forest service,
- selection of key sites and the appropriateness of making decisions about removing cattle from large amounts of pasture based on one key site,
- the effects of the drought and pest and disease on the grass,
- the effects of removing all cattle on the ranchers and local businesses and public entities,
- the importance of cattle in improving grass production and weed reduction,

- love of the land and length of time permittees have used the pasturage,
- stewardship of the land,
- role of the NM Range Improvement Task Force,
- documentation of adequacy of forage after the rains late in the season,
- the danger of fire during deer season when the grass dies.

Board members stressed the importance of getting perspectives, both from the forest service as well as from the permittees and discussed how to support the permittees in their effort to return the cattle to their allotments, taking into account the importance of maintaining a positive relationship with the forest service. It was felt that the ranchers were contributing positively to the environment and that the information provided was impressive. Mr. Bryan invited Board members to visit the allotments to see for themselves the condition of the grazing land. **ACTION TAKEN:** Dan Williams moved to revisit the resolution and write a response from the Board supporting the ranchers. Mr. Caster seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD):

The District Manager announced that the annual meeting will be held November 8 in Socorro. She will provide more information when she has it.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC):

No report.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER: The District Manager pointed out copies of Resolution No. 03—2013 and the District’s Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan FY 2015 – 2019 included in the Board packet.

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN FOR NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, November 1, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. at Alpine Alley, located at 210 N Summit in Mountainair, NM.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the Board – **ACTION TAKEN:** William Caster moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m. Jerry Melaragno seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

RICHARD SHOVELIN, SEC. – TREAS.