



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
August 7, 2015**

Supervisors Present: LeRoy Candelaria
William Caster
Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
Richard Shovelin
Dan Williams
Brian Greene

Absentees: Jerry Melaragno

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, District Manager
Brandon Bishop, Natural Resource Conservation Service
Juan Chavez, Permittee, Torreon Allotment
Pablo Chavez
Larry Gomez, Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District
John Perea
Cody Stropki, SWCA environmental consultant
Katheryn Taylor, district volunteer
Jim Wanstall, New Mexico Department of Agriculture

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 the Natural Resource Conservation Center Conference Room located at 1206 South HWY 55 in Mountainair, NM at 8:00 a.m.

Welcome Attendees:

The Chairman welcomed those present and thanked them for taking the time to attend. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The board reviewed the agenda. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve the agenda. Brian Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING:

Minutes of the regular meeting from June, 2015 were reviewed. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve the minutes as read. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of June, 2015 with accounts payable for July. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to accept the report for June and pay the accounts payable for July. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of July, 2015 with accounts payable for August. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to accept the report for July and pay the accounts payable for August. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The district manager reported that she received a letter from the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) saying that the DFA examined the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2016 and has granted approval and certification for its use. The letter also lists materials to be submitted for final approval of the budget. The district manager met with Tom Dixon, the district's budget analyst and informed him of the computer problems that have delayed submission of the required materials. She went over the fourth quarterly report with him. She will be able to send everything required following the district's board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: Torreon Allotment Fencing Project FY2014

John Perea spoke on behalf of his uncles, Juan and Pablo Chavez, regarding the Torreon allotment fencing project. First, he gave the background behind their presentation to the board. He explained that most of the allotment and nine miles of fencing were burned in past fires and that the financial impact on his uncles was substantial. This allotment is the only one in the Manzanos that is still owned by the original family and the Chavez's regard it as their heritage. The family was running cattle on the land in 1924 before the Forest Service took over the land.

Mr. Perea's uncles have rebuilt the fencing needed to release cattle on the allotment again, and Mr. Perea described their labor, challenges of the terrain, and the enormous personal financial burden involved in rebuilding the fences. He said that the Forest Service provided some materials, but representatives were uncooperative and insisted on compliance requirements that are difficult to fulfill. Access to water is also an issue. Now deadfall is destroying fencing that was replaced. Mr. Perea stated that Elaine Kohrman, Forest Supervisor, Cibola National Forest promised \$30,000 in funding to help repair damage and to clear areas along the fence line. The Claunch-Pinto district was chosen as the fiscal agent. Then the Chavezes were informed that the Cibola National Forest decided to retract the funding. Later, at meetings with Alan Warren, Rangeland Management and Karen Lessard, District Ranger, Mountainair Ranger District, and Elaine Kohrman, Forest Supervisor they were told that the funding was held back for two reasons. These Forest Service representatives said that the Claunch-Pinto district reported that other permittees complained that the Chavezes were receiving preferential treatment by getting the funding. In addition, the Forest Service had a shortfall in funding, so the \$30,000 was needed to balance the budget.

Mr. Perea then explained the reason that he and his uncles came to the board meeting to speak with the supervisors. They want to know why the district was said to forward complaints about the unfairness of the funding. Mr. Perea said that according to the other permittees who were asked, nobody complained.

The district manager explained the process and timeline for carrying out the project. Before the District had begun the project, Ian Fox, Forestry Program Manager, Cibola National Forest informed her that the funding had to be pulled back because of a budget shortfall. Discussion followed on the treatment of the Chavezes by the Forest Service. At Brian Greene's request, the supervisors plus the district manager were polled to find out whether they received any complaints. Jerry Melaragno, who was absent, will be polled by telephone. Each board member and the district manager stated that no

complaints were received. Mr. Perea requested that any future business or funding for the allotment be referred to the East Torrance Soil and Water Conservation District where the allotment is actually located. The district manager explained that the Claunch-Pinto district was selected as fiscal agent for the project because the district has a participating agreement with the Forest Service.

ACTION TAKEN: Richard Shovelin moved that a letter be written to Elaine Kohrman, Forest Supervisor, asking for the written details and documentation of any alleged complaints made by the district to the Forest Service about the preferential treatment of the Chavezes in receiving \$30,000 in funding from the Forest Service. Brian Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

A copy of the letter will be sent to Juan and Pablo Chavez and to Mr. Perea.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA):

Jim Wanstall's written report is included in board member's packets. He said that the district received total points available and would receive funding. He also drew attention to the regional supervisor certification trainings in Roswell, Socorro and Las Vegas NM.

Field Office Report:

Brandon Bishop reported that "Tool Kit" trainings were being conducted in Albuquerque to help NRCS office staffs in learning the new computer system. He also said that NRCS is collaborating with the Forest Service, State Land Department, Game and Fish, and producers on a "Reading the Range" program to collect monitoring data to help provide an understanding of what is happening to the land on the ground.

District Manager's Report:

The district manager's June report is included in board member's packets. The July and August written reports will be included in the report for the September meeting. The district manager described a re-leaf project for Torrance County that would improve the grounds of the current administrative buildings in Estancia. She has submitted a draft proposal to Joy Ansley, Torrance County Manager. The Edgewood and East Torrance County Soil and Water Conservation Districts will be asked to support the project. The district manager asked the board for its support.

ACTION TAKEN: Richard Shovelin moved to support the re-leaf project for the Torrance County administrative building grounds. Brian Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence is included in the board packets. Mr. Shovelin called attention to a note included in correspondence from Kathy Albarella, a resident of the Deer Canyon Preserve thanking the district manager for how good "your whole organization was to work with." The district manager explained that the project for Ms. Albarella was a thinning project on property at the far south end of the Preserve.

UPDATE ON GRANTS:

The district manager's report on grants listed below includes 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 (WTB) and State Forestry Grants (NFL,) and Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance (GRGWA):

The district manager received final notice the Estancia Basin project was not funded for FY2015; however, the Greater Rio Grande project was funded. The district is making progress in contracting Estancia Basin projects. Some delays have been caused by the server being down. Chairman Lovato

asked the district manager to explain what happened with the server. She said that an electrical storm took the server out. The NRCS technical personnel recovered and transferred Claunch-Pinto files to a new server. The district manager will purchase external drives and back up files every Friday on them.

Asset Management Plan

Asset Management Plans are required when proposals are submitted to the WTB. Claunch-Pinto's Asset Management Plan will help the district plan for needed repairs to equipment, to vehicles and to the building. The district manager is progressing with the development of the plan.

Joe Zebrowski, NM Highlands University called a meeting of New Mexico Highlands University, SWCA, NM State Forestry and the NM Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute to discuss plans for the monitoring program and ideas on alternative funding for it. Questions have been raised at meetings of the Water Trust Board about how much money has been spent on the monitoring program. The district manager explained that the data collected from it is already being used by the Cibola National Forest to support applications for funding. The data from the monitoring is available to NRCS and other entities.

Regarding the GRGWA, site visits are being conducted with contractors for projects in the Belen area, Grants, Sandia Pueblo, Algodones, the San Cristobal Ranch near Lamy, Ojo Caliente and Velarde. Several more contractors have indicated an interest in submitting proposals, so more site visits will have to be scheduled. The district manager described the new process required by the NM Water Trust Board, which requires approval by the NM Environment Department - Construction Bureau. The GRGWA technical committee will meet on September 1 to review the proposals that were submitted by the deadline of August 21, 2015. The report will be submitted to the GRGWA on September 11.

Mr. Candelaria asked for information on the project in the Thunderbird area. The district manager said that 200 cords of wood were cut and that members of the land grant are hauling it out. This area finishes up the Red Canyon CFRP.

Central New Mexico Cooperative Weed Management Area:

No report.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP):

Romero Wood, LLC:

The district is responsible for thinning 23 acres by hand. All but three or four acres are complete. A fourth year extension on the grant may be needed due to various problems.

Forest Service Participating Agreement:

The Forest Service has added an additional \$128,456 to the participating agreement with the district for projects in the Zuni Mountains. The district will contract with the Alamo Navajo Resource Department in Alamo on this project.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

Sixteen applications for the grant were received. The district manager thinks CPSWCD will be responsible for two coordinated resource plans. Twenty-two people attended a meeting at the district office the previous Wednesday. The district manager will provide Cody Stropki's notes from that meeting at the next board meeting. The goal is to get more people out on the land to observe what conditions are like so that when drought reoccurs, some problems can be avoided because more information will be available. SWCA is a partner in this grant and contributed a \$10,000 match. They will be working on the coordinated resource plans. The district manager explained that projects will be carried out through a Master Service Agreement, approved by the board, on a project by project basis.

ACTION TAKEN: Richard Shovelin moved to approve a Master Service Agreement between SWCA

Environmental Consultants and the district. Brian Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

New Mexico State Park Project

The district manager has received no new information regarding a second year for the project.

Announcements:

The district manager said that the Soil and Water Conservation Commission granted \$4,000 to the district for an erosion and water catchment workshop. The district received \$15,000 from the New Mexico Association of Counties to update the Community Wildfire Protection Plan and an educational grant of \$10,000 to prepare materials to conduct workshops concerning fire protection.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Building – Capital Outlay, driveway and parking area:

Capital outlay funds in the amount of \$50,000 were allotted to the district for the shop building. The district manager thanked Senator Barela and Representative McQueen for their support in getting the money. Senator Phil Griego deserves credit for getting the ball rolling. The district manager said that the money will pay for completing the first phase of construction, the 1800 square foot metal building shell with a concrete floor. After the funds are received, Mike Valdez will bring plans to a board for approval.

Cibola National Forest – Forest Plan Revision Resource Assessment Wilderness Inventory:

Public meetings were held in Corona and Mountainair, and one is scheduled in Torreon on August 18 at 6:00 p.m. The district manager credited Dan Williams and Brent Racher with the good turnout in Corona. Discussion occurred on lack of participation due to trust issues concerning the Forest Service and whether concerns and input about the Forest Plan will be taken seriously. The district manager urged board members to review information about the plan and submit comments to her so that they can be included in the review process.

NEW BUSINESS:

Elected Supervisor – Oath of Office:

LeRoy Candelaria, William Caster, and Felipe Lovato were given the oath of office as elected supervisors.

Board Re-Organization:

ACTION TAKEN: Richard Shovelin moved to maintain the organization of the board as presently constituted. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion was approved. Vote was unanimous.

Resolution No. 01 – 2016 – Budget Revision:

The district manager reviewed various line items and increases to actual revenues and expenditures compared to the budget.

ACTION TAKEN: Richard Shovelin moved to approve Resolution No. 01 – 2016. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried by voice vote as follows: Dan Williams – yea; William Caster – yea; LeRoy Candelaria – yea; Richard Shovelin – yea; Felipe Lovato -- yea.

Resolution No. 02 – 2016 – Fourth Quarter FY 2015 Report for the Department of Finance and Administration:

ACTION TAKEN: William Caster moved to approve Resolution No. 02 – 2016. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried by voice vote as follows: William Caster – yea; LeRoy Candelaria – yea; Dan Williams – yea; Richard Shovelin – yea; Felipe Lovato – yea.

Resolution No. 03 – 2016 – New Mexico Association of Counties – Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) Update:

ACTION TAKEN: William Caster moved to approve Resolution No. 03 – 2016. Richard Shovelin seconded the motion. Motion carried by voice vote as follows: William Caster – yea; LeRoy Candelaria – yea; Dan Williams – yea; Richard Shovelin – yea; Felipe Lovato – yea.

Resolution No. 04 – 2016 – New Mexico Association of Counties – Educational Grant:

ACTION TAKEN: William Caster moved to approve Resolution No. 04 – 2016. Richard Shovelin seconded the motion. Motion carried by voice vote as follows: William Caster – yea; LeRoy Candelaria – yea; Dan Williams – yea; Richard Shovelin – yea; Felipe Lovato – yea.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Torrance County:

The district manager explained the content of the MOU with Torrance County. Torrance County received \$15,000 from NM Association of Counties to update their Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The MOU will make the District the fiscal agent for this funding, so a contract to update both plans can be advertised by the District. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve the MOU with Torrance County. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

Memorandum of Understanding with Lincoln County Cooperative Weed Management Area:

The district manager explained the content of the MOU with Lincoln County and described its benefits. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve the MOU with Lincoln County. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

Annual Meeting Plans:

Several dates for the district's annual meeting were discussed. A consensus was reached to hold the meeting on October 14. Possible presentations were discussed. The district manager said that Carla Cope will put together the presentations.

Local Work Group Meeting:

The local work group meeting will be held on September 11 following the board meeting.

Renewal of Janitorial and Building Maintenance Contracts:

ACTION TAKEN: Richard Shovelin moved to approve renewals to janitorial and building maintenance contracts. Dan Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

AmeriCorps/ Vista Program:

Jim Wanstall explained how the program works. A participant in the AmeriCorps/ Vista program will work for the district for 40 hours per week for a year at a cost of \$8,000. Funding from the New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts will cover the cost. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve an agreement with the AmeriCorps/ Vista Program to accept a participant in the program as an employee. Dan Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD), Report on Annual Meeting:

The district manager said that the NMCCD annual meeting was held on July 30 in Edgewood. Richard Shovelin said that it was an excellent meeting attended by several representatives of 19 districts. The district manager praised a presentation by Margaret Byfield from the American Stewards of Liberty on coordination agreements with federal agencies. All of the districts gave a report, and Jim Wanstall spoke about the Forest Plan Revision. Other participants included representatives from the employees association, Ryan Flynn, Cabinet Secretary, NM Environment Department, and Aubrey Dunn, NM State Land Commissioner. Kim Kostelnik was credited for bringing participation into the coalition. Mr. Wanstall mentioned that NMCCD was providing needed services to local districts.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC):

The district manager will distribute information from the committee. A member volunteer is needed to serve on the EBWPC to represent Torrance County.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER:

The district manager may take off the days of September 4 and 5. She would like to participate as a volunteer to read to children in the elementary school during her lunch hour.

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN FOR NEXT MEETING:

Local Work Group.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, September 11, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. at the Natural Resource Conservation Center, 1206 South Highway 55, Mountainair, NM.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the board, the regular meeting of the Claunch-Pinto Board: **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 a.m. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

JERRY MELARAGNO, SEC. – TREAS.