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MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING November 3, 2017

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

Absentees: Richard Shovelin

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, District Manager
David Cain, Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District (CPSWCD)
Jim Groom, Deer Canyon Preserve
Martín Lucero, Torrance County
Wayne Sleep, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
Katheryn Taylor, 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 the Natural Resource Conservation Center Conference Room located at 1206 South HWY 55 in Mountainair, NM at 8:10 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:** Dan Williams moved to approve the agenda, with the deletion of "Appointed Supervisors Oath of Office." Larry Gomez seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING:

Minutes of the regular meeting from September 29, 2017 were reviewed. **ACTION TAKEN:** Larry Gomez moved to approve the minutes as read. Dan Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of September, 2017 with accounts payable for October, 2017.

ACTION TAKEN: Dan Williams moved to accept the report for September 2017 and pay the accounts payable for October, 2017. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Jerry Melaragno gave his unofficial summary treasurer's report. He pointed out that the district has held the sum of \$ 75,000 for the New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD) and then remitted it to the NMCCD during this monthly reporting period.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The district manager said that the auditor will be in the office on Nov. 13, 14, and 15.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

Jim Wanstall's written report is included in board member's packets.

Field Office Report:

The NRCS Field Office written is included in board members' packets. Wayne Sleep, new acting district conservationist for team five Is working from the Fort Sumner field office, and he commented on several items.

The big focus has been on getting CSP payments made. Mountainair has 41 active contracts. There is a delay in processing new contracts for 2017 because the payment process for them is different. There are 14 active EQIP applications, and the Mountainair office has been providing technical assistance.

Mr. Sleep reported on April Luna's activities: checking out brush management, livestock pipelines, water facilities and cross fences. She worked with the State Land Office regarding state land practices for EQIP contracts.

District Manager's Report:

The district manager's written report is included included in the board member's packets. She mentioned that the F350 was in the shop.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The district manager received a letter from the USDA Office of Communications which announced that the House of Representative passed the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017 (HR 2936). NM Representative Pearce wrote an addendum to the bill to enable the Forest Service to do categorical exclusions on certain projects, which should facilitate getting work done on the ground, if the Senate passes the bill and the President signs it. The bill should fix "the "fire borrowing" problem, which siphons off forest management dollars to pay for firefighting.

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)

WTB and State Forestry Grant -- The district manager said that there are five WTB projects which aren't completed yet but are in progress. The defensible space project along Mojo Road in the Deer Canyon Preserve was started this week. This work will provide a safer second exit out of the Preserve in case of fire. There are several more projects there which will be contracted soon.

The district manager gave a presentation to the WTB last week on the GRGWA and EBWHRM projects. There are six EBWHRM proposals on the list, and the district manager will find out whether they were forwarded to the legislature when she goes back to a meeting on Nov. 29. The monitoring reports are being prepared to go up on the Institute's website.

GRGWA -- The Acoma Pueblo has competed nine acres of its GRGWA project and is working on the larger part of the project, a meadow project adjacent to .Cibola National Forest land where they will do a project as soon as the Forest Service finishes its NEPA work.

Vern Kohler has been working all over the state spraying re-sprouts. He and his crew have been finishing up at Ojo Caliente and near the Rio Grande in the Valencia SWCD. Spraying re-sprouts needs to be done in the Abó area.

Re-sprout spraying Russian knapweed took place with the Forest Service in Saladito Canyon. All of the salt cedar and Russian olive have been sprayed.

The State Forestry grant – the district manager now has the work plan for the new state forestry grant for \$265,000 for the entire Claunch-Pinto area. She needs to review it. Projects will be done on private land off of 275, adjacent to the Forest Service. Some work will be done in the Corona area, and more work in Deer Canyon and projects in Manzano adjacent to forest land will be done.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP):

Romero Wood LLC CFRP:

The district manager has hired an extra crew on the Romero Wood project to do sawing. The Romeros are behind on the project. Twenty-three acres have to be done. Another meeting may be needed with Claunch-Pinto, the Romeros, and the Forest Service. By August of next year, 300 acres will have to be finished, so the saw crews can probably work through the winter.

Capilla Peak and Corona CFRPs:

All of the bird surveys are complete, and SWCA has submitted reports to the Forest Service, Another Mexican owl survey needs to be carried out, but the CFRP should be finished by September of next year. Then an implementation grant can be applied for.

The district manager said that the Corona CFRP is ahead of schedule. The cultural resource work is finished for the Corona CFRP for the first year and a half.

Chupadera CFRP:

The district manager said that on Tuesday, she will meet with the State Land office, BLM and the contractors who will do the work. She will have contracts ready for the two contractors who will do the work. She described work that is being under taken. Several different applications will take place in the area. Romero Wood and Alamo Navajo are partners on this CFRP.

The district manager announced that the forestry FFA team placed in the top third in the nation. She said that the Mountainair Fire Department greeted the returning team and their advisors and escorted them into town using their sirens and lights. Also, people lined the streets and honked their horns. Claunch-Pinto will work with the team and the Corona team on the Envirothon competition. There is funding in the CFRP to help support the teams.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

The district manager said that NRCS that is developing promotional material for 2017, and December 15 will be the deadline for applications.. The district manager will probably go to Taos to find out whether Southern Methodist University is interested in applying for a RCPP to thin their land.

The district manager said that she should hear in December whether the 2018 funding was approved and how much it would be

Agreement with the New Mexico State Parks:

The district manager said that she has the work plan from State Forestry, so she can contact state park personnel to get permission to do thinning

FEMA Grant Proposal:

Once the Torrance County Hazardous Mitigation Plan has been accepted, the proposal will be funded.

New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Water Quality Grant:

The district manager has submitted the first report, and a meeting will take place with the fire chief within the next two weeks.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay :

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The district manager said that after submitting the signed contract to the community development department of the local government division of the Department of Finance, she was informed three weeks later that she needed a more detailed budget for plumbing and some other areas. She was also told that no outside concrete work would be funded for water catchment. She asked for direction in writing but was refused. Mike Valdez told her that no certificate of occupancy would be issued without an apron and a sidewalk. She will prepare some pictures of the building and some other support documents, and then she, Mike Valdez, and Ted Barela, who got the funding to finish the building, will meet with the director of the local government division to discuss the restrictions. Discussion followed on the importance of written backup documentation.

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

The district manager said that a draft of the revision probably won't be available until late spring or early summer in 2018 because of short staffing.

The district manager said that she talked with the district ranger about the importance of communicating information to the public on prescribed burns. Mr. Lucero talked about what Torrance County is doing to inform the public about emergencies.

Americorp/Vista Program:

The district manager said that she, Mr. Lovato, Mr. Williams and Mr. Gomez selected a candidate to interview and talked with her. She wanted a week to think about the offer. There is a possible second candidate.

Beautification – Partnership with the town of Mountainair – Elm Trees in Town Right of Ways:

The district manager wrote an MOU between the town of Mountainair and the district, which was reviewed by Larry Gomez. Discussion followed. **ACTION TAKEN:** Jerry Melaragno moved to approve the MOU with the town of Mountainair. Mr. Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

District Legal Description:

The district manager said that the Soil and Water Conservation Commission approved the two resolutions passed by the board at the previous meeting: Resolution 06 – 2018 – Acceptance of SWCD Boundary Maps and GIS Shape Files and Resolution No. 7 – 2018 – Approval of Claunch-Pinto SWCD Legal Description and Boundary Maps. She will submit the required documentation to the Secretary of State for recording.

NEW BUSINESS:

Annual meeting:

The district manager proposes to have an annual meeting in November. She suggests having an open house, which would provide an opportunity for participants to tour the building, see the work on the shop, and visit the hoop house.

Resolution No. 08 – 2018 – Adopting the Torrance Country Hazardous Mitigation Plan:

Mr. Lucero, Torrance County Emergency Manager, thanked the district manager for her help in going through the process of adopting the Hazardous Mitigation Plan. He explained the challenges that he had to face in and that the process was begun in 2015. The end of the process is in sight with FEMA adopting the plan. After the plan is adopted, several projects must be undertaken and reports submitted to FEMA. Claunch-Pinto has taken on 18 projects, and there are 69 action plans throughout the county.

ACTION TAKEN: William Caster moved to approve Resolution No. 08 – 2018. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote as follows: William Caster -- yea; LeRoy Candelaria – yea; Jerry Melaragno – yea; Dan Williams – yea; Larry Gomez – yea; Felipe Lovato — yea.

Resolution No. 09 – 2018 – Open Meetings Act:

ACTION TAKEN: Dan Williams moved to adopt Resolution No. 09 – 2018. Jerry Melaragno seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote as follows: William Caster -- yea; Jerry Melaragno – yea; Dan Williams – yea; Larry Gomez – yea; LeRoy Candelaria – yea; Felipe Lovato — yea.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD):

The district manager said that the NMCCD held its annual meeting on October 10 in Socorro with about 60 attendees including a number of NRCS staff members. Pete Domenichi, Jr. spoke about the mil levy.

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He explained how the wind and solar farms affect the mil levy and how important the SWCDs' land use plans are because the plans require that the districts be consulted when one of these companies wants to come into the county. Discussion followed on getting the consultation process to include the districts. Also, board members discussed the need for mitigation of the harm done to the environment by these big projects and the companies' responsibilities to clean up the land if the projects are shut down.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

EBWPC:

The district manager said that a meeting was held in October. She distributed a monitoring report for the board to review.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER:

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

The district manager will make a presentation at the Rio Grande water fund meeting next week on the Estancia Basin and Rio Grande projects.

PLAN FOR NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, December 1, 2017 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:** William Caster moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 a.m. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

JERRY MELARAGNO, SEC. – TREAS.