



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
February 3, 2017**

**Supervisors Present:** Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman  
LeRoy Candelaria  
William Caster  
Larry Gomez  
Jerry Melaragno  
Richard Shovelin  
Dan Williams

**Absentees:**

**Others Present:** Dierdre Tarr, District Manager  
Kenneth Lujan, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)  
Katheryn Taylor, volunteer  
Jay Turner, USFS  
Jim Wanstall, NMDA

**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:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve the agenda. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING:**

Minutes of the regular meeting from January 6, 2017 were reviewed. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin 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 January, 2017 with accounts payable for February, 2017.

**ACTION TAKEN:** William Caster moved to accept the report for January, 2017 and pay the accounts payable for February, 2017. Richard Shovelin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Melaragno distributed his unofficial treasurer's summary for January 2017. He said that the first line under revenue should say "grant administration" instead of "reimbursements." He also explained the amount of mil levy revenue.

#### **OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

##### **Audit:**

The district manager reported that a letter from the State Auditor, Timothy M. Keller is included in the supervisor's packets authorizing the district to release the FY2016 audit report. When the district manager receives copies of the audit from the auditor, she will disseminate them to board members and post the audit on the web site.

##### **Financial Committee:**

No report.

#### **REPORTS:**

##### **New Mexico Department of Agriculture:**

Jim Wanstall's report is included in board members' packets. He pointed out several items of interest.

- Declarations of candidacy must be delivered by the candidate to the designated location on March 14, and soil and water conservation districts must have a polling place in each county that lies within the districts boundary.
- Mr. Wanstall commented on two House bills dealing with elections, HB 174 and 104 that soil and water conservation districts should be concerned about. He explained how the bills could negatively affect conservation districts. The district manager reported on the committee hearing on the bills held yesterday afternoon. The two bills were put on hold so that the sponsors could combine two bills into one. The bill will come before the committee again on Tuesday of next week. She urged board members to attend hearings where the bills will be heard and contact house members to express opposition to the new bill.
- The New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) has funding for special projects relating to water quality and conservation. RFPs are due Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>.
- New Mexico State Forestry will release a Request for Applications for Hazardous Fuels Reduction on Non-Federal Lands projects. SWCDs interested in submitting an application should contact their District Forester.
- NM State Forestry spring conservation seedling sale is underway. The deadline to order plants is April 14, 2017 and distribution will take place March 7<sup>th</sup> through April 21<sup>st</sup>.
- The New Mexico Association of Counties (NMAC) announced the release of its 2017 – 2018 Wildfire Risk Reduction for Rural Communities Grant Program. All applications must be received by Friday, March 31, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.
- Dates the legislative session that may interest SWCDs are listed in Mr. Wanstall's report.
- Websites with updates on meetings and comments regarding New Mexico national forests are listed in the NMDA report.
- Mr. Wanstall commented on the Santa Fe National Forest Draft Forest Plan Components.
- NMDA livestock scales inspection requests are due by March 31, 2017. Mr. Gomez stressed the importance of notifying ranchers of information concerning these requests.

##### **Field Office Report:**

The NRCS Field Office written report is included in board members' packets. Kenneth Lujan commented on several items. He mentioned that the district conservationist position has not been advertised yet, and he will serve as the district conservationist until February 3<sup>rd</sup> followed by Joshua Archuleta. Then there has been a six-week rotation between Mr. King, Mr. Lujan and Mr. Archuleta as district conservationist. Because of the hiring freeze, it will be at least 120 days before a permanent district conservationist is selected.

##### **EQIP:**

He reminded the board that a team-wide ranking system for 2017 will replace the current system. There will be one pool of funds for the four offices and one ranking sheet. He explained how the funding will work. He explained that New Mexico received a lot of RCPP funding, but the Mountainair office will not have access to all of it. He explained what the process will be for applying for RCPP funds.

CSP:

Mr. Lujan said that the deadline for CSP applications is today February 3. There are five applications. He talked about the disadvantages of applying this year and suggested that producers wait another year to apply if possible. He said that CSP applicants will compete with every other applicant in the state.

He reported on a meeting he attended in Edgewood where concerns were expressed about the level of cooperation between NRCS and SWCDs in regard to trainings available to districts. Mr. Lujan explained to the group in Edgewood that any NRCS training was open to districts.

### **District Manager's Report:**

The district manager's written report is included in the board member's packets. She also added several other items. Orlando Lopez called her concerning the Manzano RCPP project with NMACD while he and Pablo Romero were driving to Santa Fe to meet with the Interstate Streams Commission. He planned to tell commissioners that the Claunch-Pinto district must be notified of and included in any meetings concerning the project. He will report on the meeting to the district manager.

The district manager has joined the New Mexico Public Procurement. She can earn CEUs for her Certified Procurement Officer re-certification by attending workshops being held in conjunction with its meeting in Ruidoso in March.

Yesterday the district manager met with Jay Turner of the Forest Service. They talked about an EQIP project that needs cultural clearances by next week. Mr. Turner said that he hopes to get an answer today. The district manager reported on the efforts being made on the project. Mr. Lujan talked about the value of the project and the consequences of not getting it done.

The district manager will meet with a man from California to discuss putting compost on range land. She will disseminate an article about this topic among board members. The meeting came about through an introduction from Joan Bybee.

The district manager elaborated on a meeting she attended on January 25 with Team Five. She also explained that she met with Shannon Cobb, an area land owner, to get her signature on a contract.

### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

A letter from the State Auditor explaining changes to the audit rule is included in the board packets. The district manager summarized the content.

### **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 said that WTB funds won't be available for the district's new proposals due to a mistake on deadlines. The legislature may put a hold on funding anyway due to the large budget shortfall. She has written one contract for the 2016 funds. Progress is being made on the GRGWA projects.

#### **New Mexico State Forestry:**

There is also funding from the State Forestry grant and projects will go forward in the fall.

#### **Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP):**

**Romero Wood, LLC:**

The district manager said that the district crew has completed 23 acres. She praised Manuel Lopez and Jacob Chavez for the fine job they are doing. They have now started on the next 23 acres.

**Capilla Peak and Corona CFRPs:**

The district ranger had a meeting with SWCA and the Forest Service before the CFRP work begins on both the Corona and Capilla Peak projects so that all parties are on the same page on the NEPA work. She described changes to the projects.

The district manager had a meeting last Monday with Shawn Knox of Rocky Mountain Ecological, Mark Meyer from the State Land Office and Casey Hendricks concerning a CFRP proposal. She described the project on 2000 acres of state land south of Highway 60 plus some BLM land. She showed the area on a map. The proposal for the project is due February 27. She will send the executive summary and map to board members.

**Forest Service Participating Agreement:**

The district manager doesn't foresee a participating agreement in the future, so the item will be removed from the agenda. She said that there is an active participating agreement with the East Torrance district and explained the possible effects.

**Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP):**

The district manager is working on reports that she described. She was notified that the RCP was funded for \$969,000. All of the 2015 funds has been contracted. All of the cultural resource surveys have been submitted and all of the technical assistance funding has been spent. The local RCP is the only one in the state that has completed all of its work but got the least funding. Mr. Lujan reminded the board that all RCP funds are spent on federal land. He commented on Coordinated Resource Management Plans (CRMPs).

**Agreement with the New Mexico State Parks:**

No report.

**FEMA Grant Proposal:**

The district manager said that the final paperwork on the proposal has been submitted to FEMA and to Homeland Security in New Mexico. She explained where the funding would be spent.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Capital Outlay -- shop building:**

The district manager met with the community development office under the Department of Finance and Administration, local government division. She said that she is confident that the district can work with this entity on the capital outlay funds. She also said that the severance tax bonds have been sold, and she is waiting for the letter from the Board of Finance saying that the entities are not in violation of the anti-donation clause. Once the letter is received, contracts will be written.

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

The district manager said that it may be June or July 2017 before the next draft is available. She and Jay Turner will hold a collaborative group meeting in April.

**Supervisor Elections:**

The chairman reminded the board that positions three and four held by Mr. Melaragno and Mr. Gomez are up for this election, and he reminded them to be sure and meet the deadline to file declarations of candidacy. Mr. Wanstall read the regulations about what qualifications supervisors must meet to serve on a soil and water conservation board.

**Americorp/Vista Program:**

No report.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

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

Vern Kohler is preparing to take the test needed for required for certification.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve a beautification project with the town of Mountainair and establish a memorandum of understanding with the town. Jerry Melaragno seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

**REPORTS:**

**New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD):**

Mr. Shovelin will attend AgFest in Santa Fe on February 7.

**South Central Mountain RC&D:**

The chairman said that he was unable to attend the last meeting.

**Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC):**

The district manager will meet with this group next week. A discussion was held on cooperating on well monitoring. When she receives minutes, she will disseminate them to board members.

**ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:**

**OTHER:**

Jay Turner of the Forest Service presented a certificate of appreciation to Dan Williams for his hard work, commitment and many extra efforts in supporting people and protecting important resources of the 2016 Dog Head Fire. A certificate was also presented to the district manager for her hard work, commitment and many extra efforts in supporting people and protecting important resources of the 2016 Dog Head Fire. In addition, her behind the scenes support in joint efforts and with the Mountainair Landsape Team and vision for the future were recognized.

**MEETINGS ATTENDED:**

**PLAN FOR NEXT MEETING:**

**NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:**

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, March 3, 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:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to adjourn the meeting at 1015 a.m. Dan Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

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FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

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JERRY MELARAGNO, SEC. – TREAS.