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MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING May 4, 2018

Supervisors Present: Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
David Cain
LeRoy Candelaria
William Caster
Larry Gomez
Richard Shovelin
Dan Williams

Absentees:

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, District Manager
Jim Groom, Associate Supervisor, CLPSWCD
Kenneth Lujan, NRCS
Jay Turner, Forestry Service
Katheryn Taylor, volunteer, CLPSWCD

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. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING:

Minutes of the regular meeting from April 6, 2018 were reviewed. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve the minutes as amended. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. On page 4 under Other, delete "Mr. Shovelin wanted to post a political sign on the district property, but political signs are not allowed." Add: "Mr. Shovelin asked for a discussion on placing political signs on district property."

TREASURER'S REPORT AND APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of April, 2018 with accounts payable for May, 2018.

ACTION TAKEN: Dan Williams moved to accept the report for April 2018 and pay the accounts payable for May, 2018. Richard Shovelin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Claunch-Pinto SWCD
May 4, 2018
Regular Meeting

FY2018 – 2019 Budget:

The district manager asked to hold a special meeting on Friday May 18 so that she can prepare more information on cutting expenses. **ACTION TAKEN:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to table discussion of the FY208 – 2019 budget. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The district manager asked to place on the next meeting agenda, adding a fourth person to the bank signature card in case the other three signatories are out of town.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

Jim Wanstall's written report is included in board members' packets. He noted several items. Item # 4: announces a presentation and demonstration on seepage control for dirt tanks and ponds that will take place on May 22 at 12:30 at the Upper Hondo Soil and Water Conservation District office in Capitan. Item # 7 explains the provisions of House Bill 98, which passed. It concerns a single election day and uniform processes for certain local government elections. The NMDA will provide more information on the impacts this bill has on SWCDs and watersheds. Number 8 announces a New Mexico State .University youth ranch management camp to be held June 10 – 15.

Field Office Report:

The NRCS Field Office written report is included in board members' packets. As the new district conservationist, Kenneth Lujan highlighted several points in the report. He went over EQIP and CSP contracts and applications and the funding that Team 5 was allocated – one point two million dollars. Mr. Lujan said that because of the number of applications, those funds won't go very far.

Next he discussed RCCP funding. He wants to wait to fund the range contracts until there is more certainty about the money. He asked board members to tell any producers with concerns to call him. Delays in approving the ranking system were discussed.

Staffing is the main problem for Team 5. There are about 43 vacancies in the state and Team 5 is down at least one person in each office. In Mountainair, April Luna is working by herself. Mr. Lujan talked about people in various positions and possibilities for adding staff by means of different programs. His goal is to get two qualified people in each office.

Then Mr. Lujan described the status and potential effects of the new Farm bill on New Mexico. He will keep the boards informed on changes to the programs.

Mr. Lujan's duty station will be in Estancia, but he will spend one day a week in each of the five offices.

Approval to sign Conservation Resource Management Plan after District Review:

The district manager reviewed the plan, and she recommends approval.

ACTION TAKEN: Richard Shovelin moved to authorize the chairman to sign the Conservation Resource Management Plan. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Lujan commented on the plan. He suggested that discussion of a future plan take place in executive session to ensure the privacy of individuals mentioned in the plan.

District Manager's Report:

The district manager's written report is included in the board member's packets. She mentioned that her laptop computer failed, and she described the work-arounds that she is using to get her work done until the computer is replaced.

She also commented on the windmills that are in the Claunch-Pinto district and the future windmills that are being planned for the Corona area. She talked about what she learned during the visit she made to the office of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (PRC) on Wednesday May 2. She disseminated copies of the windmill companies' applications for location site approval of the Corona Wind Projects. She asked the supervisors to review the applications. It was suggested to the district manager that the district consider protesting the applications and become an intervener because the companies have not complied with the district's Land Use Plan, which requires that they submit their reclamation information to the board for review and meet with the supervisors. Becoming an intervener would put the district at the table. The district manager went over the time line for participation in the process. A public hearing before the PRC may take place on July 25. She would like to place the issue on the May 18 meeting agenda. The windmill companies are ignoring the soil and water districts. Also at stake is possible funding for the districts that could result from installation of the windmills.

Discussion took place on getting a response from the companies. Mr. Gomez suggested that it may be

useful to find out the basis of protest from other interveners. Discussion followed on the effects on the land when energy companies fail and abandon their equipment.

Then the district manager distributed a Rio Grande Water Fund agenda from a meeting that she attended.

She also pointed out a report that she made to the Lincoln County Commission

CORRESPONDENCE:

Information is in board members' packets. The district manager mentioned the flyer advertising the presentation and demonstration on Seepage Control for Dirt Tanks/ Ponds to be held at the Upper Hondo SWCD office in Capitan on May 22.

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 will attend a meeting of the WBT where she expects to learn about the projects that have been approved for funding.

She submitted the district's quarterly report.

About \$30,000 remains in the Rio Grande grant. She has received an invoice from the Acoma Pueblo which has finished its thinning project on Horse mesa. In July she will receive the final invoice from the New Mexico Watershed and Forest Restoration Institute for monitoring, which will zero out the account. Regarding the Estancia Basin project, the district manager is waiting for an invoice from SWCA for monitoring. The district will receive some administrative fees, and then this grant will be zeroed out.

Practice plans are being submitted for WTB funding.

There are five contracts in progress on private land in the Corona area funded by the State Forestry NFL grant. There will be three projects in the Deer Canyon Preserve plus the project to finish the project on Mojo Trail.

An application has been submitted to the district manager for a project in Priest Canyon.

Chairman Lovato and the district manager met with the acting highway department engineer for District 5. They talked about the area near Cedarvale and an area near Gran Quivira. She also talked with someone at the Salinas Pueblo Missions who is interested in a project on the road to Quarai.

The district manager has submitted another proposal for NFL funding, but it will be a couple of months before she gets news of its success.

A project on highway 275 is planned.

The Greater Rio Grande proposal was not funded through the WTB. A meeting will take place this afternoon on some contingency plans.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP):

Two teams were sent to the Envirothon where they place tenth and twelfth, and they did a good job, according to Jim Wanstall, who served as a judge for the event. He said that competition is pretty stiff. The experienced teams placed higher. One of the team members placed high in the FAA competition, and he will make a presentation to the board.

Romero Wood LLC CFRP:

The district manager will meet with a Forest Service representative on May 22 to get an update on the project. The district's crew can only thin from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. The sawyer has to be on fire watch for three hours after 10:00. The spotter will return to the office and work here. There is no moisture predicted until August.

Capilla Peak and Corona CFRPs:

Teams are conducting surveys on the Capilla Peak project. The Capilla Peak project is a two-year grant, ends in September and is on schedule. Then survey work will take place on the Gallinas.

Chupadera CFRP:

The district manager said that she has asked the State Land Office for a map of their working projects. Rocky Mountain Ecological cannot start work until the district manager receives the information that she has requested.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

The district manager said that there is a provision in the grant to pay the district for technical help, so the district can support NRCS with whatever it needs to be done. SWCA will do the clearances on the project once it is contracted for.

The preliminary paperwork for 2018 has been signed and sent to Washington D.C. Applications from landowners for 2019 funding will probably be due in December.

New Mexico State Park Project:

The district manager will contact the state park next month on a project for the fall.

FEMA Grant Proposal:

The district manager received the contract several days after the last board meeting. She has a meeting with her contact during the week of May 15 before she goes out for a bid on the NEPA work that needs to be done.

New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Water Quality Grant:

The district manager said that the project to install catchment tanks at the fire station is finished, and a workshop was held on April 28. She said that it was lightly attended but that the participants got a tour and information on what was done at the fire station as well as on the system that was installed at the district office.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay, Shop Building:

The district manager had a meeting at the Department of Finance (DFA) on April 25 to review her request for funding for the shop building. Felipe Lovato and Ted Barela attended the meeting with her. The chairman reported on the meeting. He explained that the issue the DFA has with the proposal is that it wasn't specific enough. The district manager explained what further paperwork is required. After she submits a new budget, the DFA will decide what the capital outlay money can or can't be spent for. If there is money remaining after expenditures are authorized, the district will have to go back to the legislature to get those funds re-authorized.

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

Jay Turner said that the revision is going to the regional office for review, and he explained the rest of the review process. Perhaps the draft will be available for public comment in the fall. The district manager announced that Elaine Korman, formerly a forest supervisor has taken a new position as the deputy regional forester at the regional office in Albuquerque. The new forest supervisor is Steve Hottenbach.

Americorp/Vista Program:

The district manager said that two people have contacted her about the position, so a date for interviews needs to be chosen.

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

The chairman said that he would attend a town council meeting as soon as he can.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution No. 12 – 2018 – Budget Resolution

ACTION TAKEN: Richard Shovelin moved to table Resolution No. 12 – 2018. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD):

The district manager met with John Laconda at the Forest Service regional office about an MOU between the Forest Service and the coalition. The district manager with Kim Kostelnik will create some

task orders because the Forest Service wants any funding that comes through the MOU to be done through task orders, so that an accurate accounting of the funds can be achieved.

The district manager went over what the district is requiring of the contractors that work on projects to defend against fire danger. She said that in 2012 when the Forest Service went into closure, she told the contractors to shut down. If that happens this year, she will ask the contractors on all projects to shut down. The chairman mentioned that there are restrictions on all land now.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

EBWPC:

Minutes from the last two meetings are in board members' binders. The last meeting was held on April 12.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

The district manager thanked Jim Groom for participating in the budget development process.

OTHER:

Mr. Shovelin brought up the issue of a district drug policy. After discussion, the matter was referred to district personnel committee to review the district's policy. Mr. Shovelin asked that a committee report be put on next month's agenda.

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

The district manager attended her first state land advisory committee meeting on Wednesday, May 2. She praised the leadership of the state land commissioner and mentioned the fiscal achievements under the last three years of his direction.

Mr. Williams said that he attended the annual spring meeting of the New Mexico Geological Society that addressed the environmental geology and hydrology of New Mexico. He mentioned studies on aquifers to measure conservation efforts. The studies indicate that water tables have risen, However, predictions on the lack of water inflows to the aquifers this year indicate that Albuquerque will have to depend on wells because water levels will go down. Mr. Lujan said that studies on wells at the base of the mountains shows increases of 10 feet, but the water level in wells in Estancia have gone way down. He explained that trees burning in the fires probably accounts for the rise in well water at the base of the mountains. Discussion followed on reasons for rising lake and reservoir waters and the effect of the drought on the snow pack and on irrigation.

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

The district manager said that documents on infrastructure and capital improvement planning (ICIP) have to be submitted by July 15. She will attend an ICIP training in June to learn about any changes.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, June 1, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. at the Natural Resource Conservation Center, 1206 South Highway 55 in 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 10:25. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

RICHARD J. SHOVELIN, SEC. – TREAS.