



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
November 6, 2020**

Supervisors Present: Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
David Cain
LeRoy Candelaria
Robin Dunn
Larry Gomez
Jack Lockridge
Dan Williams

Absentees:

Others Present: Diedre Tarr, District Manager
Kenneth Lujan, NRCS
Dale Rose
Katheryn Taylor, CPSWCD, volunteer
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, both in person and via Zoom at 8:10 a.m.

Welcome Attendees:

The chairman welcomed those present and thanked them for joining the meeting. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The board reviewed the agenda. **ACTION TAKEN:** Leroy Candelaria moved to approve the agenda. Jack Lockridge seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ACTION TAKEN: Larry Gomez moved to approve the minutes of September, 2020 as read. David Cain seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote with one abstention: Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye.
ACTION TAKEN: Larry Gomez moved to approve the minutes of October, 2020 as read. David Cain seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote with one abstention: Larry Gomez, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of October, 2020 with accounts payable for November, 2020. **ACTION TAKEN:** Jack Lockridge moved to approve the treasurer's report for October, 2020 and pay the accounts payable for November, 2020. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

DFA Quarterly Financial Report:

The report is included for reference. The district manager has received approval of the report from the Department of Finance and Administration.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

The department of agriculture's report is included in the board packets.

Mr. Wanstall reported on several items:

- The new Soil and Water Commission has been appointed. The members are announced in his written report. The district's new commissioner is Ross Garcia Jr. for Region 2.
- An update on the Open Meetings Act Resolution states that "districts are being advised to include both virtual/conference call meeting information and the physical meeting information.
- The Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center at New Mexico State University will host a series of sessions via Zoom.
- The New Mexico Department of Agriculture will host two pesticide disposal events in the month of November. One will be in Los Lunas.
- The New Mexico State University is offering pesticide applicator training two ways online. The district manager said that Vern Kohler has completed his training and has submitted the necessary paperwork.
- The Soil and Water Conservation Commission voted at its meeting in October to have the point system worksheet remain the same as it was in 2020.
- The New Mexico Livestock Board will hold a virtual rulemaking hearing on December 10 to receive public comment for an alternative to the brand and transport fees rule.
- The New Mexico submitted a plan to the US Department of Agriculture for growing hemp that has been approved. There is information on the NM Department of Agriculture website with more information.

NRCS Mountainair Field Office Report:

The report is included in board member's packets. Mr. Lujan said that there is no deadline yet for EQIP, but producers should apply as soon as possible. He also said that the Mountainair NRCS office is in phase 3, so it is one step closer to re-opening but will probably remain closed until at least the summer. Visitors can be received but by appointment only.

District Manager's Report:

The district manager reported that she has participated in many Zoom meetings. She and Mr. Lockridge spent several weeks researching $\frac{3}{4}$ ton trucks.

CORRESPONDANCE:

The district manager received a letter from the Mountainair Elementary School students and staff thanking the district for the 100 ponderosa pine seedlings from the Manzanos that were given to the school to distribute. Students are reporting weekly on the health and growth of the seedlings. The district had received 2400 seedlings from the Forest Service to give to the community. Pictures and drawings were included with the letter.

UPDATE ON GRANTS – the District Manager's report to the board:

Watershed Health Grant – Water Trust Board (WTB):

2018 WTB Funds – The grant has been completed.

2019 GRGWA Projects: We have completed all the current projects. We have a contract with NM Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute for monitoring with a balance of \$43,812.69. We have approximately \$27,000.00 to be used for re-sprout treatments on completed projects. The re-sprout treatments are working well if we can keep treating the re-sprouts for 3 - 5 years. Vern Kohler and Fred Rossbach completed the re-sprout treatments on the Seboyeta projects and a portion of the San Cristobal project. Vern was able to complete the re-sprout treatments on the Anna Price project and the Ranchos las Lagunas project. Hopefully we will be able to start the Ojo Caliente project in the next week or so.

2019 WTB Funds – EBWHRM Projects: East Torrance SWCD has completed three projects. Edgewood SWCD has contracted the majority of their portion of the funding. Edgewood SWCD will be contracting the remaining portion of their funding in the next couple of weeks. Claunch-Pinto SWCD has the Cain State Land project, Deer Canyon Gate project and a couple of small projects they have contracted. We have contracted with SWCA Environmental Consultants to continue the monitoring project.

2020 WTB Proposal – We have been funded for both the Estancia Basin Watershed Health Restoration and Monitoring project and the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance project. Both proposals were for \$600,000 each. All of the readiness items have been submitted and approved. The Water Trust Board legal team is planning to close both of these grants on December 18, 2020. The board will be asked to review all of the draft documents over the next few weeks and approve resolutions on both grants at the December 4, 2020 board meeting.

NM State Forestry Grants:

2018 NFL Funding – The Ramah Navajo Natural Resource thinning crew has been working on the Cain State Land project twice during the month of October. They come in for eight days at a time. They appreciate the restrooms with showers that we have been able to provide for them.

2019 NFL Funding – I have reviewed the draft work plan for this funding in the amount of \$276,500.00.

2020 NFL Funding – We have been notified we have received funding in the amount of \$276,500.00. Our proposal ranked number one in the proposal rankings.

Forest and Watershed Restoration Act (FAWRA) Funding:

The district has been funded for the Box Canyon project in the amount of \$375,000.00. Box Canyon is in the Mexican Spotted Owl habitat area which was included in the Wild Earth Guardian Injunction against the Forest Service. This injunction has now been released by the Federal Court after the Forest Service and Wild Earth Guardians came to an agreement. The district is working with State Forestry to complete this work plan. The district is also working with NM Forest Industry Association on a \$275,000 agreement for the work in Box Canyon. The district will be responsible for completing all of the hand work for this project.

BNSF Railroad Project:

We have sent Notice of Termination of Coverage under a NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges associated with Industrial Activity into EPA in Washington, D. C. We

are waiting for concurrence from EPA. After we receive the concurrence and do some work on the project, the railroad will release the final payment of \$47,500 to the district.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Projects:

Chupadera CFRP – We have now moved into the fourth year on this project. All documents have to be submitted and approved for this project prior to August 31, 2020.

New 2019 CFRP Proposal – Ian Fox, Collaborative Forest Restoration and Forest Product Modernization Program Manager sent the following update: “I am working with the Washington Office (WO) to route the recommendations and report through the Washington Office to get signed off by the chief and her staff. Once that is complete the WO will route to the Department of Agriculture for the secretary’s review and approval. We cannot award any new projects until the secretary approval process is completed. At this time, I have no ETA on how long this process will take. In addition, the federal government is operating under a continuing resolution. I will continue to keep you posted on the progress for this proposal.”

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

2018 RCPP Funding – All of the cultural resource survey reports for the Mountainair office have been sent to NRCS for review. NRCS only has a couple to review before they are sent to SHPO. The remaining reports are either on SHPO’s desk or have been approved. We have two outstanding reports for the Grants/Gallup Field Office. One of the reports has been submitted to the Forest Service for review and concurrence. The second report is being drafted and should be submitted soon.

Additional RCPP Funding – All of the negotiations have been sent to the Washington, DC office for approval. When New Mexico receives the approval on these negotiations an agreement will be prepared between the district and NRCS.

New Mexico State Park Project:

The thinning portion of the Manzano State Park project has been completed. State Forestry is working with a contractor to cut the wood in two and four-foot lengths and haul to a staging area. The district will then haul the wood to the district wood yard to sell to land grant heirs.

FEMA Grant Proposal:

Grant No. FEMA-4197-DR-NM-11-01 –

The contractor’s contract has been signed. A copy is being sent to the financial office of NM Home Land Security and Emergency Management. The work will be completed by the Ramah Navajo Natural Resource thinning crew after they have completed the Cain State Land project.

Hazard Mitigation Project - Sub-grant Application HMGP – 5281 –

The district submitted a proposal for this funding on July 24, 2020 in the amount of \$451,043.00. This funding is planned to complete projects on the Aceves Ranch, Swenka Ranch, and Deer Canyon Preserve. The project on Deer Canyon Preserve will include a clearing for a helicopter pad and also a staging area in case of a large wildfire. We have received the first round of comments and questions from FEMA. The answers have been re-submitted to FEMA. We probably will not hear anything on this proposal until after the first of the year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay:

Shop Building - Report:

The district manager reported that there will be about \$1100 left of the funding. The building has been inspected and the paperwork done for completion. She would like to use the money to gravel the parking area west of the building.

Purchasing a ¾ Ton Vehicle for the District:

The district has been given the funds to purchase vehicles for the district, so Jack Lockridge, Felipe Lovato and the district manager have spent the last month researching vehicles. The district has purchased a 2007 Chevy 2500, four-wheel drive truck as well as a 2009 GMC 2500 four-wheel drive pickup. This pickup will be for the use of the crew. Vern Kohler will use the other truck. The district manager has arranged for the truck that broke down to be brought back to the district, and she will figure out how to dispose of it. There are problems with equipment which need to be addressed. The district manager and Mr. Lockridge reported on the condition of the trucks that were bought, and Mr. Lockridge praised the district manager for how much time she spent on researching vehicles. The district manager's personal vehicle has been used to take the district's crew to the field.

Torrance and Lincoln County Wind Energy, Corona Wind Companies, Western Spirit Transmission Line:

The district manager reported that she met with the Forest Service, New Mexico State Forestry, and Pattern Energy regarding the fire plan that Pattern is working on for the Corona Wind Companies. Some of the fire plan may be used for the Western Spirit Transmission line. She also reported on the tri-county committee that was formed to prepare for receiving and then distributing funds from Pattern Energy. At a committee meeting Pattern said that one million fifty thousand dollars will be made available. The committee will work with the New Mexico Foundation instead of applying for its own 501 c.3. The money can then be invested and other funding can be sought to match it. The district manager donated the fee to submit the paperwork to the New Mexico Foundation.

Mr. Gomez asked whether there has been any discussion on making repairs to local roads being heavily used by Pattern's vehicles. The district manager reported on her discussions regarding the roads and the danger to motorists posed by contractors' vehicles. She said that as far as she knows the NM Department of Transportation has no plans to improve the highways. Mr. Williams stressed the need to put pressure on contractors to make highway safety a high priority.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution No. 07 – 2021 – Open Meetings Resolution:

The district manager will consult with Mr. Wanstall on the wording to take into account the Zoom meetings.

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Candelaria moved to approve the resolution with the addition of wording on the Zoom meetings. Mr. Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Robin Dunn; Larry Gomez, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

Appointed Supervisor Oath of Office:

Mr. Wanstall said that the oath should be sent to board members to sign and have notarized.

Paperwork through the Forest Service for an Incident Command Center:

The district manager will follow up with Ernie Taylor on this item.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts:

No report.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:

No report.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER:

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, December 4, 2020 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, Leroy Candelaria moved to adjourn. Larry Gomez seconded the motion at 9:10.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

David Cain, SECRETARY