



PO Box 129, Mountainair, NM 87036 Ph: 505-847-2243 Fax: 505-847-0615

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

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

Absentees: Dan Williams

Others Present: Jorge Dodge, NM Department of Transportation
Kenneth Lujan, NRCS
Anita Ortiz, CPSWCD
Juan Sanchez, Edgewood SWCD, Chilili Land Grant
Alan Warren, USFS

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 8:05 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:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to approve the agenda. Robin Dunn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ACTION TAKEN: Robin Dunn moved to approve the minutes of February 7, 2020 as read. Jack Lockridge seconded the motion. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of February, 2020 with accounts payable for March, 2020.

ACTION TAKEN: Larry Gomez moved to approve the treasurer's report for February, 2020 and pay the accounts payable for March, 2020. David Cain seconded the motion. Motion carried.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

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No report.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

Jim Wanstall's written report is included in the board packets. The district manager said that an item not in the report yet is that there is an additional \$200,000 in the state budget for soil and water conservation districts, pending the governor's approval. These funds would be added to the money allocated for the point system.

The district manager pointed out an item on a new process for livestock scales inspections.

NRCS Mountainair Field Office Report:

Mr. Lujan said that Joanne Cornwall from Washington state will join the office on March 30.

He said that EQIP is basically the same, but there are changes to CSP. He went over those changes that are published in the attachment to his report. He said that the biggest change is that public land can be included. He said that his office is informing CSP producers that they should come into the office so that he can go over the changes and options individually.

He also went over the funding that is available for the programs and the amount that Team 5 can probably spend. Then Mr. Lujan explained CSP enhancements that are available.

Next he explained the staffing challenges that he is facing.

District Manager's Report:

The district manager referred board members to her written report included in the board packets. She commented on the governor's guidance provided to State Forestry regarding funds for State Forestry projects that now must be moved to other projects to assist contractors and forest businesses who have lost work due to the Spotted Owl injunction. Therefore, State Forestry will use some funds on thinning projects in Manzano State Park. In her report, the district manager mentioned that she participated in a conference call with New Mexico State Parks. She talked about what the park wants to do on a project with slash and wood. She warned the participants that a greater fire hazard would be created by following the park's plan than by leaving the acres in their present state. She also told them that people from the area would go in and remove wood disregarding cultural resources and the environment. The outcome of the call was that a meeting will be held with State Forestry, Claunch-Pinto and State Parks.

CORRESPONDANCE:

The "Noticias de las Acequias" newsletter is in the binders. The district manager has received several letters from Lincoln and Torrance counties saying that they will be selling bonds for the Corona wind farm.

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.

Watershed Health Grant – Water Trust Board (WTB):

The district manager said that almost all of the 2018 funds have been spent.

Regarding 2019 funding, East Torrance has written almost all of its contracts, and payments have been made on two of them. She explained that the district's grant funds have been used as matches on the Deer Canyon Trail project and Mr. Cain's state land project. The Deer Canyon project is finished and has been inspected. There were questions concerning trees that were left standing, the district's field technician and the president of the Homeowners Association inspected the area in question. These trees were not in the project. A dog was hit and killed on the Deer Canyon Preserve, and the district manager explained what happened.

Some trees on the Cain project are down, but chipping has been delayed somewhat by needed repairs to the chippers.

Then she reported on progress on the Jordan Pareo project and on a private agreement the landowner apparently had with the Alamo Navajo crew to cut and chip on land not in the project. The project is nearly finished.

These projects are being paid for both by the WTB and state forestry grants.

Both the Estancia Basin and Greater Rio Grande projects are on the WTB list for approval, but the notification of success will not be known until May.

The State Forestry Grant:

The district manager reported on the amount of wood being taken from projects and on her commitment to paying the State Land Office its due.

**Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance (GRGWA) aka Upper Rio Grande Salt Cedar Project:
BNSF Railroad Project:**

Vern Kohler has conducted inspections on the railroad project. Grass plugs are stored in the district's hoop house. Hopefully, next month they will be planted.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP)

Chupadera CFRP:

The district manager has submitted a draft report on the biological assessment for review and comment. She expects to meet with the State Land Office and BLM on moving forward with the NEPA work. She will ask for a year's extension which will put the project in the fourth year with the Forest Service.

New 2019 CFRP Proposal – Watershed Restoration and Fuel Reduction in Bartolo Canyon in the Manzano Mountains:

The district manager said that everything on the proposal is in order, but there is still no CFRP Technical Advisory Committee to review the proposal.

The district manager has been asked to apply for Forest and Watershed Restoration Act (FAWRA) funds. These funds will be used on a project in Red Canyon. If the district is funded, it has been asked to use this funding as a match for work that is being completed by NM Forest Industry Association on the Sandia Ranger District.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

2018 RCPP Funding:

The district manager said that work on the cultural resource surveys is being completed.

Additional RCPP Funding:

The district manager doesn't know yet whether the proposal will be approved. Mr. Lujan commented on his perspective on the funding and the amount of work required to use the money. The district was not allowed to submit a proposal for 2019 funds.

New Mexico State Park Project:

The district manager reported earlier on the conference call she had that concerns a possible project on the state park.

FEMA Grant Proposal:

The district manager reported on the work that she has been doing in the FEMA office. She thinks that the packet she prepared for phase 2 of the project is ready. There is a scope of work, a budget and required signatures.

She has submitted an application to Homeland Security for 2020 funding and described areas that would be addressed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay

Shop Building - Report:

The district manager has submitted the second of two required RFPs for another contractor.

Purchasing a vehicle for the district:

The district manager submitted a request for a three-quarter ton work truck. She hopes that the governor will not delete the request from the capital outlay bill.

Cibola National Forest – Forest Plan Revision:

The Forest Service is in the process of doing its comment analysis for the Forest Plan revision.

Beautification – Partnership with the town of Mountainair:

The district manager and Anita Ortiz met with the mayor and the town clerk of Mountainair, and three trees will be planted on the east side of the city offices in conjunction with the town's Earth Day celebration. However, she emphasized to the mayor that the town must take care of them.

Lincoln, Torrance and Socorro Transmission Line, SunZia Transmission Line:

No report.

Torrance and Lincoln County Wind Energy:

Corona Wind Companies, Western Spirit Transmission Line:

The district manager attended a pre-scheduling hearing of the County Commission. The energy company plans to lengthen the Western Sprit Line, perhaps to the east. An additional eleven thousand acres to the wind farm in the Corona area was being planned, but the rancher who owns the land has filed as an intervener because an agreement hadn't been reached with Pattern Energy. However, at the meeting the company withdrew the request to expand the wind farm area. The wildfire issue came up, and after the meeting the district manager was asked about it by the commission's attorney and a commissioner. After she explained the issue, she was told in the presence of Pattern Energy representatives that she had a right to be concerned.

The chairman moved the agenda to NEW BUSINESS, item: Discussion with George Dodd, Department of Transportation.

Discussion with George Dodge, Jr. -- Highway Right-of Way Fuel Reduction:

Mr. Candelaria said he attended an Association of Counties meeting where Mr. Dodge and the Department of Transportation (DOT) cabinet secretary, Mr. Sandoval, made a presentation on the highway department's interest in working with small communities. Mr. Candelaria told the board Mr. Dodge had been a state representative and a county manager in addition to his job with the DOT, so he thought that it would be a good idea to invite Mr. Dodge to a board meeting to discuss a possible partnership to work on highway rights-of-way. The district manager described resources that the district can bring to accomplish work on these rights-of-way and projects that have been completed in the past. Mr. Dodge said that the secretary of the DOT has charged him with meeting with entities in communities across the state to find out what the DOT can do to help them. He will report to Secretary Sandoval about what may be done. Mr. Candelaria stated that establishing a partnership between the district and DOT is important and a win, win for everybody. A discussion then took place on the condition of certain highways. Mr. Dodge said that it would be helpful if State Senator Sefanics and Representative McQueen were made aware of the need to put money into the Local Government Transportation Project Fund again in order to respond to issues concerning roads near small communities. He explained about funding the DOT has and how it has to be used. He reiterated that his focus is on small communities. Discussion followed on local priorities. The district will email a list of priorities to Mr. Dodge after communicating with her contacts for input.

Resume Unfinished Business:

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NMDA – Healthy Soils Program Proposal – Rodney Garcia and Janis Pauliks:

No report.

Personnel Policy – Absenteeism and Tardiness:

No report.

NMDA – Healthy Soils Program Proposal – Education – Robin Dunn:

No report.

NEW BUSINESS:

Re-organization of the Board:

ACTION TAKEN: Robin Dunn nominated David Cain for the position of secretary of the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Gomez moved to nominate Jack Lockridge as the treasurer of the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Resolution No. 11 – 2020 – Mil Levy:

ACTION TAKEN: LeRoy Candelaria moved to approve the mil levy resolution. Jack Lockridge seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye; David Cain, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts:

The district manager reported that the NMCCD had a booth at AgFest that was in great demand. Five districts had representation to help at the NMCCD booth.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

A meeting was held, which Felipe Lovato was unable to attend. However, he reported that Mr. Brian Green proposed funding for monitoring a well in the Estancia Basin at a depth of 2500 feet. The district manager said that the request comes from the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee. She will find out information at the next meeting of the committee.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER:

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, April 3, 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 Jack Lockridge moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 am. David Cain seconded the motion. Motion carried.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN
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SEC. – TREAS.