



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
November 5, 2021**

Supervisors Present: Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
David Cain
Jack Lockridge
Dale Rose

Absentees: Robin Dunn
Larry Gomez
LeRoy Candelaria

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, District Manager
Ernest Taylor, Mountainair Ranger District
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, followed by a moment of silence.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The board reviewed the agenda. **ACTION TAKEN:** Dale Rose moved to approve the agenda. Jack Lockridge seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Jack Lockridge; David Cain.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to approve the minutes of October 1, 2021 as read. David Cain seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye; David Cain, aye.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of October, 2021 with accounts payable for November.

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to approve the treasurer's report for October, 2021 and pay the accounts payable for November, 2021. David Cain seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye; David Cain, aye.

Mr. Lockridge reported that he still continues to pursue eliminating the bank charges to Claunch-Pinto.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The district manager sent out the quarterly report to board members. She has not yet heard whether it has been approved.

REPORTS:**New Mexico Department of Agriculture:**

The NMDA's written report was provided to the board members. Mr. Wanstall called attention to some items.

He said that 1.5 million dollars may be added to the healthy soils program to be awarded to districts and tribes to develop and implement appropriate programs. The district manager said that she has materials on soils that could be presented on DVDs to be used in the schools. Mr. Lovato said that he attended a fantastic meeting on soils at the UNM campus in Los Lunas. The meeting raised his awareness of his own practices and those of the tribes that improve soil productivity, especially during these times of water crisis. Mr. Wanstall mentioned that rules need to be changed to get money on the ground.

Mr. Wanstall said that he has been working on the grant that comes from Fish and Wildlife Service to reimburse ranchers for depredation from wolves. There is an effort to form a New Mexico version of the Livestock Co-existence Council in order to make it smaller and more efficient and therefore process funding more quickly.

The NMDA Agricultural Workforce Development program offers incentives to agricultural businesses to hire interns, but Mr. Wanstall said that districts are not considered agricultural businesses.

The Soil and Water Conservation Commission voted to require responses to all items on the point system worksheet.

The Open Meetings Act Resolution reminder asks districts to include both the virtual/conference call meeting information and the physical meeting information.

The district manager said that she was recertified as the chief procurement officer for the district. She also said that she Vernon Kohler attended the noxious weed conference, so he earned all his CEUs and has his license.

Mr. Wanstall said that he plans to retire in 2022, at the latest in August.

NRCS Mountainair Field Office Report:

Mr. Lujan's written report is included in board member's packets.

District Manager's Report:

The Torrance County Emergency Manager will attend the next board meeting to explain how Homeland Security and FEMA work.

CORRESPONDANCE:

The district manager said that she received a note from the Mountainair FFA thanking the district for its sponsorship of the 2021 ranch rodeo. The money will be used to support FFA members attendance at leadership conferences, at the state convention as well as at competitions and local career development events throughout the year.

Second, she also received a letter from the Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County notifying and explaining the Lincoln County New Mexico Taxable Industrial Revenue Bonds (Pattern SC Holdings LLC Project) in the amount of \$3.6 million dollars to "finance the acquisition, construction and installation of wind energy generation facilities . . . used to generate electricity from wind energy to be located within the county (the 'project')."

Third, the Rio Grande Water Fund Wildfire and Water Source Protection Annual Report 2021 was received.

**UPDATE ON GRANTS – the District Manager’s Written Report to the Board: November 1, 2021:
Watershed Health Grant – Water Trust Board (WTB):**

2019 GRGWA Projects:

Vern has completed the re-sprout treatment on the Michaels property in Seboyeta. He has sprayed 21 acres on the Ojo Caliente Spa North. We still have 28 Acres on Ojo Caliente North and 57 acres in the middle portion of the Ojo Caliente project to complete the re-sprout treatment. The funding for these treatments will be billed to Taos SWCD. The 2019 GRGWA WTB grant has been closed and the appropriate reports have been submitted.

2019 EBWHRM WTB Funds:

The 2019 EBWHRM WTB grant has been closed and the appropriate reports have been submitted.

2020 EBWHRM WTB Funds:

The district has drawn down \$106,706.44 on this grant to pay landowners for projects completed. We have also paid SWCA on their monitoring contract. The East Torrance SWCD will have two meet and greet meetings in Torreon and Tajique to generate landowner interest in defensible space and hazardous fuel reduction projects. At the last EBWHRM Core Steering Committee meeting, East Torrance SWCD released \$40,000 back to the other two districts because they didn’t have any applications for projects. Edgewood and Claunch-Pinto SWCD are working on a 60 acres defensible space project in Chilili. Both districts have landowner applications, but there aren’t contractors to complete the work.

2020 GRGWA WTB Funds:

The district manager has closed two contracts for the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance projects. There are nine projects for a total of 283 acres. Larry Taylor has started working on the Rio Puerco project and has completed 12.5 acres. We will be adding an additional 7 acres to this project. The contract to Restoration Solutions has been executed, and work will begin sometime in the next couple of months. These grant funds have to be expended by August, 2022.

2021 WTB Proposals:

The EBWHRM and GRGWA proposals were both funded. The resolutions for both grants are on the board agenda for 11/05/2021. Once the resolutions have been passed, the grants documentation can be signed and returned to the NM Water Trust Board legal team for closing.

NM State Forestry Grants:

2018 NFL Funding:

The district has \$140,572 to spend on this grant before December 31, 2021. We have on-going projects that if we finish them by December 31 2021, we will not have to turn back any of this funding.

2019 NFL Funding:

The district has a work plan in the amount of \$276,000. This funding will need to be expended by 12/31/2022. This first project for this funding will be the HWY 42 project which will cost approximately \$60,000.

2020 NFL Funding:

The district has just signed a work plan in the amount of \$276,000. This funding will need to be expended by 12/31/2023.

Forest and Watershed Restoration Act (FAWRA) Funding:

NMFIA has one more contract to complete with this funding. The contractor should complete the project by the end of early winter, 2021.

BNSF Railroad Project:

The district will continue to monitor the area for any erosion issues.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Projects:

Chupadera CFRP:

All of the deliverables have been submitted to the US Forest Service. The final report and final reimbursement request have also been submitted.

Watershed Restoration and Fuel Reduction in Bartolo Canyon of the Manzano Mountains:

Romero Wood, LLC has started the forest thinning on this project and has moved some of the wood to their wood yard in Manzano.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

2017 RCPP Funding:

We have one outstanding report that needs to be reviewed and approved by a tribal cultural resource department before we can pay SWCA on their final invoice.

2018 RCPP Funding:

All of the cultural resource survey reports for Mountainair have been approved by SHPO. The EZGrants.gov portal for Claunch-Pinto SWCD was set up incorrectly as Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water "Conversation" District. As of today, this has not been corrected. The district manager is submitting the financial and written reports to the NM NRCS RCPP project manager, who makes sure the reports are added to the portal so that the district doesn't show past due. The district is waiting to receive some signed cultural resource reports so that another reimbursement request can be submitted to pay SWCA for their work.

2021 RCPP Funding:

The supplemental agreement has been completed and is in review in Washington D.C. before we can move forward.

Additional RCPP Funding:

The district has received notice that the fiscal year 22 Regional Conservation Partnership Program Renewal proposal in the amount of \$967,000 has tentatively been selected to become an RCPP project.

FEMA Grant Proposal:

Hazard Mitigation Project - HMGP 5281 Sub Grant Agreement:

The district has signed the sub-grant agreement for the first phase of the project in the amount of \$68,192 to complete the NEPA on the three project areas planned for this funding. As soon as we receive an executed agreement from NM Homeland Security and a notice to proceed, we will advertise a request for proposal for a contractor to complete the NEPA on these three projects. We will be in a time crunch on this project. Until we receive something in writing from

NMDHSEM, we will need to have phase 2 of this project started before December 2022 since this is the date the Torrance County Hazardous Mitigation Plan expires.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay:

New Chipper:

The district manager reported that the RFP for \$75,000 will go out next week, but it won't be possible to buy the chipper until at least April.

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

The district manager reported that Pattern Energy will go back to the PRC twice to increase the footprint of the Corona wind area in order to put up more turbines.

She received a map that she will send first to the district's attorney and then to board members. Pattern will make sure that conservation efforts will be included in their requests. The district manager will be working with New Mexico State University and with the state land office on some sites to demonstrate different types of re-seeding.

Mr. Lockridge is concerned that the district needs to know what Pattern wants from the district. He also said that he cannot see evidence of clearing on right away areas.

Sun Zia Transmission Line:

The district manager said that Sun Zia has now partnered with RETA. After the NEPA process is finished any concerns will have to be taken through RETA. Discussion followed regarding Sun Zia's association with RETA and its consequences.

The district manager said that she will have to review a draft document during five days at the end of January. Ms. Rose expressed her concern about the extra work for the district manager, who said that she will ask Cody Stropki with SWCA to help her with the review and with making comments. Ms. Rose offered to help if needed. She also expressed a concern about how the power will get to the Torrance substation and on whether it be an overhead line. She said that Corona residents are worried about whether an overhead line would follow highway 54.

The district manager said that she would find out whether there is a map that shows the route of the line that would affect Corona.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution No. 07 2022 – Open Meetings Resolution:

The district manager announced the additional dates for 2022 board meetings: October 7 or 14, November 4, and December 2. She will publicize all of the meeting dates in the newspaper. Mr. Lockridge mentioned that the news on channels 4 and 13 reported on concerns raised by voters about the lack of information on certain positions on the local ballot. Discussion followed about lack of support for soil and water conservation districts from some parties.

ACTION TAKEN: Dale Rose moved to approve Resolution No. 07 – 2022. David Cain seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye; David Cain, aye.

Resolution No. 08 -- 2022 – Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Water Project Grant Agreement for the EBWHRM Project:

The district manager explained that the resolution authorizes her and Chairman Lovato to sign all of the grant agreements for the Estancia Basin project for the 2021 grant money that has been received from the Water Trust Board. The district manager explained where additional funding comes from in addition to the Water Trust Board to pay for the EBWHRM project.

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to approve Resolution No. 08 –2022. Dale Rose seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye; David Cain, aye.

Resolution No. 09 – 2022 – Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Water Project Grant Agreement for the GRGWA Project:

The district manager explained sources of other matching funding that also support the GRGWA project for 2021 WTB funding.

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to approve Resolution NO. 09 – 2022. Dale Rose seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye; David Cain, aye.

FY 2020 – 2021 Annual Report:

The district manager plans to present the annual report at the next board meeting. She will mail the report to people that she has addresses for. Ms. Rose suggested providing information explaining what the district does for the residents of the district.

REPORTS:

For Information Only – Draft Rules for Prescribed Burn Manager Certification:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts:

The district manager sent out the draft rules to board members. Mr. Wanstall said the he will work on comments to submit in response to this draft. He also explained that getting certified reduces liability for land owners, but they can still burn without this certification. The district manager explained the background of the draft rules. Discussion followed on concerns about the rules and who developed them. Mr. Wanstall suggested that when the draft rules are advertised, it would be a good idea to send them and the legislation out to district cooperators.

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts:

No report.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:

The district manager will send the draft minutes of the last meeting to board members. She attended a special meeting yesterday because the chairman of the Bernalillo County Commission sent a letter requesting review and comment on the recent town of Edgewood amendments to the Campbell ranch master plan potential impact on the water resources of the Estancia Basin. This proposed development is for several thousand homes.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER:

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, December 3, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. at the Natural Resource Conservation Center, 1206 South Highway 55 in Mountainair, NM.

OTHER:

Claunch-Pinto SWCD

November 5, 2021

Regular Meeting

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the board, the regular meeting of the Claunch-Pinto Board, Jack Lockridge moved to adjourn. David Cain seconded the motion.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

David Cain, SECRETARY