



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
December 3, 2021**

Supervisors Present: Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
LeRoy Candelaria
Robin Dunn
Jack Lockridge
Dale Rose

Absentees: David Cain
Larry Gomez

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, District Manager
Roy Gibson
Kenneth Lujan, NRCS
Cody Stropki, SWCA
Ernest Taylor, Mountainair Ranger District
Katheryn Taylor, CPSWCD, volunteer

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 8:05 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:** Jack Lockridge moved to approve the agenda. Dale Rose seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Jack Lockridge; Robin Dunn, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to approve the minutes of November 5, 2021 as read. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote with one abstention: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Jack Lockridge; LeRoy Candelaria.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

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

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

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The district manager presented the award that the district received from the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) for its financial work during fiscal year 2021 – 2022.

She said that approval was received from the DFA for the fourth quarter report.

The auditor has examined the district's finances and will conduct an exit conference with Chairman Lovato and the district manager.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

The NMDA's written report was provided to the board members

NRCS Mountainair Field Office Report:

Mr. Lujan's written report is included in board member's packets. He described a workforce analysis of NRCS offices conducted by the state. Team 5 was number 1 for projects, outperforming the entire state. The Mountainair office performed the least amount of work, but personnel are new and still learning. In addition, the office was reported for not following COVID guidance. Mr. Lujan explained what had happened. The outcome is that the office can only be staffed with one person. All other work has to be conducted from home.

He reiterated EQIP and CSP deadlines noted in his report.

He mentioned that there were no CSP renewals.

District Manager's Report:

No report.

CORRESPONDANCE:

No report.

The District Manager's Written Report to CPSWCD Board – Update on Grants, December 3, 2021:

Watershed Health Grant – Water Trust Board (WTB):

2020 EBWHRM WTB Funds – The district is preparing thinning contracts for signature. Claunch-Pinto and East Torrance are completing a couple of projects. Vern Kohler and the district manager are working on scheduling their time so that the office is staffed appropriately. Vern is doing assessments on applications that have been submitted.

2020 GRGWA WTB Funds - The Rio Puerco project is scheduled for an inspection on December 3rd. The contractor might have 40 acres completed at the time of the inspection. Restoration Solutions has changed their plans and hopes to start work on their awarded projects right after the first of the year. These grant funds have to be expended by August, 2022.

2021 WTB Proposals: The EBWHRM and GRGWA grant documents have been signed and the district has been notified the grants have closed, so we can proceed to start projects.

NM State Forestry Grants:

2018 NFL Funding – The district has \$129,499 to spend on this grant before December 31, 2021. The district manager has developed a plan to complete work and expend the funds. If on-going projects are completed before December 31, 2021, no funding will have to be turned back.

2019 NFL Funding – The district has a work plan in the amount of \$276,000. This funding should be expended by 12/31/2022. The 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.

The district manager commented that the district has plenty of projects, but finding employees is difficult.

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. There is one project cutting trees in Box Canyon. Both Vern Kohler and the district manager have looked at the work which is proceeding as it should. NMFIA has one or two other projects in Box Canyon.

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 delivered to the US Forest Service. The final report and final reimbursement request have also been submitted. The Forest Service Finance Center is sending emails to explain that our reimbursements will not be paid for two to two and a half months after the reimbursement has been submitted.

The district manager has been notified that the district will be paid for the CFRP grant next week, so she can pay the contractors and close out the grant.

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

Romero Wood, LLC has completed at least 40 acres on this project.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

2017 RCPP Funding –

There is one outstanding report that needs to be reviewed and approved by a tribal cultural resource department before SWCA can be paid 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 has received all of the final reports on the cultural resource surveys, so the invoices can be submitted.

Coronavirus Agriculture Relief Payments (CARPS) could be due on a few of the RCPP funded contracts for FY2017 and FY2018. The cooperators who have these contracts will be contacted by NRCS field staff.

After these payments have been calculated and paid, there should be a balance of RCPP 2017 and 2018 funding available for another sign-up period.

2021 RCPP Funding –

The supplemental agreement has been completed and has to be reviewed 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 received an executed agreement from NM Homeland Security and will be participating in a sub-grant orientation on Monday, December 6. After the paperwork has been signed for the sub-grant orientation, the district will submit a draft request for a proposal for a contractor to complete the NEPA on these three projects for NMDHSEM review and approval. There will be a time crunch on this project. Until we received something in writing from NMDHSEM, we will need to have phase two of this project started prior to December, 2022 since this is the date the Torrance County Hazardous Mitigation Plan expires. The NEPA process takes a long time because of a lengthy process with Homeland Security and FEMA. The long process affects when the district can begin to work on the project.

The district manager will meet with Forest Service representatives on December 15 to assess a proposed site for a helicopter pad in the Deer Canyon Preserve.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay:

New Chipper:

The district manager reported that she has written a draft RFP for \$75,000. She expects that it will go out on Monday, 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 she has nothing new to report on the wind companies. She does expect that Western Spirit is about ready to go on line.

Sun Zia Transmission Line:

There haven't been any new meetings on the Sun Zia Transmission line. The district manager explained who will be present at the meeting to discuss conservation measures: the district's lawyer, Pattern Energy's lawyer and two of the district's board members and the district manager herself.

NEW BUSINESS:

REPORTS:

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

A public meeting will be held on December 14, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom or Web X. The district manager will send information on the meeting and the draft rules to board members.

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts:

Even though the coalition signed up for a table at AgFest, new Covid rules may prevent the group from participating

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:

The committee sent a letter to the town of Edgewood asking for more information on the Campbell Ranch subdivision. Questions were raised about the source for the water for so many homes. Dale Rose said during an interview, the Bernalillo County engineer spoke of getting the water from the Estancia Basin. The district manager explained that the state engineer closed the Estancia Basin several years ago, and no new applications were being accepted. Discussion followed on other possible sources of water. The district manager will distribute the letter to the board when the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee sends the letter to Edgewood.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER:

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, January 7, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. at the Natural Resource Conservation Center, 1206 South Highway 55 in Mountainair, NM.

OTHER:

Mr. Taylor announced that the new range management specialist for the Mountainair Ranger District is Arlene Perea.

ADJOURN:

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

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

DAVID CAIN, SECRETARY