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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
March 4, 2022**

Supervisors Present: Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
Robin Dunn
Larry Gomez
Jack Lockridge
Dale Rose

Absentees: David Cain
LeRoy Candelaria

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, district manager
Dan Austin, district auditor
Joshua Archuleta, NRCS
Cody Stropki, SWCA
Ernest Taylor, Mountainair Ranger District
Dan Williams

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 8:01 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:** Larry Gomez moved to approve the agenda. Jack Lockridge seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

REVIEW OF FY 2021 Audit – Dan Austin:

Dan Austin, district auditor, reviewed the details of his independent auditor's report of the district's finances including his overall evaluation, findings, and suggestions. He began by saying, "The financial statements included in this document are fairly stated in all material respects." He explained that this statement is called an unmodified opinion, which is the best opinion that he could render on financial statements. He continued explaining in detail the contents of the report. He suggested that the district track funds from specific federal programs plus the CFDA number of the programs as well as the requirements for compliance. He also said that it was important to find out from the state whether state funds received by the district came from the federal government so those funds can also be tracked.

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to accept the audit as presented by Dan Austin. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ACTION TAKEN: Dale Rose moved to approve the minutes of February 11, 2022 as amended. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. On page 5, under REPORTS -- New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts -- insert quotation marks around the phrase "30 by 30 land grab." The motion carried by voice vote with one abstention: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of February, 2022 with accounts payable for March, 2022.

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to approve the treasurer's report for February, 2022 and pay the accounts payable for March, 2022. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

The district manager mentioned that she keeps a list of people who have asked for wood which is being held for them. However, some people have not picked up their wood, so at the next meeting, she will suggest a plan to address the issue.

She also announced that she had to buy a new chainsaw.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Appoint a FY2023 Budget Committee:

ACTION TAKEN: Robin Dunn moved to appoint Jack Lockridge, Dale Rose, and Larry Gomez to the budget committee. Jack Lockridge seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

The NMDA's written report for March was provided to the board members. Questions should be directed to the district manager. Ms. Dunn asked how someone could become involved in the workforce development program. The district manager will check for information on the NMDA website and pass it on. Ms. Dunn also asked for an update on funding for workshops under the healthy soils program. The district manager said that the district's application was turned down but that she may submit another application.

NRCS Mountainair Field Office Report:

The NRCS Mountainair Field Office written report for March is included in board member's packets.

Mr. Archuleta pointed out that Team 5 staff is working on ranking FY2022 program applications and is also working on deferred applications in case producers want to add to their applications, make changes or cancel them. Jody Cornwall continues to work on CSP and new applications. Steve Ferguson continues to work on new and existing contracts and has been in the field a lot. Mr. Archuleta is continuing as the acting district conservationist while Kenneth Lujan is serving as the acting north area programs specialist.

Team 5 will lose one employee, Rangeland Management Specialist Lucas Montano, who worked from the Santa Rosa office. Also, a civil engineer, Meredith Shankwitz will leave NRCS. This loss will mainly affect Santa Rosa and Fort Sumner.

Regarding EQIP and CSP, the Mountainair field office received five new EQIP applications for FY 2022 in addition to roll overs. Five CSP applications have been received. April 1 is the deadline for EQIP applications and May 3 for CSP.

Mr. Archuleta asked the district manager what she has heard regarding RCPP. She said that she is being required to submit a spreadsheet that includes extensive information on such things as match money, RCPP expenditures, and hours spent on planning and administration. She and Cody Stropki are both working on supplying the information. The funding is from the 2015 funding of \$2,300,000 and \$965,000 funded for the 2017 RCPP renewal. Also, the affected areas have been expanded.

District Manager's Report:

No report.

CORRESPONDANCE:

No report.

The District Manager's Written Report to the CPSWCD Board — Update on Grants, March 4, 2022

Watershed Health Grant — Water Trust Board (WTB):

2020 EBWHRM WTB Funds —

The District is preparing thinning contracts for signature.

Claunch-Pinto and East Torrance have a couple of projects that work is being completed on.

Six contracts for cooperators from East Torrance SWCD have been signed. Claunch-Pinto SWCD has signed two contracts. This grant will have to be expended by August 2022.

Total Reimbursements -- \$102,070.57

Attached to this report are the proposed new thinning rates for the Estancia Basin Thinning Project for your review and consideration.

2020GRGWA WTB Funds –

The final inspection on the Rio Puerco project was conducted on March 1, 2022. There have been some landowner problems on this project, but we have managed to work through them. Taylor Services, LLC will be heading to a project on the Pueblo of Sandia and a project at San Cristobal. Restoration Solutions has completed 2 of the 3 projects on the Pueblo of Sandia. The contractor expects to complete his projects on the Pueblo of Sandia by March 4, 2022. Restoration Solutions will be heading to Guicu Acequia Association and Lagunitas Homeowner Association project in the Santa Fe area. The District Manager is in the process of preparing a contract with Santa Fe -- Pojoaque SWCD to complete a project that was started with their State Forestry grant. This grant will have to be expended by August 2022. **Total Reimbursements: \$63,115.81**

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

NM State Forestry Grants:

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 \$85,000. The District Manager and Field Technician are working with NMDOT on this project. The projected start date is 03/10/2022.

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 work on Box Canyon should be completed within the next month.

BNSF Railroad Project:

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

Claunch-Pinto SWCD

March 4, 2022

Regular Meeting

Collaborative Forest Restoration Projects:

Watershed Restoration and Fuel Reduction in Bartolo Canyon of the Manzano Mountains: Romero Wood, LLC has completed at least 41 acres on this project.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

2017RCPP 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. NRCS has re-submitted all of the paperwork associated with the cultural resource survey to the tribal cultural resource department.

2018RCPP 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 we can submit another reimbursement request to pay SWCA for their work.

2021 RCPP Funding — The supplemental agreement has been reviewed by the Washington D.C. office. We have to complete a valuation methods worksheet on how the funding and match will be spent before we can move forward. We will be working on this worksheet today (03/04/2022).

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 Manager has sent the technical team's proposal review report to NMDHSEM for their review. She has also prepared and sent a draft contract for NMDHSEM's review. These documents will need to be approved before we can move forward on the project. The District 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 prior to December 31, 2022 since this is the date the Torrance County Hazardous Mitigation Plan expires.

**Estancia Basin Watershed Health, Restoration and Monitoring Project
Proposed New Thinning Rates - 02-08-2022**

Project Rates:	Current Rate	10% Increase	1 5 % Increase
Defensible Space, Heavy	2,000.00	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,300.00
Defensible Space, Medium	1,467.00	1,614.00	1,760.00
Defensible Space, Light	667.00	734.00	800.00
Ponderosa/Mixed Conifer, Heavy	1,467.00	1,614.00	1,760.00
Ponderosa/Mixed Conifer, Medium	1,073.00	1,180.00	1,288.00
Ponderosa/Mixed Conifer, Light	887.00	976.00	1,064.00
Pinon Juniper, Heavy	1,073.00	1,180.00	1,288.00
Pinon Juniper, Medium	887.00	976.00	1,064.00
Pinon Juniper, Light	499.00	549.00	599.00
			1 5 % Increase
Project Rate w/Steep Slope Access over 30%	Current Rate	10% Increase	
Defensible Space, Heavy	2,800.00	\$ 3,080.00	\$ 3,220.00
Defensible Space, Medium	2,054.00	2,260.00	2,362.00
Defensible Space, Light	934.00	1,027.00	1,074.00
Ponderosa/Mixed Conifer, Heavy	2,054.00	2,260.00	2,362.00

Ponderosa/Mixed Conifer, Medium	1,502.00	1,652.00	1,727.00
Ponderosa/Mixed Conifer, Light	1,242.00	1,366.00	1,428.00
Pinon Juniper, Heavy	1,502.00	1,652.00	1,727.00
Pinon Juniper, Medium	1,242.00	1,366.00	1,428.00
Pinon Juniper, Light	699.00	769.00	804.00

Payment Rates for light thinning below 100 Basel	Current Rate	10% Increase	1 5 % Increase
80 - 100 Basel	499.00	549.00	574.00
65-80 Basel	300.00	330.00	345.00
Below 65 Basel	200.00	220.00	230.00

Other Services Offered:

Heavy Chip & Haul only	420.00	462.00	483.00
Medium Chip & Haul only	300.00	330.00	345.00
Light Chip & Haul only	200.00	220.00	230.00

District Manager’s Additional Comments to the Board:

EBWHM -- The State Forestry Service suggested at the last core steering committee meeting for the EBWHM project that the rates for the project should be increased. (The possible proposed increases are attached at the end of the Update on Grants Report.) The district manager wanted the board to be aware of the proposal because of its representation on the committee. She also stated that she feels very fortunate to have a small saw crew as well as a good relationship with Ramah Navajo because there are no other hand saw crews in this area. There is a large demand for wood, but other crews want to masticate the trees. However, if mastication is used in areas where the trees are very dense, there will be too much material on the ground. The rate increases are proposed both to encourage new contractors to become involved and because of high prices for fuel. The increases will have to be included in any new proposal. Fewer acres will be included in proposals, but there are matches that do include more acres.

FEMA Grant – A contractor has been selected. The district manager is waiting for the final review from Homeland Security so that she can get the contract signed.

She also reported that she is getting applications from people who want to do erosion control and other small projects that the district can provide technical assistance for but no funding.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay:

New Chipper RFP:

The district manager reported that she is working on getting a new chipper, but there are none available at the present time.

FY 2022 Capital Outlay Request:

The district manager submitted a capital outlay request for a tractor that was the FY2023 priority project ICIP for 2023. She thinks that the district will receive \$40,000 in capital outlay funds to purchase a new skid steer.

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

No report.

Sun Zia Transmission Line:

No report.

NEW BUSINESS:

“30 X 30 Land Grab” Resolution:

The district manager suggested that this issue be tabled since Mr. Candelaria, who asked for the issue to be placed on the agenda, is absent from the meeting. Discussion followed on whether action on the issue is appropriate for the district’s board to take up.

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to table the item. The motion was seconded by Robin Dunn. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

NM Envirothon Funding:

The district manager said that \$500 for Envirothon Funding is included in the budget. Felipe Lovato strongly supported funding to help young people participate in the Envirothon.

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Lockridge moved to approve \$500 for the Envirothon. Mr. Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

Resolution No. 08 – 2022 – Mil Levy:

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Lockridge moved to authorize Mil Levy Rate Resolution 08 – 2022. Dale Rose seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote with one abstention: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dale Rose, aye; Larry Gomez, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts:

No report.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:

The district manager invited Cody Stropki to the board meeting to explain the deep well issue (drilling to 2500 feet) being discussed by the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee. He stated that according to New Mexico State, salt water would be found by drilling deep wells of 2500 feet. Therefore, he doesn’t see what the purpose would be of drilling such a well. One concern is that the salt water would mix with fresh water. The deeper the drilling, the worse the water is. Discussion followed. The district manager explained that the district has only one vote on the committee, but she has asked Mr. Stropki to attend the meetings so that he can provide input during discussions on the efficacy of drilling a deep well. Mr. Stropki will review guidance from the state water engineer’s office, and he will also ask SWCA staff ground water hydrologist, Chris Garrett to review the issue and write up his thoughts on it for the board.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

OTHER:

Mr. Taylor reported on his efforts to fill an open position.

Codi Stropki said that he can work with Aaron Kauffman of Southwest Urban Hydrology to give workshops this summer on such concerns as erosion control and rain water harvesting.

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

Claunch-Pinto SWCD

March 4, 2022

Regular Meeting

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, April 1, 2022 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. Dale Rose seconded the motion.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

DAVID CAIN, SECRETARY