

**Ferry Conservation District
Special Board Meeting MINUTES: 12/07/2022**

Meeting Start – 3:15 pm

In attendance USDA Service Center: Eric Bracken, Board Supervisor Chair; **Dave Konz**, Board Supervisor Vice Chair; **Joann Marshall**, Board Supervisor; **Jim Rochelle**, Board Supervisor; **Charlotte Coombes**, Board Supervisor Auditor; **Dave Hedrick**, FCD District Manager; **Mike Baden**, NE Regional Manager; **Candy Roman**, Staff.

In attendance via "GoToMeeting,": None

Official Action Items			
Motion	Motion made by:	Motioned seconded by:	Decision
Motion to approve agenda	Dave Konz	Charlotte Coombes	Carried
Motion to approve Oct 26, 2022 minutes	Jim Rochelle	Joann Marshall	Carried
Motion to approve Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable October/November, 2022	Charlotte Coombes	Jim Rochelle	Carried
Warrants to Pay: 3186-3203 Total \$26,339.21 EFT's: \$3,810.51 For Oct 27, 2022 - Dec 7, 2022	Charlotte Coombes	Dave Konz	Carried
Meeting Adjourned at 4:47 PM			

Open Public Testimony

None

Partner Reports

Mike Baden, WSCC:

Elections and Appointments

Eric is up for election this round and Joann will be up for full-term appointment this cycle.

Open Government Training

It is time for Eric and Candy to renew their Open Government Trainings. Please do so ASAP as the 4-year period will be expiring this month. Joan is also required to take the training as a new supervisor. We were able to discuss this during our meeting. There are two videos that cover this requirement, one on the Public Records Act and one on the Open Public Meetings Act. Here are the links for the trainings:

Public Records Act Training Video: [LESSON 2: OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT BASICS – RCW 42.56 | Washington State](#)

Open Public Meetings Act Training Video: LESSON 3: OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT – RCW 42.30 | Washington State

Once you have viewed the two videos please submit this form to SCC to confirm completing of the training. The training is effective for four years. Thanks for your attention to this!

WACD Conference

There were elections discussions as the WACD annual meeting last week and WACD passed a resolution that put both the association and the Commission on the same page going into legislative session regarding district elections. Both WACD and WSCC will be in support of the recommendations of the joint committee on elections along with a basic financial statement to be

Other Business

- I forgot to mention that you should be seeing a notice about the availability of a new round of Food System Grants coming out soon. These will be for a maximum of \$5,000.
- It was great to be able to finally connect with Joann for a new supervisor orientation. I enjoyed our time meeting and hope it was helpful!

developed by the Commission which was important to some legislators last session.

Derek Gianukakis, Ferry County Commissioners: None

Alex Reyes, NRCS: None

Operations Report

Dave Hedrick

Budget

Implementation Grant (keeping the doors open) Original Amount \$117,823.00 (100%) Amount Paid Through 10/31 \$ 38,826.23 (33%) Amount Available Through 6/30/23 \$ 78,996.77 (67%) I'm comfortable where we're at with the budget at this time. We've paid for most of our big items like WACD dues, Enduris (insurance), Springbrook (accounting software) and Smartsheet.

WACD:

The WACD annual meeting was held in Wenatchee at the convention center November 28-30. I attended the first two days in person and watched the business meeting remotely. Due to the expected bad weather on the passes there were a significant number of people who did not show up in person. Some of the highlights:

- The legislative budget for the next biennium is expected to be neutral. Some of the money that CDs received last session was one-time funding either from federal or state buckets. There's a reasonable chance that that funding will not be available in the future so it might feel like a cut even if it technically isn't.
- CDs have done a very good job of getting unexpected funding from the supplemental session of the legislature last year on the ground. That should help show legislators how capable we are and can justify increased financial support.
- NRCS has significantly more money to spend thanks to some new legislation. Money

from the Inflation Reduction Act that was given to NRCS doesn't have the same rules as Farm Bill money and could be much more flexible. One of the continuing issues in the NRCS NE Washington area is if there's the capacity to get much of this money on the ground. This is something that I will continue to bring forward.

- The resolution that passed that has the potential to affect the board is in connection with the election legislation that didn't pass last year. It is likely to be reintroduced this year with an additional part that would be around financial disclosure for board members. The way it is being approached is that the WA State Conservation Commission would be in charge of developing what that would look like and would not be part of the state Public Disclosure Commission. It's not exactly clear what this is going to be.

- It is still uncertain what the course of action is going to be regarding the Dept. of Ecology Policy 1025 will be. This is a reinterpretation of a policy that now says that livestock cannot drink surface water (creeks, rivers, ponds, lakes) unless the owner of the livestock has a paper water right. This would essentially end the livestock industry in Ferry County which is our only agricultural business.

Curlew Lake Ecology Grant: The selection of a consultant was made by a committee of Joann Marshall, Gordon McIntyre and myself. I'm currently negotiating with Herrera Consulting based out of Portland to do the lake management plan. I'm excited to work with this group and they are talking about doing some innovative things. One of the things that could help us out the most is using their connections with WSU faculty to get grad students to do some of the work. I would like to get more help from WSU on several other things we're working on. Thanks to Joann and Gordon for all their help.

New Employee: We have a potential new person to help with things around here. Her name is Mckenzi Coleman and she would be able to work two days a week until September and then could potentially go full time. She is working the other three days a week at the Republic High School. She is graduating from EWU this month and will certainly fill some holes around here that Bill took care of plus some additional skills that we don't currently have.

Dept. of Health: The state department of health has come out with some new guidelines on animal waste. There's going to be more effort by the agency to enforce the guidelines with a "three letter policy" where the first one says there's a problem and recommends working with conservation districts to solve it, the second one asks for an update on the resolution process, and the last one describes the action that will be taken by the county prosecuting attorney. I met with Jon Ness from TriCounty Health and he said that they would only be responding to complaints and not out actively looking for problems. He said he was aware of a couple of potential problems in Ferry County.

Colville Tribe: I'm working with the tribe to develop an agreement so we have something in place if we are able to work together on something. The Okanogan CD has an agreement with them and is willing to share a copy of the contract so we don't have to reinvent the wheel.

Voluntary Stewardship Program: We are doing weed cost-shares again this next year and Rochelle from the Weed Board has lined up about \$50,000 worth of projects. This is making a difference in the county and are vital acres for our VSP implementation benchmarks.

Conservation Commission Executive Director: This is a hard one. The new director of the WSCC, who was hired last spring, has been the subject of a complaint by two conservation district staff members for inappropriate behavior. They were investigated by the state agency that does those sorts of things and

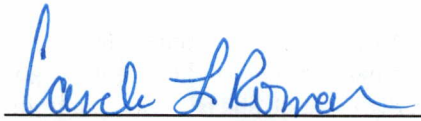
the report is attached. I have been familiar with this issue since both of the women involved work in the NE area of districts. The Lincoln County Conservation District Board of Supervisors wrote a letter to the WSCC after the WSCC did not act when the report was given to them. I have also attached that letter. I was also disappointed that the WSCC took no action. The women who made the complaint are very credible people and after speaking with some other people at WACD last week, there are likely more women who are going to come forward. There's really no good outcome here but it may be a problem that could persist and create a poor work environment. I would guess that about 65% of the conservation districts throughout the state are led by women and probably about the same percentage of staff at the WSCC. We'll have to see how this all shakes out but legislators in our state take these sorts of things seriously.


Policy Manual: Our policy manual for the district is due for an update. I've been going through it and overall it is ok but there are things that aren't addressed. We don't have to do this all at once but maybe we could take on one or two things per meeting for the coming year. All the CD managers across the state have an online folder where we share these types of things so we don't have to start from scratch.

Upcoming Before the Next Meeting

- Make a list of items to potentially surplus
- Review Open Public Meeting Act Guidelines and New Additions.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:47 PM


Candy Roman, FCD District Staff


Ferry Board Member