



DESCHUTES COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Board Meeting – May 21, 2020

Meeting location: via Zoom

Current Board Members

Director Zone 1 (Redmond)	Leslie Clark, Treasurer
Director Zone 2 (Sisters)	William Kuhn, Co-Chair
Director Zone 3 (Tumalo)	Jeff Rola, Co-Chair
Director Zone 4 (Alfalfa)	Susan Altman, Secretary
Director Zone 5 (South County & La Pine)	Colin Wills
Director At-Large #1	Robin Vora
Director At-Large #2	Gen Hubert

Directors present: Susan Altman, Colin Wills, Robin Vora, Jeff Rola, Gen Hubert, Leslie Clark, William Kuhn

Staff present: Todd Peplin, Program Lead/Planner

Other attendees: Teresa deBardelaben, ODA; Lars Santana, NRCS; Eric Nusbaum, ODA

Order of business:

1. Call to order & introductions: The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.; all attendees introduced themselves.
2. Public Comments: No public comments.
3. Agency Reports:
 - a. Lars Santana would like to discuss the three agreements that he sent to Jeff Rola and Todd Peplin. Todd forwarded them to the directors so we could speak to them during the meeting. They are starting to open up the NRCS office. Lars asks to keep track of days employees are in the office in case they need to do COVID-19 contact tracing investigations. Stephanie Russo accepted a new position and will be working as an “organic specialist and small acreage farms specialist” so she is transferring to basin staff. She will remain in the NRCS, though. The recent NRCS quality assurance review (QAR) highlighted the requirement for NRCS to review the most current MOA’s with the Conservation District. Lars presented 3 documents:

- Deschutes SWCD National MOA 1996
- Deschutes SWCD Deschutes Basin CWA 1997
- Deschutes SWCD Cooperative Agreement 2011

The National agreement is from 1996; basin agreement is from 1997; cooperative agreement is from 2011. Much of the spirit of the agreements is the same, though some details have changed (for example we are working under a new Farm Bill). The basin agreement talks about sharing of equipment and office space. The cooperative agreement talks about local legislative authorities, pledge to work together on common conservation project and section 1619 which gets into protecting privacy information when the district and NRCS cooperate on projects. IT support and computers are also addressed in the cooperative agreement.

Lars talked about the NACD technical assistance grant. It is time-sensitive; the grant is due on June 1. It is similar to the OWEB technical assistance grant. This is a national grant whereby NRCS works with

NACD to supply technical assistance funds that districts can apply for. DSWCD is trying to put together a grant by June 1. Todd put together a grant proposal; Lars edited it. It is important to get it in on the radar with the NRCS leadership folks. The proposal is currently in NRCS review and the hope is that we get it back to submit by June 1. A partnership letter has to go to NACD in order to even apply for the grant. If it doesn't gain support, there is no use in applying. Robin asked if the pay rates that we would assign to each grant are in alignment with the pay DSWCD has approved for employees in their job descriptions, and not a particular rate for a different grant. Jeff said what we are trying to do right now is to get buy-in from NRCS that is crucial to getting this grant. Todd said there is no minimum and no maximum for this grant. Jeff said this grant also has a match; a lot of what we are doing will be part of what we are doing under our scope of work with ODA.

- b. Teresa deBardelaben said that State agencies are going through budget cuts. Gov. Brown ordered all state agencies to plan for a \$2 billion drop in revenue or an 8.5% cut in General Fund appropriations due to the COVID-19 emergency. For ODA that added up to about \$2.1 million. ODA made some difficult decisions and came up with the \$2.1 million reduction. SWCD Districts boards are required to pass a fiscal budget prior to June 30 of each fiscal year, before any spending begins on July 1st. Annual work plans need to be submitted usually by June 30th of each fiscal year. Extensions can be granted if additional time is needed. Annual meeting, along with Legal Notice, Annual Report and a copy of financial information (aka Audit), both of which were presented at annual meeting and current long-range plan could have an extension until December. Expect an email from Sandi Hyatt with more information. Otherwise, things are pretty slow right now but as the state starts to open back up we anticipate our workload to speed up.
 - c. Eric Nusbaum said that looking at the first round of the Coronavirus funds that can be used for SWCDs are if we bought any supplies to disinfect the office, if we had to grant any of the 80 hours of sick leave as instructed for Covid-19, or if the district had to buy any supplies from March 15-May 15 (in the example of required to work from home). Regardless of ODA/OWEB grant, we have to have a budget passed by June 30 in order to operate on July 1 (entire budget, not just scope of work). All directors who are up for re-election in November will receive a letter from ODA with recommendations for getting signatures by the end of August to get on the ballot. A candidate needs 10 signatures but to be safe they should collect 12-15 to make sure all are correctly certified.
4. Approval of Minutes (April and May):
 - a. **Motion #1 made by Robin Vora, seconded by Gen Hubert to approve the April regular board meeting minutes as submitted.** Rollcall vote; majority approval (William Kuhn absent).
 - b. **Motion #2 made by Leslie Clark, seconded by Robin Vora to approve the May 5 special minutes as submitted.** Rollcall vote; majority approval (William Kuhn absent; Colin Wills abstains due to absence from that meeting).
 5. Treasurer's Report: Current bank balance (after pending payment of \$2,900 to Richard Winkel for financial review service) is \$11,752.02. Payments made today, pending board approval, will be \$3,155.54. Robin asked about the \$105,224.71 balance is for the biennium; Leslie said yes. Todd thinks there is more money in the OWEB NRCS grant than is indicated on the report; Leslie suggested they sit down and discuss to find the difference. Jeff would like to send a letter of thanks to COID for their assistance in helping the district with interim bookkeeping services.
 - a. **Motion #3 made by William Kuhn, seconded by Susan Altman to receive the treasurer's report.** Rollcall vote; unanimous approval.
 - b. **Motion #4 made by Gen Hubert, seconded by Susan Altman to approve payment of outstanding bills.** Rollcall vote; unanimous approval.
 6. Action Items:

- a. District Manager: Jeff Rola had submitted an interim manager’s report highlighting his work in May. A letter of acceptance for the district manager position was sent to Erin Kilcullen, which she signed and returned to Jeff. Erin will be signing her job description and employee handbook come June 1. Todd asked if the employee handbook got cleaned up or if it is still in the mark-up stage. Jeff said that we are operating according to the 2019 handbook but are in the process of revising into a 2020 version. The question is what are we asking Erin to sign on June 1? Susan suggested giving the 2019 version to Erin to sign and let the personnel committee have more time to incorporate any changes; June 1 is too tight a deadline. The question of exempt vs. non-exempt employment came up. Eric Nusbaum suggested consulting BOLI with regard to rules regarding that status. Eric said that “temporary” is referred to seasonal employees; the definitions of full-time, temporary, part-time, permanent need to be defined in the handbook. “Permanent” is generally at-will but open-ended period of time. “Temporary” is related to time or a specific grant project. Eric suggested we need to come up with agreed-to terms defining each type of employment and put them in the employee handbook. We discussed the insurance options for Todd and any other employees. Eric reiterated that we need to step back and look at types of employment and what benefits we will offer for each type of employment, regardless of who is in what type of position. Colin brought up benefits and said that insurance and workmen’s comp is going to go up. The board discussed having a special meeting next week to give the personnel committee time to make changes to job definitions and approve the revised employee handbook. A meeting will take place on Thursday, 5/28 at 1 p.m. to finalize the employee handbook.
 - b. Payroll and Bookkeeping Services: Jeff indicated in his report that he will set up payroll through a third-party provider (ADP, for example) and also reached out to Staci Merkt of Jefferson SWCD to see if we could contract with her personally for 10 hours of service per week (\$200/month) to manage our Quickbooks system and prepare financial reports. Staci will bring it up to her board which meets on 5/26/2020.
7. Todd Peplin sent a report to the district today (see attached as Exhibit A) with his grant summary.
 8. Directors’ Reports
 - a. Colin: no report; his term expires and he will not be running for re-election
 - b. Bill: no report
 - c. Robin: sat in on a discussion on Sagegrouse with the Prineville LIT yesterday
 - d. Gen: no report
 - e. Leslie: no report
 - f. Susan: applied for a position on the Deschutes County Planning Commission and will find out in June
 - g. Jeff: June 18 meeting will be our annual meeting; it will likely be via Zoom

The next regular board meeting (and the annual meeting) will be on June 18 at 9 a.m. Pending Corona virus pandemic status, it will be held via conference call or a to-be-determined location.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Susan Altman, Secretary



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Addendum: Motions of the Board Meeting - May 21, 2020

Motions made:	Vote result
<i>Motion #1 made by Robin Vora, seconded by Gen Hubert to approve the April regular board meeting minutes as submitted.</i>	Majority approved (William Kuhn absent)
<i>Motion #2 made by Leslie Clark, seconded by Robin Vora to approve the May 5 special minutes as submitted.</i>	Majority approved (William Kuhn absent) (Colin Wills abstained due to absence from special meeting)
<i>Motion #3 made by William Kuhn, seconded by Susan Altman to receive the treasurer's report.</i>	Unanimous approval (William Kuhn arrived in time to vote on this motion)
<i>Motion #4 made by Gen Hubert, seconded by Susan Altman to approve payment of outstanding bills.</i>	Unanimous approval

Exhibit A: Programs Lead/Planner Report covering Month of May

OWEB/NRCS grant – Majority of my time was spent developing the local NRCS long range plan. This plan assesses and analysis natural resources in Deschutes County. The plan runs in parallel with Deschutes SWCD long range plan and efforts from partners and the NRCS Locally lead process in CIS development.

Draft will be presented to NRCS early next week. Still needs formatting/editing

I'll submit billing to OWEB next week

\$46,152.69 left in the grant

OWRD grant Tower – Coordinated efforts with BRE and SES in developing alternatives and cost estimates. Date has not been set to meet with BRE to go over alternatives. Once alternatives are reviewed a patron meeting will be scheduled to go over findings and next steps.

The grant will be completed once the final patron meeting has been conducted.

A final report will need to be submitted for close out

\$6,586 left in the grant

ODA/OWEB Capacity grant – met with new NRCS engineer to review G-4 lateral on site, additional on-farm engineering assessments will be conducted on 2 properties. Developed an NACD grant for June 1 submission, application is being reviewed by NRCS.

\$83,314.75 left in the grant

NOTE: there is flexibility to utilize SOW fund for District Operations (DO)

OWRD grant Lundy – no activity. Since the COVID-19 pandemic it is uncertain if landowners will support the project. A revision of the grant will need to be approved by OWRD.

\$42,697 left in the grant

OWEB SIA grant – no activity. Monitoring will need to be completed in the next couple of months.

\$15,402 left in the grant

New Grant: NACD grant to assist NRCS in planning and coordinating landowner meeting was developed and being reviewed by NRCS Basin Team Leader. This is for salary and hiring of an intern to help assess irrigation private laterals and work with landowners. Amount requested: \$83,565; 20% match \$20,938; Total project cost \$104,503