



*Coos Soil & Water Conservation District
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Coos Soil and Water Conservation District
Regular Meeting Minutes-
April 24th, 2014
(Approved May 22, 2014)

Regular monthly meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman, Mark Villers.

Board members present: Charlie Waterman, Steve Scheer, Ernie Newton, Dan Pierce.

Absent board members: Empty zone 5, Beau Allen.

Staff: Caley Sowers

Guests present: Beth Pietrzak (ODA), John Fandel (Coquille Valley Accounting), Jeff Jackson (ODFW), Amy Wilson (NRCS).

Introductions: All members were familiar with each other, making introductions unnecessary. A sign-in sheet was passed around and all those present signed their names.

7:00 PM-7:05 PM Regular Minutes:

Mark asked if anyone had any corrections or changes to make to the March draft minutes. Steve had one correction of the wording of one of the motions that was made. Staff made a note to make the edit. **Charlie then moved to approve the March monthly meeting minutes with the correction. Dan seconded the motion. All approved, the motion passed (Mark abstaining because he was not present at the last meeting, when the motion was made).**

7:05 PM-7:31 PM Treasury Report: - John Fandel- John Fandel reported that he had made the wording changes to the regular finance reports, so that now the SOW budget would be referred to as ODA SOW, and the District Operations budget would be referred to ODA District Operations. He then issued his regular warning about the District running under budget and needing to address the excess funds. He thought that we would be under \$12,500 enough to receive the 4th Quarter Payment this fiscal year, but would still have to carry over funds to the next fiscal year, which means we'll have an even more difficult time spending down the budget next year. He projected that at the current rate, the District would be about \$20,000 under budget by the end of next fiscal year, without some significant changes. We need to come up with some ideas, as a District, to use those funds appropriately and get back on track.

Amy made a couple of on-the-spot suggestions; some sort of water quality educational campaign; hiring an educator to go around and teach water quality to schools. The board then discussed at length various other ideas such as hiring a person to develop a specific project and write a grant, and hiring a second person to take care of some of the administrative duties. Beth thought that it would make sense to create some separation of the administrative and SOW activities. It was also suggested once again that we pursue more project partnerships with the Coos and Coquille Watershed Associations. **Charlie moved to approve the Treasure's Report. Ernie seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.**

Agency Reports:

ODA (7:31 PM-7:40 PM) – Beth Pietrzak- Beth announced that the Biennial Review for the Coos-Coquille Plan was coming up and she has started preparing for that event. She passed out handouts with some information on the Agricultural Water Quality Management Plan, and where to find the plan in its entirety. She explained that the LAC helped to write that plan, originally, and decided what things should be part of the plan and what should be the rules. Now, ODA brings the LAC together every two years to review their plan. The next meeting is Tuesday, June 17th, 6 PM, at the Coos County Annex Building. The chair this year is Joan Mahaffey.

Beth also gave a brief update on Marsha Decaires's violation case and said that she was scheduled to meet with Mrs. Decaires on May 15th. May 15th is the extended deadline Mrs. Decaires was given to remove the material on the hillside above the creek. Beth also mentioned that there has recently been another report of a water quality violation. The complaint was made to the DEQ, who forwarded the case to ODA. She planned to drive by and check out the site visually from the road, before scheduling a meeting with the landowner.

NRCS (7:40-8:00) Amy Wilson (see attached report handout) - Amy passed out a handout, and said that she didn't really have anything new to report, but mainly the same information she had presented at the March meeting. NRCS is still accepting applications for this year's Farm Bill, although a third cut-off is expected soon. The federal government is renewing funding for their three strategies: Cranberry Automated Irrigation, Forestry, and the EQUIP program. Amy gave a brief update on some of the projects done last year. She reported that there were 4 cranberry irrigation contracts, and two of those have completed initial installation of automated systems and the other two are in progress. She explained that the automated irrigation allows farmers to provide their crops with exactly the amount of water they need, when they need it, especially during the dryer summer months. This aids both cranberry production and water conservation.

The NRCS Forestry Strategy will share its focus area with the Coos SWCD, and it is likely that some sort of combined outreach events will take place in the fall. Amy explained that she was not sure what kind of funding she was going to have until fairly late into the year, and so she hadn't done a lot of outreach as of yet. The Coquille Tribe is the main target of the Forestry Strategy, although the program is open to other private landowners in the same watershed.

She talked about the Sudden Oak Death Strategy that is planned for next year. One board member asked if she thought that sudden oak death would spread to Coos County. Amy thought that there was a good likelihood of the disease spreading, especially if early precautions are not taken.

Amy also mentioned the ArcGIS software opportunity for Districts, available through NRCS. Staff had brought the software agreement to the meeting for review by the board, and passed out copies of the agreement to all of the board members and explained the offer as well as the value and applicability of the software. Staff expressed concerns that the CoosSWCD may not qualify as partners under the definition in the agreement, because the District elected not to sign the cooperative agreement with NRCS. Amy offered to follow up on looking into whether or not we are eligible for the offer. The board discussed the agreement and the possibility that the software may not be available later on in the future, and also the high cost of the software, should the District choose to purchase it with District Operations funds. **Charlie moved that the District sign the license agreement, as long as we qualify as partners, and to use the assistance and training provided by NRCS. Ernie seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.**

CREP (N/A)

FSA- (N/A)

ODF&W (8:10 PM-8:15 PM) - Jeff Jackson- (see attached handouts) Jeff announced that the fish and wildlife commission would be in town at 8:00 AM tomorrow at the Mill Casino. He passed out the agenda for the meeting and pointed out item f. The Coastal Multi Species Conservation and Management Plan. He explained that the commission would be briefed on the details of the plan at this meeting, and would then probably move into adoption of the plan at a future meeting. Jeff went on to say that his agency has been working on this plan for the past several months and it is made up of many different elements, but one is a change to hatchery management and which systems are going to receive how many fish. ODFW knows that most people in the area want to keep hatchery releases as they are, but there is a proposal to stop planting steelhead in the East Fork, and move those numbers to the South Fork. He encouraged anyone who is interested to attend.

Jeff's second handout was about the OWEB town hall discussion meeting on Monday April 28th at 2:30 PM. This meeting is a chance for folks in the community to let OWEB know about local issues, and how they feel about the projects that have been completed in this area and the type of work they'd like to see being done in the future. On Tuesday there is another OWEB regular business meeting at 8:00 AM in Bandon for those interested.

Moving on to his third handout, Jeff reported that Weyerhaeuser is now going to be limiting public access to their lands. They plan to charge \$350 for a vehicle access permit, and they will be limiting the number of permits sold to 1000. This will have a lot of impact to hunters and fishers who are accustomed to using Weyerhaeuser property. Jeff thought that walk-in access for fishing would still be allowed, at least on weekends. As of right now, there are no plans to change the number of tags being sold in the Tioga Unit.

Mark pointed out that this new policy might be in reaction to a large dumping of tires, septic holding tanks, and other trash that occurred on Hodges Creek a while back. Mark said the incident was in the news and he had helped in the cleanup with his tree-puller. Jeff said that he didn't know but that it was a possibility.

OSU-Extension - N/A

Weed Board (8:20 PM-8:25 PM) -Steve Scheer- Steve gave an update on Woody Lane's Forage and Pasture Management Class. He thought the class was turning out to have a lot more relevance to water quality than he had expected. He mentioned that there are a couple of long-time dairy farmers, some new farmers, and a couple of veterinarians. He also mentioned that the class would be conducting several 'field trips' to local farms as part of the curriculum.

CWA (8:25 PM-8:30 PM) - Ernie Newton – Ernie wanted to keep his report very brief as Caley had provided a printed handout of his report for all the board members. He did point out that he thought one of the highlights of his report was an upcoming volunteer event of the CWA, in partnership with the Ocean Blue Project that would involve using the new technique of mycofiltration. The technique involves placing permeable bags with mushroom fungi into Cunningham Creek near the hatchery - the purpose is for the fungi to sop up contaminants in the Creek, which is filthy, and Ocean Blue has set the whole thing up with SOLV, press & volunteers. Caley mentioned that Kelly Miles had asked if SWCD staff would like to participate as a volunteer, and wanted to know if the board approved of her participating in this water quality educational event. The board had no objections. Ernie also invited everybody to come to the Watershed Association Meeting on Monday night.

Staff Reports:

WTS (8:30 PM-8:35 PM) – (see attached report) Staff Caley Sowers provided a brief report of her activities over the past month and plans for upcoming activities. She mentioned that she was going to have to leave on Tuesday and stay over at a friend's house in Portland in order to make the 10:00 AM start of CONNECT in Welches (Mount Hood) on the 30th.

Caley reported having made another tentative contact in the focus area, and planned to try and schedule a site visit with him soon. She also reported that the 3rd Quarter reports were completed and had been submitted and accepted. Regarding the focus area; staff had completed a return visit to the Waterman's with Barbara Grant and Jeff Jackson to talk over some project ideas with the family. So far she had not received a response from them regarding this last visit and the different ideas discussed. Regarding other landowner projects and contacts; on the Bramble Creek fencing and planting project, the landowners still had not come to a decision to proceed forward with the project. Staff had been unable to reach Bret Clarno since the last conversation with him, as well.

Staff reported that she had participated in several volunteer, youth-education activities this past month. First there was South Slough Natural Resource Days, then Ocean Crest Earth Day and Powers Earth day events. Participation in these events had opened her eyes to the District's need for an educational tool of some kind to use and display at such events. Staff had one suggestion for an educational display model. She passed out a handout detailing the construction process and materials needed to make the model, and gave a brief explanation of how it would work. After reviewing the handouts and discussing the idea, **Charlie moved to approve the display model. Ernie seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.**

Old Business:

8:35 PM-8:55 PM

- a) **Shelby Filley "Mud and Manure Management" May presentation-** Staff had decided to go ahead with the Mud and Manure Management Seminar on May 22nd, if the board was still in approval, and would

advertise as necessary to try and recruit as much attendance as possible to the event. **Steve moved to approve the Mud and Manure Management workshop. Dan seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.**

- b) **Langlois Mountain Rain Gauge Data Comparison Handouts** – Staff passed out new data comparison charts for the Langlois mountain rain gauges.
- c) **ArcGIS software opportunity through NRCS-** This item was covered during Amy Wilson’s NRCS report.
- d) Steve brought up the issue of Dawn’s final performance evaluation, which had been completed by Charlie, and whether or not the board should still issue her some back-pay for the assistance that she had provided to Caley during the first few months of her employment. Charlie thought that the matter was out of context, since Dawn is no longer an employee and the matter should have been dealt with months ago. Steve pointed out that the board had already approved a check in the amount of \$250 to be paid to Dawn, but she had declined it. Caley explained that Dawn hadn’t exactly declined the money, it was just that when she had told Dawn that she would have to fill out new tax forms, Dawn had been too busy with her new job to deal with the matter, and it had been pushed aside and forgotten. Caley added that the reason the matter had been brought up in the first place was because when the project management fees had come in on the Baker and King small grants, it had seemed like some of those funds might be used to compensate Dawn for her significant assistance to Caley on the final reporting and completion of those small grants. Mark asked how the project management funds had been used in the past, and Charlie said that they had usually been paid to Eric Himmelreich as part of his paycheck when he was still on staff. With that in mind, Mark suggested that the board simply issue Dawn a payroll check, since the accountant already has all of her payroll information still on file. Discussion ensued as to the amount of the check, and it was decided that \$300, minus all withholdings and deductions, would be sufficient. **Steve moved that the board should issue Dawn Weekly a check in the gross amount of \$300, for technical assistance on the Baker and King small grants provided after her period of official employment had ended. Charlie seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.**

New Business:

8:55 PM - 9:45 PM

- a) **Employee Handbook Ch. 4 Review-** Charlie had requested that staff look up a motion that was recorded in the May 2013 minutes, regarding staff safety precautions on site visits. Staff had located the motion and printed out a copy. Charlie wanted the language of the motion to be captured in Chapter 4 of the employee handbook. Staff made a note to add it in. Steve then pointed out another edit, under section 4.3, B: item 3, which referred to District staff driving an NRCS vehicle; this was no longer applicable and could be removed. Also, under section 4.5, B, item number 1, the employee handbook states that no weapons are allowed in the workplace or on district property for any reason. Steve pointed out that Dawn had possessed a concealed carry permit, and asked if current staff were also to obtain a concealed weapon permit, should she be allowed to carry a weapon? The board discussed the reasoning and potential situations in which there could be a need for this. Mark said that he would rather not have a restriction on allowing staff to carry a legal weapon so long as they have all of the proper permits and licenses. It was generally agreed that an exception should be added in the handbook to the effect that staff who had obtained a legal concealed carry permit could carry weapons if they so choose. Also, under section 4.2 and 4.3, Unsafe Conditions and Accident reporting, Steve said that he would like to see a report provided to the board, as well as to the supervisor, in case of any accidents.
- b) **Water Quality Educational Display Model Idea Proposal-** This item was covered during the staff report.
- c) **Staff Training and Education opportunity: Habitat Restoration and Mitigation Webinar Series; SWOCC class-** Staff presented two training opportunities and passed out printed handouts: a series of webinar classes offered through NWETC on creating and implementing a habitat restoration/mitigation plan, and a class that was being offered at SWOCC. The board discussed both opportunities. The series of webinars were somewhat expensive, but Beth Pietrzak pointed out that the classes could be paid for out of Scope of Work Funds, as long as we haven’t gone over our allotted budget percentage for staff training. **Steve moved that the board approve Caley to take the NWETC webinar courses (tuition**

totaling \$540) on successfully creating and implementing habitat restoration/mitigation plans. Dan seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed. Staff then brought up the second training opportunity, which consisted of some natural resource credit courses being offered at SWOCC. Staff's idea was to take the SWOCC classes on her own time and money, since she would be earning college credits, and was only asking the board to allow her to move her work hours around slightly in order to accommodate the class schedule. The board as a whole did not have a problem with her doing this, and also discussed the possibility of even reimbursing staff for the classes later on, should she prove to be a long-term employee of the District. The two SWOCC classes were compared and discussed. One of the courses' day and time had yet to be announced, and staff admitted that she would need more information about both classes before she could decide which one to take next term. Staff said that she would provide an update at the next meeting.

- d) **CWA/Ocean Blue Mycofiltration project on Cunningham Creek.** This item was covered during Ernie's CWA report.
- e) **Safety Report- SDAO/SDIS-WHA Update Renewal Forms.** The board discussed and filled out the WHA update renewal forms. **Steve moved that the board adopt and sign the SDAO/SDIS Joinder of Trust Agreement on April 24th, 2014. Dan seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.**
- f) **Public Comment on agenda items-** No public comments.
- g) **Next Meeting:** May 22nd, 2014, at 7 p.m. at the Coos County Annex/Owen Building Large Conference Room.
- h) **Additional Business to Address:** No additional business.
- i) **Director's Signatures Needed: February Meeting Minutes; NRCS Software Agreement; Marsha Decaires small grant Cooperative Agreement.**
- j) **Meeting Adjourned at 10:00 PM**

Ratified by the Board of Directors:

Signature of the Chairman

Date

Submitted by:

Caley Sowers

Date