

Laramie County Conservation District

11221 U.S. Hwy. 30
Cheyenne, WY 82009

Regular Board Meeting

Thursday, June 18th, 2020

4:00 p.m.

Attendance

Supervisors Present: Tom Farrell, Chairman; Kevin Wells, Vice Chairman/Treasurer; Ann Sanchez, Secretary; Jay Berry, Member; Jeremy Manley, Member.

District Employees Present: Shaun Kirkwood, Kathy Cooney, Paul Sandler, Rex Lockman.

NRCS Employees Present: Mason Peebles & Tyler Therkildsen

FSA Employee Present: Robin Hudson

1. CALL TO ORDER

At 4:10 p.m. Tom called the board meeting to order.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING- May 21, 2020

Kevin moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting;
Ann seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT- Profit and Loss Statement – (May 2020) **Shaun**

Shaun presented the Treasurer's Report and the Board recommended to submit it for audit.

4. PROGRAM REPORTS –

–Education (Ann, Paul)

Ann stated she has been assisting neighbors with their weed barrier.

Paul stated he has been assisting the other programs, has ordered parts and media for the new stream trailer, has registered for 3 classes online, and will be assisting with the Beast Foundation and the youth center on FE Warren AFB.

-Wildlife & Range (Kevin, Rex)

Kevin stated there is a new rabbit disease in domestic rabbits that has moved through Colorado and is heading this way. It is getting into the wild rabbits as well. Due to this, there will be no rabbits in the Laramie County Fair this year.

Rex stated he has been doing a lot of grass and seeding recommendations. Rex stated he has been working on Curt Gowdy doing vegetation plots, and installed some trail cameras. There will be a

second spraying in August on 500-800 acres of cheat grass. Ann asked if it was aerial spraying. Rex stated, yes, by helicopter. Jay asked if it will kill all the cheat grass or just new seeds. Rex stated the chemical will be on the soil, and kill seeds that will fall. Rex stated the August spraying will be either the 2nd or 3rd week in August.

- Water (Tom)

Tom stated there is a lot of water on the western side of WY, but very little here. Tom also noted there is a bug in the pine trees up on Curt Gowdy that is turning the ends of the needles yellow, and killing the trees, thus causing a fire hazard.

Jay asked if there is a means to measure the aquifer in Laramie County. Jeremy stated politically, no, but scientifically, yes. Jeremy proceeded to explain that aide is needed, by possibly cooperators, to assist if agreement terms could ever be met.

- Trees (Jeremy)

Jeremy noted the tractor repairs required due to a breakdown during planting, and that plantings for the year will be completed Friday.

Shaun stated he and Clark had met with Cheyenne Urban Forestry, State Forestry, and UW Extension this morning to discuss the Emerald Ash Bore (EAB) and how to handle tree calls.

- Administration (Jay, Shaun, & Kathy)

Kathy stated the end of the Fiscal Year is approaching, so she is working on end of year grant reports for the audit and that Rob Dickerson, auditor, will be at the office June 30 to conduct a physical inventory count. Kathy also stated another \$150,000.00 in bond securities had to be obtained mid-May for the checking account at WY Bank & Trust.

Jay stated he would like an email with Administration updates sent to him each month prior to the Board meetings.

-NRCS (Mason Peebles)

Mason introduced Tyler as the new Range Specialist for NRCS. Tyler stated he had worked for NRCS in Akron, CO, for 2 years, graduated from the University of WY, and had grown up in Arvada, CO.

Mason stated NRCS has 45 CRP contracts and they are all renewals, and that with the new farm bill, there could be some nesting changes for wildlife that could affect haying and grazing if needed due to drought.

Mason discussed his handouts, and the list of priorities he came up with for NRCS. He narrowed the list down to wind erosion, groundwater depletion, terrestrial habitat for wildlife & invertebrates, plant pest pressure, and plant productivity & health. Mason stated NRCS would probably not have a Local Work Group meeting this year.

Mason also discussed noxious weeds and that NRCS had sprayed 2,300 acres on Soap Stone last year by aerial application with Telar and are seeing good results.

Conservation Plans:

- ② (1) haying CRP
- ② (1) CRP enrollment

Kevin moved to approve the listed Conservation Plans.

Jay seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED.

-FSA (Robin Hudson)

Robin explained the CRP enrollment was just a change in name.

Robin also stated Farm Service Agency has a new food program called Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), which will provide up to \$16 billion in direct payments to deliver relief to America's farmers and ranchers impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. FSA is helping farmers where they can due to COVID-19.

Discussion Items:

5. Budget 2020/21 (distributed May meeting) – input, questions, concerns for 2020/21 budget?

Shaun stated the draft budget would have a few changes before the budget hearing in July. One being there would be no Living Snow Fence planted for WY Dept. of Transportation in 2021, thus changing income.

The Mill Levy election coming up in November was discussed. Jeremy suggested signage at the Library storm drain conversion. Shaun stated signage is in the works. Due to COVID-19, and the lack of public events, it will be a challenge to reach voters with information. Information packets are going to be put together for Clark and Rex to distribute to residents when doing calls on residents.

6. Staff Evaluations – will distribute at meeting.

Shaun stated he had a folder for each Board Member with employee information in each for them to review. The date of July 7th, 2020, at 5 pm at the District office was selected to review the evaluations.

7. Staff and flex schedules - Supervisors opinions/approval/denial on staff requesting ability to adjust work hours while supporting LCCD core hours.

The wording in the employee policy book was discussed regarding a flexible work schedule. Jeremy asked if an attorney had reviewed the current policy book, as the word "will" for board approval could be an issue. Kevin stated he has allowed flex time with his staff. Sometimes it works for the individual and sometimes it doesn't, but felt it is good for moral, and motivates the employee. Jay stated he is "old school" and doesn't feel it works with the public, but would have an open mind.

It was decided the Board would approve/disapprove the flex work schedule under the current employee policy book, but it will be up to the District Manager if it does or does not work for the employee. The Board asked they be informed of any changes.

Kevin moved to approve Rex's working request for 10 hour days with the District Manager overseeing the staff to meet District needs.

Ann seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED with Jay voting NAY.

- 8. Transfer of funds** - notification that funds will be transferred from depreciation reserve to checking. Funds will cover John Deere repairs and rental costs associated with need of tractor to complete planting season. Funds to be transferred will not exceed \$9,000.00.

With the invoices from 4 Rivers having been received, the actual expense for the tractor repairs and rental tractor came in at \$7,153.91.

Ann moved to approve the transfer of \$7,153.91 from Depreciation Reserve to Checking for the tractor repairs and rental expense.

Jeremy seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED.

9. Other Business-

Shaun passed out an email he had just received from Plan 1 prior to the Board meeting for the Board to review, and to get back to Shaun with comments. Jeremy asked if there would be a penalty for Plan 1 if the project goes out to bid, but the District waits until after the Mill Levy election to proceed. Shaun will ask Plan 1.

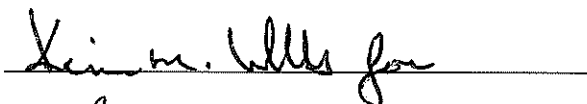
Shaun also notified the Board that the District had received an email that Bobbie Frank will be retiring as of August 1st from WACD.

Shaun also stated Brent Lathrop, Nature Conservancy, is retiring the end of June and has shown some interest in being an Associate Board Member. Shaun asked if the Board had any concerns or opinions on Brent becoming an Associate.

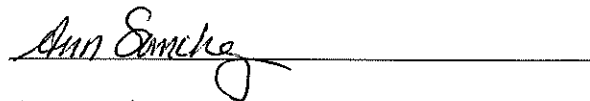
Kevin also informed everyone he is unsure if he will run for re-election for the Board of Supervisors in November.

10. Adjournment-Tom

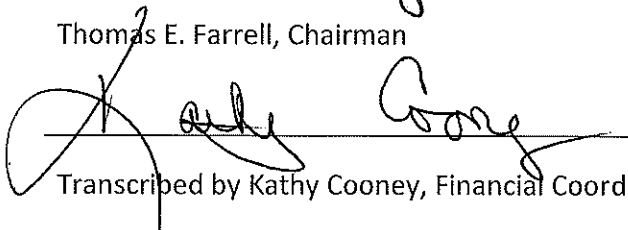
Tom adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.



Thomas E. Farrell, Chairman



Ann Sanchez, Secretary



Transcribed by Kathy Cooney, Financial Coordinator