



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
November 1, 2013**

**Supervisors Present:** LeRoy Candelaria  
J. Brian Greene  
Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman  
Jerry Melaragno  
Richard Shovelin  
Dan Williams

**Absentees:** William Caster

**Others Present:** Dierdre Tarr, District Manager  
April Luna, Soil Conservationist, NRCS  
Frank Luna, Associate Supervisor  
Roy Todd, New Mexico Department of Agriculture  
Katheryn Taylor, District Volunteer  
Sherrill Bradford, land owner  
Andrew Chavez, land owner  
Pablo Chavez, land owner  
Ramona Chavez, land owner  
Timothy Chavez, land owner  
Inez Perkins, land owner  
Rand Perkins, land owner

**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 at Alpine Alley, located at 210 N Summit in Mountainair, NM at 8:10 a.m.

**Welcome Attendees:**

The Chairman welcomed those present and thanked them for taking the time to attend.

**APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

The Board reviewed the agenda: **ACTION TAKEN:** Jerry Melaragno moved to approve the agenda as amended. Brian Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous. The Report on Livestock Removal from US Forest Service Land and the Letter concerning the Blanket Removal of Livestock from the Mountainair District of the Cibola National Forest were moved from **New Business** to **Unfinished Business**.

#### **APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes of the regular meeting from October 3, 2013 as amended: **ACTION TAKEN:** Jerry Melaragno moved to approve the minutes as amended. Brian Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous. On page 2 under Correspondence, change "Monotoya" to "Montoya." On page 3 under Ojo Peak Restoration, change "Aran" to "Aaron." Replace "The work will be completed within the week to be continued in the spring." with "The work for the fall will be completed within the week, and the project will be continued in the spring. Under Report on Livestock Removal from US Forest Service, in the second line, replace "for" with "from."

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT AND APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:**

The District Manager answered questions regarding the treasurer's report for the month of September with accounts payable for October. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to accept the report and pay the accounts payable. Jerry Melaragno seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

The Board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of October with accounts payable for November. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to accept the report and pay the accounts payable. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

#### **OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

The District Manager announced that the District's auditor is preparing for his audit to be completed by December.

#### **REPORTS:**

##### **New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA):**

Mr. Todd referred the Board to his written report. He said that the November meeting would be his last meeting because he is retiring at the end of December. He mentioned that three districts in the south are bringing suits against the fish and wildlife agency because the agency is not granting cooperating status to these districts. Discussion followed on the reasons that Claunch-Pinto will not be able to participate in these suits. The District Manager explained the advantages to becoming a collaborating agency and the importance of the District's land use plan in achieving this status.

##### **NRCS Field Office Report:**

April Luna reported for NRCS. She said that after returning from being furloughed, she and Kenneth Lujan have been very busy checking out 10 to 15 EQIP contracts. They are also planning for EQIP 2013.

##### **District Manager's Report:**

The District Manager explained the problems with the new phone system. She said that old messages will be deleted and the current voice mail feature will be disabled by Centurylink. She will provide extension numbers to Board members.

She also reported that crews have finished three to five acres on the Red Canyon project. She and Kenneth Lujan will look at the site soon to decide whether the wood can be moved to a more accessible location. The wood must be removed by June 12, 2014.

Richard Shovelin asked the District Manager to explain the Torrance County Food Shed Partnership. She reported on a meeting that she attended and the District's involvement in a grant being submitted by Pat Lincoln of the county project office. She said that on-the-ground projects are already in place in the Mountainair area.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

The District Manager pointed out a newsletter with an article on the Mountainair community garden.

#### **UPDATE ON GRANTS:**

The District Manager reported on grants listed below, meetings attended, progress on projects, status of proposals to funding agencies, and RFPs issued by funding agencies.

**Estancia Basin Watershed Health and Restoration Monitoring (EBWHRM) Project – Water Trust Board and State Forestry Grants (NFL,) and Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance:**

The District Manager submitted pre-proposals to the WTB for the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance and Estancia Basin Watershed Health and Restoration Monitoring projects. She reported on a WTB meeting that she attended where the proposals were approved to be submitted to the legislature. Regarding the grants, the District will receive the legal documents for 2013 funded grants. The readiness items have been submitted, funds are being drawn down and projects are being finished. Several contracts need to be written. She described a problem with the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance request for proposals. Proposals were due on October 4. A contractor sent his via UPS express. A delivery problem caused the proposal to be late. The proposal will be included because the delivery problem was beyond the contractor's control. Greater Rio Grande projects will probably be contracted during the next month. The Estancia Basin Core Steering Committee voted several months ago to bill any district where projects required more than three inspections; therefore, the committee voted to bill the East Torrance District for mileage and time because their projects required four inspections by the forest contract inspector. The District Manager praised Vern Kohler, the Claunch-Pinto field technician, who inspects all projects before he calls the forest contract inspector. This practice makes multiple inspections by the forest contract inspector unnecessary. The District Manager said that questions have been raised regarding the reimbursements for administration that Claunch-Pinto receives. Trainings will be held for districts to demonstrate how to facilitate reimbursements.

**Central New Mexico Cooperative Weed Management Area:**

No additional information is available on this project.

**Collaborative Forest Restoration Program:**

**Ojo Peak Restoration:**

The District Manager reported that 21 erosion control structures have been built in Ox Canyon from materials in the area. Jerry Melaragno went with the District Manager and Karen Lessard, District Ranger to look at the structures. Five hundred more feet of structures will be built, plantings will be added, and the riparian area will be fenced to keep cattle out until the plants are well established. Coyote Willows are spreading and flourishing since no grazing is taking place. Water is flowing in the canyon, so silt is already building up in some wood structures. This project will be a good demonstration area for the District and the US Forest Service. Wood from 125 acres of tree felling will go to the Manzano land grant heirs.

**Red Canyon Project:**

The District Manager said that work is progressing. Five acres were completed in a week, so the 30 acres remaining should be completed in six weeks.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Future Directions Committee – District Property, Building Progress**

The District received five proposals on October 4 that were opened in a committee meeting attended by William Caster, Jerry Melaragno, Dan Williams and the District Manager. The bids varied from \$509,000 to \$569,000 dollars, greatly exceeding the budget for the project. On advice by the District's legal counsel, it was decided to go out on a re-bid. The District Manager sent certified letters to the contractors informing them of the decision. The project was advertised again, and five bids were received yesterday afternoon, including one new bid and four previously submitted proposals. They will be opened in executive session at this Board meeting. The NRCS side of the building plus parking lots have to be finished by July 11, 2014.

Chairman Lovato thanked Mr. Caster, Mr. Melaragno, and Mr. Williams for their work on the building project.

The District Manager suggested meeting with state Representative Salazar, Senators Griego and Chavez and representatives from the governor's and lieutenant governor's offices to try to get support for the project. The District needs to demonstrate to Mr. Salazar that much of the Claunch-Pinto area is in his District.

The District Manager reiterated the importance of having the building project on the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP). The project is number one on the District's ICIP.

### **Land Use Plan**

The District Manager will invite Kim Kostelnik to the next Board meeting to work on the Land Use Plan. Ms. Kostelnik thinks that two more meetings will be needed to complete the plan.

### **Envirothon Competition**

Kenneth Lujan and the District Manager will work with the high school science teacher and the new agriculture teacher to plan for the event. Coordination has been delayed by the furlough.

### **Report on Livestock Removal from US Forest Service:**

Discussion took place on getting Karen Lessard, the Mountainair district ranger, to attend a Board meeting. Mr. Greene expressed his disappointment in the forest service's process used to close the forest to livestock. He emphasized the Forest Service's lack of communication with the permittees before requiring that livestock be removed from U.S. Forest Service land. He was also disappointed in the amount of time it has taken for the Board to respond to the permittees' request for support of their resolution. However, he said that he agreed with the Board's letter of support for the permittees that is on the Board's agenda. The Chairman explained that the Board voted on October 3 to write its own letter of support rather than act on the resolution presented by permittees at the October Board meeting. It was the consensus that a letter would be seen as a stronger level of support. Mr. Rand Perkins, a lessee, reported on a letter that he recently received from the Range Improvement Task Force saying that he should be able to stock 236 animal units year long based on the available forage. He said that he only had 100 cattle on his pastures. He also reported on plant mortality. He raised issues again with the process used to remove the cattle.

Supervisor Richard Shovelin raised several questions for the record.

1. Was the Mountainair district the only district to institute removal of cattle?
2. Were the fees paid by the permittees the same after livestock were removed as they were before the cattle were removed?
3. Why were only 100 acres of 20,000 acres in the Comanche allotment perused?
4. Was the decision to remove the livestock made solely by the staff of the Mountainair District of the Cibola National Forest without consultation with superiors?
5. Shouldn't an advisory committee be formed consisting of the entities, including ranchers, involved in making decisions concerning livestock on Forest Service land?
6. Why wasn't notification given to permittees a year in advance since drought conditions have existed for some time?
7. Were permittees informed of the NEPA analysis done every 10 years of the condition of the rangelands?

Discussion followed on answers to the questions, on how the Forest Service responds to range conditions, on its decision making process and on potential changes to how Forest Service and BLM lands are used.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to ask the District Ranger to attend the next meeting to respond to questions. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion passed. Vote was unanimous. Mr. Melaragno requested information on the Forest Service's response to Congressman Pierce's letter.

### **Letter Concerning the Blanket removal of Livestock from the Mountainair District of the Cibola National Forest.**

Chairman Lovato complimented Jerry Melaragno on the letter. Mr. Williams commented that the letter directly from the Board might be more effective than simply supporting a resolution. The District Manager suggested that the letter be copied to a number of entities. Mr. Melaragno suggested a change to the end of the first paragraph of the letter. Add: "Rather than act on that resolution, the Board voted on October 3, 2013, to communicate directly with the Forest Service. The resulting letter follows in writing." **ACTION TAKEN:** Brian Greene moved to send the amended letter to the Mountainair District of the Cibola National Forest with copies to the congressional delegation, the NM state secretary of the Department of Agriculture, the undersecretary of the federal Department of Agriculture, the Forest Supervisor and to the Regional Supervisor. Richard Shovelin seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Resolution No. 04-2014 Open Meetings Resolution:**

The District Manager explained the resolution based on changes to the Act.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Jerry Melaragno moved to approve the resolution. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried by a voice vote as follows: LeRoy Candelaria – yea; Brian Greene – yea; Felipe Lovato – yea; Jerry Melaragno – yea; Richard Shovelin – yea; Dan Williams – yea.

#### **Approval of Board Meeting Dates in FY2014:**

The District Manager explained changes to meeting dates in January and July from the first Friday to the second Friday of the month. Following Board approval, the meeting dates will be posted.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Brian Greene moved to approve the meetings dates for FY2014. Richard Shovelin seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

#### **Approval of Office Closure during Winter Following School Schedule and Friday after Thanksgiving:**

The District Manager explained the request for closing the District office. The office will follow the school winter closure schedule and will close on the Friday following Thanksgiving.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Brian Greene moved to approve the motion closing the office following the school winter schedule and the Friday following Thanksgiving. Richard Shovelin seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

#### **NM Coalition of Conservation Districts Membership Pledge and Approved Representatives:**

The District Manager presented the pledge and asked for names of the approved representatives. Brian Greene moved to accept the pledge and to approve Richard Shovelin as the representative and Jerry Melaragno and LeRoy Candelaria as the alternates. Dan Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

### **REPORTS:**

#### **New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD):**

Richard Shovelin announced that the annual meeting will be held November 8 in Socorro. The District Manager is working with NMCCD on the program for the meeting.

#### **South Central Mountain RC&D:**

Brian Greene reported that South Central is thriving. He said that three Board members, including the treasurer, have had to resign and must be replaced. A staff position of rural forester paid for by a grant needs to be filled.

**Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC):**

Brian Greene reported that the scheduled meeting had to be canceled due to the government shutdown.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

As per motion and roll call vote, pursuant to New Mexico State Statute Section 10-15-1, the following matters will be discussed in closed session:

Competitive Sealed Proposals: Pursuant to Section 10-15-1 (H) (6), the contents of competitive sealed proposals solicited pursuant to the procurement code – notice of invitation for bid – IFB No. 2013.01.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to close the meeting of November 1, 2013 and to enter into executive session to discuss competitive sealed proposals pursuant to Section 10-15-1 (H) (6), solicited pursuant to the procurement code – notice of invitation for bid – IFB No. 2013.01. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. . Motion carried by a voice vote as follows: LeRoy Candelaria – yea; Brian Greene – yea; Felipe Lovato – yea; Jerry Melaragno – yea; Richard Shovelin – yea; Dan Williams – yea.

The Chairman declared the motion to be approved by a majority vote of the Board. The Board of the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation went into closed session at 10:39.

**CONTINUATION OF NEW BUSINESS:**

**Selection of Contractor: -- Project: Natural Resource Conservation Center: Tenant Development of Existing Shell Building and Site Improvements:**

The Chairman declared that the regular meeting of November 1, 2013 was now in open session at 11:20. He asked for a statement regarding the closed meeting. Mr. Candelaria stated: “The Board of the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District discussed in closed session only those matters specified in the motion to close.” **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to reject all five bids to finish the building and to enter into discussion with Mike Valdez concerning completion of the building project. Jerry Melaragno seconded the motion. Motion carried with one opposed.

**ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:**

**OTHER:**

**MEETINGS ATTENDED:**

**PLAN FOR NEXT MEETING:**

**NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:**

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, December 6, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. at Alpine Alley, located at 210 N Summit in Mountainair, NM.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the Board – **ACTION TAKEN:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m. Richard Shovelin seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

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FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

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RICHARD SHOVELIN, SEC. – TREAS.