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MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING February 7, 2014

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

Absentees:

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, District Manager
D'Laynn Bruce, District Conservationist, NRCS
Kim Kostelnik, New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts
Kenneth Lujan, District Conservationist, NRCS
Katheryn Taylor, District Volunteer
David C. Tyler
Jim Wanstall, NMDA

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 10:07 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:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve the agenda. Jerry Melaragno seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the regular meeting from January 10, 2014. **ACTION TAKEN:** Richard Shovelin moved to approve the minutes as amended. William Caster seconded the motion. Motion carried. Vote was unanimous.

At the top of page one, change "January 10, 2013" to "January 10 2014."

TREASURER'S REPORT AND APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

The Board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of January with accounts payable for February. **ACTION TAKEN:** William Caster 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 referred board members to the approved audit in the board packets.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA):

Jim Wanstall, field specialist from NMDA to the Claunich-Pinto board, asked board members for feedback on his report. The consensus was that the report was useful in several ways, deadlines and legislative actions, for example.

NRCS Field Office Report:

Kenneth Lujan introduced D'Laynn Bruce, the new NRCS district conservationist. She will represent Estancia, Mountainair, Fort Sumner, and Santa Rosa. She will attend the board meetings, with Mr. Lujan attending as needed. Ms. Bruce will make the reports to the board in the future. The NRCS office is in the midst of ranking EQIP proposals. The new farm bill may change some things. The chairman commended the district manager, Mr. Lujan and April Luna for the degree of cooperation between the two entities and hopes that the positive relationship will continue.

District Manager's Report:

The written report is included in the board packets. The district manager thanked the village of Corona for asking her to give a short report on fire readiness. She will be contacting South Central Mountain RC&D to coordinate wildfire protection plans. Mr. Williams thanked her for making the presentation.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The district manager noted the publications included in board members' packets.

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:

On the 2013 WTB funding, the paperwork for 2013 has been signed and the four districts are preparing practice plans for state forestry to approve. The contracts will be written for 2013 WTB funding that has been received. Proposals are being written for 2014 WTB funding. The district manager went over changes in the process for submitting proposals. All districts involved in the Estancia Basin and Greater Rio Grande projects have to prepare Infrastructure Capital Improvement Programs (ICIPs). The district manager explained how Non Federal Lands funding was used as a match for the WTB 2012 funding. Claunich-Pinto has projects with several Lajeunesse brothers which will provide a nice fire break. With 2014 funding, work will begin on 300 acres on the Herrera property. The district manager hasn't received word whether Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) proposals have been funded. The Non Federal Lands RFP will be coming out soon, and proposals will be submitted for those funds. Requests for funding have been turned in to work on 1500 acres in the Thunderbird and Red Canyon areas of Manzano and on land south of Deer Canyon and on state land.

Through the work of the EBWHRM steering committee, state forestry and NRCS was able to apply for joint funding, which was approved. Thirteen projects were selected nationally. Eight hundred thousand dollars was approved for state forestry and \$720,000 was approved for NRCS. The funding will support the Isleta project. Meetings have been held with various participating entities. The forest service is ready to go, and work should start on the project in March. Work with NRCS is in the planning stages.

Kim Kostelnik explained locations where thinning and mastication will take place, and who will do the work and the outreach. She said that they hope for an accelerated process so that the project will proceed successfully and in a timely manner in order to get these funds into the state. She said that the Claunch-Pinto district was instrumental in getting the funds, due in part, to the degree of collaboration with other districts. The district manager said that work on this project began in 2007. She explained how the collaboration came about. She said that the effectiveness of other projects helped to get the funding for the Isleta project. Kim Kostelnik stressed the importance of being proactive rather than reactive regarding treating the watersheds so that water resources will be protected. She said that if watersheds are not treated, the state will not have the water it needs. She said that other avenues of bringing in funding are being explored to treat the watersheds. She described efforts of the Nature Conservancy and the New Mexico Forest Industry. There is a water fund board with 50 members trying to create a comprehensive plan to treat watersheds.

On the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance projects, a project in Albuquerque open space at Coors and Paseo is being finished. The director in that area wants to add another 20 acres to the project. The contractor is being contacted to find out if he can complete the additional 20 acres.

Conservation Services will work on all but one of the projects in the Valencia district. A contract has been signed with the company for \$80,000 and work will commence in about a week.

Boss Reclamation is ready to work on the Alcalde project in the East Rio Arriba District.

The district manager is waiting on contracts from Restoration Solutions to work on two private properties in the Socorro SWCD. It will be the first time working on private property in the area between Albuquerque and Bernardo. A 51 acre project on the Isleta Pueblo is ready to go.

A saw crew has been working in Abó. Chipping is in progress. A Rema Navajo crew will do the thinning.

Central New Mexico Cooperative Weed Management Area:

No report.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program:

Ojo Peak Restoration:

Riparian work was completed, and in spring more erosion structures will be built and plantings will take place. Unused funds will be spent on forest thinning. Through New Mexico Forest Industries Association, an Alamo Navajo crew will work on tree marking of the 153 acres. This crew will camp on the district's property because the forest is closed. A Rema Navajo crew will do the thinning. Money for the project has to be spent by September. All of the wood from approximately 200 acres will go to the Manzano land grant. When the thinning and the restoration in Ox Canyon is finished, the project will be complete.

Red Canyon Project:

The funds for this project will be expended by the June deadline. The district has partnered with Marcus Romero, general manager of Marcus Wood LLC on a CFRP proposal. In April, notification on the proposals will take place. Wood from that 129 acres will go to the Manzano land grant.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Future Directions Committee – District Property, Building Progress

The chairman asked whether board members had been out to the building recently. Mr. Shovelin and Mr. Caster said that progress on the building has been great. Mr. Candelaria said that the cost of the building has been remarkably curtailed compared to the architect's estimates. Mr. Williams said that simple changes have contributed to lower costs. Mr. Candelaria said that he met with the director of the New Mexico Finance Authority and told him that money hasn't been released to the district, but the district has been making payments. The district manager reported on the history of the decision of the board to have Mike Valdez supervise the construction of the building and the reaction of the NM Finance Authority to this approach. She said that the project should be completed for about \$340,000,

with about \$14,000 remaining of the loan. The district has followed all the directions from the legal counsel regarding work on the building. The NM Finance Authority was notified that the project was ongoing and work was in progress. Mr. Candelaria offered to set up a meeting with the NM Finance Authority.

Mr. Lujan suggested that the district will have to budget for furniture when NRCS moves into the building.

Mr. Williams said that if the district had waited for the NM Finance Authority to go through an additional process to release the funds from the loan, the deadline for completing the building couldn't be met.

Envirothon Competition

No report.

Proposed CO2 Pipeline Route

The district manager referred board members to the letter submitting comments to the BLM regarding the proposed Lobos CO2 Pipeline Project. She also sent a letter to the BLM requesting that the BLM consider the Claunch-Pinto SWCD as a "stakeholder" with resultant notification relative to current and future actions which do or may result in NEPA documentation for the Kinder Morgan Lobos CO2 pipeline.

Report on the US Fish and Wildlife Lawsuit with Chavez SWCD

The district manager pointed out a press release in the board packet reporting on the lawsuit being brought by the Chavez SWCD against the US Fish and Wildlife Service because the Chavez SWCD was refused cooperating agency status.

Land Use Plan

Discussion of the Land Use plan will take place following the regular board meeting. A draft plan is in progress

NEW BUSINESS:

Ag Fest – February 11, 2014

The event will be held at the Sweeney Center in Santa Fe from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Soil and Water Day – NM Legislature – February 12, 2014

The New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts will have a booth with information representing coalition members.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD):

A board meeting will be held in Santa Fe on February 10 at 5:00 p.m. Senate bills 4 and 27 will be discussed.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

Brian Greene reported that the group lost its urban forester and hired someone new who started last week. The next meeting is on February 27.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC):

Mr. Greene said that no meeting was held. The next meeting will be held during the third week of February.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN FOR NEXT MEETING:

LAND USE PLAN:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, March 7, 2014 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, the regular meeting of the Claunch-Pinto Board adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

RICHARD SHOVELIN, SEC. – TREAS.