



Santa Cruz Natural Resource Conservation District

Santa Cruz Regular Meeting July 15, 2020 Draft Minutes

Location: Teleconference: (515) 604-9099, access code: 645264651

Board Supervisors & Clerk: Stephen Williams, Daniel Bell, Bill Schock, Fox Johnson (Absent), Chris Postel (Clerk). Andrew Jackson (SC NRCD Board Nominee)

Agencies & Guests: Emilio Carrillo (Natural Resource Conservation Service -NRCS), Sharma Torrens (Arizona Association of Conservation Districts - AACD).

Called to Order: 1:16 pm

Review/Approve June 10 Minutes: The minutes were reviewed. Bill Schock suggested to change the ending date to 4/15/20 (Corona Virus Food Assistance Program). It was moved by Dan Bell to approve the minutes as amended. Bill Schock seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. 3-0.

Treasurer's Report: The checking account balances were: \$2,984.14 (State), \$2,336.18 (Education Center) and \$119,873.99 (Local). Reviewed financial reports. Bill Schock moved to accept and file the Treasurer's reports. Stephen Williams seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. 3-0.

Administration Update (Invoices): None. Stephen Williams asked about any mail that has been received. Per Dan, he keeps a correspondence notebook which he can bring to the next meeting.

Agency Updates:

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS – Emilio Carrillo: NRCS is focused on the Bighorn Fire, working with the Pima, Winkelman, and Redington Districts. All of the fire occurred on Forest Service land, mostly on the Goff's ranch. The big concern is flooding and NRCS can provide funding thru: the EQIP program (replace damaged practices) and the Emergency Watershed Protection fund. The Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team has received their first phase funding. Emilio Carrillo is the acting District Conservationist until August 24. Alvaro Campos is still on active duty until the end of the year. A NRCS conference call is on Thursday at 2 pm to discuss the new reorganization. Keisha Tatum (AZ NRCS State Conservationist) discussed the proposed reorganization at last summer's AACD meeting. The reorganization will move from an area to a team concept. For example, the Douglas, Tucson and Sells office will become a team (8-9 teams state-wide). The main focus will be to share disciplines across their region; so, a producer can get assistance more promptly. Some offices will be closing, such as Chandler, and no more area offices such as Flagstaff, Tucson. This reorganization must be approved by the USDA Secretary Purdue. Stephen Williams mentioned that Jim Koweek should contact Alisha Phipps or Brett Myers regarding the fall monitoring program. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP - \$400,00 is available in AZ) will be in-process thru this Friday. Then, the applications will be ranked, reviewed and obligated. A Coordinated Resource Management meeting with the Pima, Santa Cruz, and Winkelman NRCDs needs to be scheduled.

OLD BUSINESS

Supervisor Appointment Update: Per Stephen Williams, Andrew (Andy) Jackson has agreed to be appointed to the open supervisor position. Married for 40 years, he has 4 children and 10

grandchildren. He lives in the Rio Rico area and he has farmed in the Eloy and Maricopa areas. Andy has signed a cooperators agreement and provided the required IDs. It was moved by Dan Bell to have Andrew Jackson fill the unexpired (Mark Larkins's) term. Bill Schock seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Review & Approve 2020 State Land Reports:

- **Santa Cruz NRCD Annual Report:** Per Bill, monitoring is also done on BLM and State land; so, the annual report should be amended to reflect this. It was moved by Bill Schock to approve the District annual report as amended. Dan Bell seconded it. The motion carried unanimously 3-0.
- **Santa Cruz Education Center Annual Report:** No changes were noted. It was moved by Bill Schock to approve the Education Center annual report as submitted. Bill Dan Bell seconded it. The motion carried unanimously 3-0.

Discuss & Approve Annual AACD Dues: Per Dan Bell, the AACD dues last year was \$1,500. It was moved by Dan Bell pay \$1,500 for the annual AACD dues. Bill Schock seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. 3-0

Discuss & Approved Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Letters of Support:

- **Sentinel Landscape:** Per Bill Schock, the Arizona Land & Water Trust (ALWT) has not helped in terms of conservation, money is spent on easements. Per Emilio, no one else is applying for RCPP funding except for ALWT. So far, one application has been received for renewal. No new RCPP applications have been received, there is no deadline for receiving new applications. Per Stephen, the District has received a request for a Letter of Support for ALWT's RCPP application for the Sentinel Landscape.. Per Dan, he would like to get an update on what they have accomplished and what other organizations (Altar Valley, AACD) might also be applying for RCPP funding. He wants to wait on a letter of support for ALWT (Sentinel Landscape) until the Board gets an update. Stephen will contact ALWT to request clarification about its RCPP application and report to the Board as to whether it is a new or renewal application, and a summary of prior accomplishments.
- **AACD:** Per Sharma Torrens: Due late August, the AACD is applying for a \$3-5 million RCPP grant (Soil Health) for Cochise and Santa Cruz Counties. They would like to request a letter of support from the Santa Cruz NRCD. In terms of partnerships, they have worked with: Arizona State University, University of Arizona – Cooperative Extension, and Arizona Game & Fish. They will work with the local NRCDs to promote workshops to the local farmers and ranchers. These workshops would provide education programs on: practices to improve soil health and the Conservation Stewardship Program (NRCS – CSP). They are looking for 10+ producers to implement these practices (reducing pesticides, crop cover, pasture rotation, etc.). Overall, the goal is to conserve water. Per Bill Schock, the Sentinel Landscape has promoted on the ground practices to kill brush and prevent erosion to keep the environmentalists at bay. The District would support workshops on soil health and could do a letter of commitment.

Approve & Elect 2020 Supervisor Appointments: These appointments will be for 2 years:

- It was moved by Bill Schock to appoint Stephen Williams as the District Chairman. Dan Bell seconded it. The motion carried unanimously, 3-0.
- It was moved by Dan Bell to appoint Bill Schock as the District Vice-Chairman. Stephen Williams seconded it. The motion carried unanimously, 3-0.
- It was moved by Bill Schock to appoint Dan Bell as the District Treasurer. Stephen Williams seconded it. The motion carried unanimously, 3-0.

Supervisor & Clerk Reports:

- Bill Schock: He has been participating on drought monitoring committees. Overall, Arizona is doing better and coming out of the drought. He thinks that drought should be defined in terms of the ground moistures vs total rainfall.
- Stephen Williams: On July 21, the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension (Ashley Wright, Michael Crimmins) is having a drought conference call.
- Dan Bell: It's been raining since our call started. The rain gauge reads less than 2 inches.
- Andrew Jackson: He is getting rain also.
- Chris Postel: Confirmed next meeting date on September 23 at 1:15 pm

Call to the Public: None

Adjourn: The Meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m. Dan Bell moved to adjourn the meeting. Bill Schock seconded it. The motion carried unanimously, 3-0

Next meeting on September 23, 2020 at 1:15 p.m.

Draft Minutes Submitted by: Chris Postel, Santa Cruz NRCD Clerk

Date: July 20, 2020

Approval of Minutes: _____

Date: _____