



*Coos Soil & Water Conservation District
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Coos Soil and Water Conservation District Regular Meeting Minutes-
October 24th, 2013
(Approved November 21, 2013)

Regular monthly meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Vice Chairman, Charlie Waterman.

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

Absent board members: Empty zone 5, Chairman Mark Villers.

Staff: Caley Sowers

Guests present: John Fandel (CPA), Amy Wilson (NRCS), and Jeff Jackson (ODFW)

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

7:03-7:05 Regular Minutes:

Charlie asked if anyone had any corrections or changes to make to the September draft minutes. Steve noted that in the case of a vote not being unanimous, the names of which board members voted yea and nay needs to be recorded in the minutes. With that correction, **Steve moved to approve the September monthly meeting minutes. Dan Pierce seconded the motion. All approved, motioned passed.**

7:05-7:07 Treasury Report: - John Fandel pointed out that we are now in the third month of a twenty-four month cycle and we are still running below budget on the ODA funds for the focus area. He stressed the importance of the SWCD starting to form a “plan of attack” and to start putting those funds to use, because the clock is ticking. With that in mind, **Dan moved to approve the Treasury Report. Beau Allen seconded the motion; all in favor, the motion passed.**

7:07-8:10pm Agency Reports:

NRCS - Amy Wilson reported that NRCS is now back at work, after the federal government shutdown ended. She noted that federal employees, by government policy and ethics rules, cannot be double-paid. So for those federal employees that applied for unemployment during the shut-down and are receiving benefits, the State of Oregon has declared that they cannot be paid twice for the same time-period. However, there is no established mechanism in place for dealing with such a situation in the case of a federal shutdown; the state government is not likely going to retrieve those unemployment funds that have been paid out, or are being paid out, and so the outcome of this double-payment issue remains to be seen. Aside from that, she reported that systems will take a while to get completely back online and she has not fully been back to work yet since last month’s SWCD meeting. The shutdown has not changed any deadlines, and even though the Farm Bill has not yet been passed, we should still act as if it has. As far as NRCS knows, the first sign-up ranking period begins December 20th so if somebody wants to sign up for the Ag Water Quality or Forestry Programs, the earlier they sign up the better. Lands adjacent to Tribal Forest Lands will receive a priority ranking.

CREP- Amy Wilson mentioned that Barbara Grant wanted her to pass along the information that she and Brett have been very busy with 26 CRP rental contracts totaling \$26,950.

FSA- N/A

ODF&W- Jeff Jackson reported that there has been lots of bear damage this month to apple trees and garbage; a reminder that bears are actively putting on weight for winter at this time, and bear harvests have been high the last couple of weeks. The Coquille Valley Wildlife Area Stakeholder Committee has just had its third meeting and they expect to have two more meetings before some sort of public unveiling of their plan. He mentioned that the amount of rainfall has been high for the first months of fall and Tom and other STEP folks have been out collecting brood stock for Chinook salmon at Gaylord, Myrtle Point and the Myrtle Creek area. Tom has so far 48 pair of fish and wants to collect 66 pairs. The rain had brought about 1800 fish in to the Devil Creek Hatchery and about 300 of those fish were donated to the food bank.

OSU-Extension - N/A

Weed Board - Steve Scheer- Steve had nothing new to report.

CWA - Ernie Newton- Ernie reported that he had received an email from Kelly miles requesting that that the Coos SWCD designate a representative to attend meetings of the South Fork Action Plan Committee. There will be 15 daytime meetings through July 2014. He also reported that the CWA is starting some riparian projects on the North Fork of the Coquille.

ODA - Beth Pietrzak- Beth had met the day before with Caley to go over the SOW, FAAP, and ODA grants. She brought up the complaint filed in May against Marcia Decaires, owner of Heather Lane Stables. She described the landowner's situation and the watershed area that is being or could potentially be affected and recommended that the board allow Caley to proceed in working with Mrs. Decaires to develop a better manure management plan and to apply for a small grant to aid her in the removal of the currently existing manure on the hillside above the stream valley.

Steve did not think we should be helping Marcia Decaires because of the fact that she is running a commercial business and should have done her homework about the costs and requirements of that business, and should have considered these problems beforehand. Ernie questioned whether or not the Coos SWCD is in the business of helping businesses and there was a discussion on the viability of this landowner's status as an agricultural operation. Charlie pointed out that farmers are also running businesses, and that the raising of cattle is very much a business as well, and yet the Coos SWCD provides assistance to farms and cattle ranchers. Beth clarified that small horse farms are included in the category of agricultural operations, and Amy Wilson pointed out that there is at least some room for discussion with the landowner; that we do not have to fund the entire operation and Marcia Decaires may have some contributions of her own to make. Beth also emphasized that the landowner needs assistance and is in danger of civil penalty if she continues to do nothing, and that the Coos SWCD is obligated to serve and assist her in this situation, as per our mission and policy. Some further debate took place along these lines, but it was decided that that we should proceed with providing assistance to the landowner. **Ernie moved to have Caley go forward with providing technical assistance to Marcia Decaires and applying for a small grant, and Beau seconded the motion. Charlie, Beau, Ernie, and Dan voted in favor; Steve voted to oppose. The motion passed.**

Staff Reports:

WTS - Caley Sowers- Caley provided a report handout and gave a general overview of her work over the past month (see staff report).

Old Business:

7:45 p.m.-7:52 p.m.

a) **Employee Handbook** - Charlie opened discussion on when would be the best time to begin meeting to update the employee handbook. Amy Wilson interjected that it might be a good idea to take the handbook one section per meeting, and that board members should read the section before the meeting takes place, to speed the process. It was agreed that these edits to the employee handbook should start taking place at the November monthly meeting. Steve also had a question about whether or not Dawn's final evaluation had ever been completed by Mark, and Charlie asked if Caley would make a note to ask Mark about it when he can be reached.

New Business:

7:52 p.m.-8:15 p.m.

- a) **Public Comment**-No public comment
- b) **Safety Report**- no items to note
- c) **New Hire Update**- Most of this information was covered during the staff report.
- d) **SDIS-Board of Directors Responsibilities Checklist**- The board went over the checklist and completed it, using the 2012 checklist as a reference.
- e) **Letter from Oregon Government Ethics Commission** – **Dan moved to approve the payment of \$82.00 to the OGE. Beau seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.**
- f) **Letter from NACD / Membership Payment Due** – The board elected not to pay membership dues to NACD, as it has not done so in the past.

- g) **Langlois Mountain Rain Gauges September Data** – There were no questions or comments on the rain gauge data.
- h) **Quarterly Report** – There were no questions or comments on the quarterly report.
- i) **Next Regular Board Meeting:** November 21st, 2013; at the Coos County Annex, in Coquille at 7 p.m.
- j) **Additional business or public comment-** Steve wanted to know if Dawn’s final employee evaluation had ever been completed and if not, it should be completed out of consideration for Dawn. Staff made a note to ask Mark about it when he can be reached.
- k) Staff expressed a desire to have a policy in writing regarding the procedure for moving forward with landowners who have either contacted SWCD of their own accord, or who have been referred to SWCD by ODA or by any other organization. She would like to know at what points in the process it is necessary to consult the board before moving forward. The board recommended that site visits and technical assistance could take place without consulting the board, but the board should be consulted before moving ahead with any projects or grant applications and also to refer to any existing policies on the matter.
- l) Staff also mentioned that she would like to start organizing a meeting, possibly with Brett Harris, or maybe some sort of informational night at the Bridge Grange, to help make landowner contacts in the focus area.
- m) **Meeting adjourned at 8:15**

Ratified by the Board of Directors:

Signature of the Chairman

Date

Submitted by:

Caley Sowers

Date