

Routt County Conservation District
Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
June 16, 2020 8 am

Attending:

Board Members:

Lyn Halliday
Tyler Snyder
Cam Kuelthau
Nadine Arroyo
Kent Sandstedt

Partners and Public:

Clinton Whitten, NRCS
Jeremy Kline, Rancher
Todd Hagenbuch, CSU Extension/At Large
Michele Meyer, Community Ag Alliance

Call to Order: 8:05 are - Lyn

-Meeting was noticed on RCCD's website and sent to our email distribution list which included instructions for the public to join the meeting virtually due to the current pandemic and as required by the Sunshine Law.

-The May 19, 2020 RCCD Board Meeting Minutes were approved on a motion by Nadine and second by Cam.

Old Business

-Oaths of Office; Nadine completed, Tyler to complete (newly re-elected in May to 3 year terms).

Board Member Reports and Updates

President

-Lyn reported on CSCB District Operational Training Sessions this past month via Zoom (Kent and Cam also attended and said it was very informative); video repeat available online. Will send links to Board as requested. One of the takeaways was that statutorily the Counties are required to support CD's. She recommended that we set up a meeting with our County Commissioners when the COVID pandemic calms down.

-Lyn also attended numerous webinars: Cattlemen's on ag and water quality/Reg. 85; Colorado Water Conservation Board four-part listening series re: updating Colorado Water Plan; CO collaborative soil health initiative. There seems to be a trend towards Conservation Districts becoming more involved in water policy, especially at Basin Roundtables. There was a discussion of which Board members might be interested/able to attend the Yampa/White/Green Roundtable meetings held every other month in Craig at 6pm. Next meeting 7/8/20.

-Lyn discussed a number of grants that are currently available which might be worth looking into: CSCB matching grants for 2021 (up to \$25,000) due July 17; mini Grants from CDPHE up to \$5,000 40% match required which can be in-kind; YVCF small grants with no match (Michele indicated these are applied for online and not very complicated). Some ideas might be for HayDay, publishing a brochure.

-Lyn prepared an article for the Steamboat Today newspaper on our soil health initiative – draft sent to board 6/12/20.

-There has been discussion of a CSCB/Yampa, North Platt, White Watershed meeting in June but no date yet. Members include RCCD, Colorado First CD, Douglas Creek CD, White River CD, and North Park CD.

-Lyn asked whether the Board liability insurance policy is up for renewal soon - Cam to check.

-An Integrated Water Management Plan meeting will be held later today to introduce the consultant team. They will be doing a desktop analysis of the river segments in the study.

Treasurer

-Cam updated the Board on current financials. The second installment of Bootstrap funds (\$2,500) was received from CSCB. He is checking to see if Direct Assistance will be available now that we are “in good standing”. Expenditures were \$570 on soil tests, \$15 for shipping, \$105 paid for accounting fees, \$12,634 on account.

Other

-Kent and Michele reported on Ag Alliance activities – food market sales are up. The RC Fair will host 4-H activities only. The Cayuse Classic will be July 27th at Sydney Peak.

-Kent reported the RCCD goal is to pursue a leadership role in the Soil Health Initiative. He proposed a county consumer/producer meeting to feature what it is RCCD does.

-Michele reported on a virtual ranch tour held by Cattlemen’s which provided a good story of ag in the valley. Lyn offered to include the video on the RCCD website if appropriate, Michele to check.

-Nadine is working on the brochure draft using an older poster as a template.

-Todd is working on a possible pasture management workshop - likely a winter project pending COVID conditions.

-There was discussion on recruiting new Board members. Seven would be a goal.

NRCS

-Clinton reported EQIP signup is complete. He funded 5 irrigation improvement projects, 3 ranch projects and 1 streambank restoration project totaling \$390,000. He has 4 new forestry projects with CO Forest Service, mostly thinning and mastication.

Soil Health Initiative

-The lab analysis for the three ranch testing sites has been received. Clinton and his team will be meeting with the ranchers to go over results and recommendations for best practices to meet the rancher's conservation objectives. Clinton went over some of the findings and recommendations for the various operations which included rangeland, winter feeding area, dry land hay and heavily grazed pasture. Results received were deemed excellent promo opportunity for RCCD about what it can do for its constituents.

Equipment Rental/lease

-Tyler reported on his discussions with Jeremy Kline who has generously offered to host and maintain a drill seeder at their ranch.

-Jeremy detailed his past experience with a similar project in the 90's and felt it is feasible. The drill was used all summer. His dad was the Board President and handled the check in and out via a calendar. He had a checklist to ensure it was returned properly. There was a charge to rent it and users were liable for misuse. Jeremy was paid an hourly rate but would volunteer to maintain and store for now. Replacement parts would need to be covered by RCCD.

-There was extensive discussion on how and where a drill seeder might be purchased. Possible models would be Great Plains or Land Pride 10'. New cost approximately \$38,000, used \$25,000. Suppliers could include Rocky Mountain Machinery in Craig, US Tractor, Big Iron Auction, Tractor House. Tyler to explore further with Jeremy's help.

-Tyler to see if CO Parks and Wildlife (CPW) would be interested to help fund. Cam will look into Habitat Preservation Partnership (HPP) possible funding.

-Clinton indicated he could keep the rental busy all summer.

-Lyn suggested we need a business plan to be developed.

Seed Purchase/Resell

Kent working with Elk River Farm and Feed.

Glen Werner Scholarship

Jeremy informed the Board that Glen Werner was his grandfather. Jeremy's mother was involved in the scholarship project previously undertaken through RCCD and is Glen's only living child. The scholarship helped kids that wanted to go to college for ag. Candidates were recruited through the high schools. Jeremy will ask his mother to send information. The Board thanked him since we have been unable to uncover much history of this project.

Tabled Item

Policy Book

Board of Supervisors, monthly hours & related mileage: to be tallied and noted in future meeting minutes. This past month: Lyn 34 hrs; Cam 11 hrs; Nadine 5 hrs.

-Next Board meeting; Tuesday 7/21/20 @ 8 am. Lyn was asked to look into a large meeting room that could accommodate social distancing and meeting in person.

Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 am.