

Routt County Conservation District
Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
August 18, 2020 8 am

Attending:

Board Members:

Lyn Halliday
Cam Kuelthau
Nadine Arroyo
Kent Sandstedt

Partners and Public:

Clinton Whitten, NRCS
Jeremy Kline, Rancher
Tiffany Carlson
Kaitlyn Vaux
Baili Foster
Jennifer Wellman
Alyssa Clarida

Call to Order:

-The meeting was called to order at 8:06 am by Lyn

-The meeting was noticed on RCCD's website and sent to the 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.

-Lyn welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining.

-Meeting notes were shared but not reviewed as "minutes"; actual minutes to be reviewed for approval next meeting-

-Jeremy Kline, a rancher north of Hayden, was nominated as a new Board of Supervisors member on a motion from Nadine and second from Kent. Motion carried unanimously and Lyn welcomed Jeremy to the Board and thanked him for joining. Jeremy took the Oath of Office.

Board Member Reports and Updates

President

-Lyn provided an update on the YVCF grant she applied for to continue the comprehensive soil testing next spring. She was interviewed by a YVCF board member last week. A decision is due in September.

-Lyn reported on the State of the Yampa event hosted by the Colorado River District which she attended recently.

-An update was provided to the group on the Streamflow, and Nutrient and Sediment Loading Analysis study she is overseeing on behalf of the Upper Yampa River Watershed Group. The

report from USGS should be out as a draft for stakeholder comment at the end of the month. She mentioned the recent article in the Today newspaper regarding toxic blue green algae found in Steamboat Lake which has caused the closure of the lake to activities that result in contact with the lake water. Also, ranchers have been noticing more algae in stock ponds.

-Lyn announced the North Platte, White, Yampa Watershed Association of which she is VP, has set the date for the fall meeting to be September 18th. She asked the Board members if they had any pending issues they would like to see as policy resolutions to be considered by the NPWY to please get them to her.

-Lyn and Jenn reported that the IWMP technical committee is meeting tomorrow with the newly hired consultants who will be performing a desktop analysis of hydrology and ecology of specified reaches of the Yampa. The committee will be reviewing a list of indicators among other topics.

-Lyn had a conference call with Kristy Winser the Routt County Planning Director regarding potential important topics for consideration during the Master Plan Update. Although the update is currently on hold due to COVID and budget cuts, Kristy is interested in continuing discussions. A discussion ensued regarding how RCCD might get the Routt County Commissioners involved in ongoing work.

Treasurer

-Cam reported on the status of the finances. The CSCB Direct Assistant funds should be coming soon. There is \$11,563 in the bank. We are currently under budget for this year. He will ask the accountant to get us a financial report at the end of the third quarter.

-Lyn reminded the Board that next year's budget is due to DOLA in January.

Wildfire Council

-Clinton and Kent reported that sub-committees have been working on preparing for implementation for existing plans/projects. The Fish Creek fire mitigation plan is pending.

Projects, Events, Grants

Soil Health Initiative update

-Lyn had sent out with the Board packet the write-ups from the NRCS team on the ranches where we conducted comprehensive soil testing this past spring. She thanked the NRCS team for an awesome job in presenting these. The results received were deemed an excellent promo opportunity for RCCD regarding what we can do for our constituents. Summaries of results will be posted on our website.

Equipment purchase/lease

-Jeremy has done extensive research on no-till seed drill rental programs by contacting all other Conservation Districts in the State. He has gathered a lot of information on type, size of drill, maintenance costs, etc. This will go into the Business plan that he and Tyler are developing. He reviewed options for drill purchase pricing (\$25-35k) from Rocky Mtn Machinery, UST, Tractor House. Douglas County example seems similar to RCCD pursuit - has a good model plan for purchasing, leasing & maintenance. Guidelines suggest \$150 rental/use; \$10/ac; seed cost additional.

-Clinton has a call into CPW Chris Middledorf regarding possible funding, not heard back yet.

Seed Program

-Kent reported that Elk River Farm and Feed retailer remains interested to be a seed distributor; Clinton offered to propose viable RC seed mixes.

Potential fall symposium

-Lyn met with Phil Brink, representing the Colorado Cattlemen's and AgWATER network, along with Michele Meyer and Patrick Stanko. She reported they are discussing a possible workshop to be held live at the Carpenter Ranch in late September which would include speakers and a tour of the Walker Ditch which recently underwent a \$60,000 improvement. RCCD would be a co-host. The plan is to start around 12:30 with a BBQ lunch.

Glen Werner Scholarship

-Nadine reported on her conversations with Jeremy. Jeremy has been in contact with the family and they desire to increase the scholarship amount from \$600 to \$2,000.

Other

Tiffany Carlson from the Routt County Weed Program introduced herself to the Board. She is interested in partnering with RCCD about possibly obtaining a weed sprayer for rentals. Weeds were particularly bad this year and her department has had some budget cuts.

NRCS Update

-Clinton updated the group on EQIP projects which are now under contract totaling \$243,000. Also he has 6 new CRP renewals with FSA near Hayden. He is excited about the stream restoration video he and his team have prepared and is hoping RCCD can pursue this Low Tech Process-based Stream Restoration concept going forward.

-Kaitlyn presented the Low Tech Process-based Stream Restoration slide show to the group. The overall focus is on slowing the water down to help streams heal. This concept has potential to be a low cost method applicable for Routt County and the Upper Yampa, especially smaller tributaries. It was well received by the Board members.

Board Member Hours/Miles:

Nadine, 3hrs; Cam 4 hrs; Jeremy 5 hrs; Lyn 30 hrs.

Next RCCD Board Meeting September 15, 2020 8am

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10am