

Routt County Conservation District
Board Meeting Minutes
May 21st 2024 8:15 am
Mountain Valley Bank Meeting Room

Attending:

Board Members:

Lyn Halliday
Kent Sandstedt
Tyler Snyder
Michael Moon
Cam Kuelthau
Patrick Stanko
Jeremy Kline

Partners and Public:

Kara Vigeau via Zoom
Ben Bell
Kathryn Bidell Via Zoom

I. Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 8:21 am by Tyler Snyder and a quorum established.
- The meeting was noticed as required by the Sunshine Law.
- Tyler welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining.

Ben Bell Presentation

Ben Bell gave a presentation to the Board where he explained that works for Friends of the Yampa and they have applied for an RCCP project to address water quality issues. Ben mentioned that there is funding available through the grant for riparian projects, gated pipe, off stream livestock watering, streambank improvement, support for ag diversions, livestock and nutrient management, and virtual fencing. Friends of the Yampa is submitting the request in July and should see it awarded at the end of this year. Ben asked if the District will be willing to sign a match letter to help money go into the matching fund pool. Kathryn asked if GLCI funds can be used as match? Kara's experience is that RCCP is run out of the field office and is curious if there is staffing available to ensure that NRCS requirements are met. Ben is looking at alternative funding arrangements using technical service providers. Kara asked if it was a shared agreement. Cam mentioned that we cannot change our use of funds from the GLCI grant. Ben mentioned that are specifically working on stream restoration. Lyn mentioned that some producers have challenges from having to front the money for reimbursable projects. Ben said that they are looking to some private family foundations to fund the upfront and construction costs and then those foundations will be reimbursed by the landowner upon completion. Ben said that he is under the impression that he is walled off from the local field office, but will reach out to the state for clarification. The Board will revisit its interest in the support letter at the June meeting.

Kristy Wallner Letter of Support

Kristy Wallner of the Silt BLM office approached Tyler about a letter of support for Federal funds that will provide assistance for grazing vegetation and soil's health management.

*Patrick Motioned to add our the Board's name to the letter of support for Kristy and her project.
Michael Seconded *Motion Passed

Approval of the April 16th 2024 minutes

*Kent moved to approve the minutes as with a written change on page 3 of the Weed Days meeting being on the 28th to the 23rd of May. Michael seconded *Motion Passed

Treasurer's Report

Cam informed the board that there was no financial activity outside of the GLCI Grant. There was no raise in premiums of the three insurance policies. The District received a letter from DORA approving the audit exemption request for 2023 but asking some questions about our financial statement. Cam said in 2021 there was a glitch of \$108 because of a typo but it is straightened out. Doris might need to do our exemption from audit next year depending on income and expenses.

GLCI Update

The Knott Ranch decided not to participate in the program because they needed to turn their cattle out. Coberly Creek has 450 cows and Windler Ranch has 80. Currently Vence has a 200 collar minimum, but we will ask if they can make an exception for Windler. Cam asked for clarity on how the Board will decide on participants. Michael mentioned that there is a need base for participants. The Board agreed that Michael and Kathryn will draft recommendations for the Board to approve. A meeting to approve the participants will be held on Thursday May 23rd at 1PM over zoom.

NRCS Update

Kara updated the Board that there are currently 4 resource team lead positions open and will close this day. There is a position for an Engineering Technical Assistant open. Ian and Erin are working on cultural resource investigations for 11 applicants. There is currently \$360,000 of obligated funds in for projects in the District. The NRCS is working on programs for Wolf Conflict Mitigation resources. Most of the projects in the District are EQUIP for either high tunnels or irrigation infrastructure.

Weed sprayer Update

Jeremy will be out of town for weed days, but will drop the sprayer off at the county shop on Thursday. Kent will attend the weed days and have brochures. Jeremy has received three phone calls inquiring about the sprayer but has not rented it yet. Lyn asked if Todd gets inquiries through extension?

Jeremey will be running the program through the fall but then is moving and will no longer be able to manage the weed sprayer program.

STAR

Lyn has the soils testing kits for the Star + participants and the tests are at the CSU lab. Reece Melton is the new Northwest Colorado Soils Health Specialist.

Board Member Reports

Patrick mentioned that the Nickel Ditch project has been fully funded and he is working on a water smart grant to automate headgates on the Bear.

Lyn presented the Board with a letter for comment from RWE who is looking to do a solar project at the trapper mine. Lyn got an email from the CSCB asking questions about our election procedure but she was able to resolve for emails.

Upper Yampa Watershed Group will meet on June 5th at 11:15 and present models for sediment loading occurring in Stagecoach.

Next meeting June 18th 8:15am MVB

Kent Motioned to Adjourn at 11:17AM