



Conservation District of Southern Nevada
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MINUTES

Conservation District of Southern Nevada Monthly Board Meeting

Conservation District of Southern Nevada – 5820 S. Pecos Rd. A-400, Conference Room
January 18, 2006– 2:30 p.m.

Attendees:

Supervisor Jodi Bechtel, Chair
Supervisor John Hunt, Treas./Secretary
Supervisor Elise McAllister
Supervisor Dirick Van Gorp

Gretchen Huie
Wilisha Daniels
Jarrod Edmunds, NRCS
Ron Smolinski, DAQEM
Mark Silverstein, DAQEM
Richard Modee
Everett Bartz, BLM

Supervisor Bechtel called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

OPEN MEETING

Consent Agenda: Consent Agenda items are considered by the CDSN Board to be routine and may be acted upon in one motion. However, the Board may discuss any consent item individually if requested when the Consent Agenda is considered for approval. (Action item)

1. Compliance with Nevada Open Meeting Law
2. Approval January 2006 Agenda
3. Approval of December 2005 Meeting Minutes
4. Correspondence
5. Pay Bills
6. Introductions

Supervisor McAllister made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Supervisor Van Gorp seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Business Agenda:

7. Financial Report (Discussion/Action Item)

Supervisor Van Gorp made a motion to approve the Financial Report. Supervisor McAllister seconded the motion. The motion passed.

8. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – Jarrod Edmunds (Discussion/Action Item)
Jarrod stated that at the last meeting there was some discussion about the new “Special Project Office.” He contacted the State Conservation, Richard Vigil about concerns from the Board regarding the reorganization changes, and direct communication with him. Mr. Vigil said that conservation districts can contact him anytime via phone, email, letter etc. Jarrod stated the “Special Project” designation means that the Las Vegas Field office is different from other offices, and will not impact the way the NRCS operates with the District. Jarrod also passed around information about NRCS programs. The handouts outlined eligibility and information on the programs in Nevada. The current programs are the AMA, EQIP, WHIP, FRPP, CRP, GRP, WRP and CTA. He distributed information on the Conservation Technical Assistance Program (CTA), which provides technical assistance to agencies. This program may be the most beneficial for CDSN. CTA also covers a broad

scope and is the most commonly used program in districts. He stated additional program information is available on the website. Supervisor Hunt asked Jarrod to meet with the district supervisors to discuss the programs and lobbying concerns in further detail. He stated he had concerns about the NvACD president lobbying for CDSN. He asked if the Mojave Desert area had projects tailored in the 2007 Farm Bill. He also asked what types of funding opportunities are available for the CWMA. Jarrod stated most of the CWMA projects are grant programs that CDSN and NRCS have identified. There are special funds set up for weeds, but most of the funding will most likely come from grants. Supervisor Hunt expressed that he would like to meet with Jarrod to discuss the NRCS programs. Supervisor Bechtel suggested that interested supervisors hold a meeting outside of the regularly scheduled board meeting to discuss the programs. Supervisor Bechtel asked Wilisha to schedule the meeting. Jarrod suggested that CDSN invite Richard Vigil to a board meeting. Supervisor Bechtel said CDSN will send another letter inviting Mr. Vigil to the board meeting. Supervisor Hunt asked Jarrod about the NRCS office in Sandi Valley. Jarrod said the local NRCS office can work with Sandi Valley on the Nevada side. Jarrod will research the Sandi Valley area before the meeting.

9. Liability Insurance – Wilisha Daniels (Discussion/Action Item)

Wilisha stated NRCS sent a letter to districts regarding liability insurance. The letter stated that districts will be required to have liability coverage when using NRCS vehicles. Wilisha said she talked to Kelly McGowan about liability coverage, and he suggested that CDSN explore purchasing insurance or a vehicle. Supervisor Bechtel asked about the Earth Team program and if it covers the employees. Jarrod said it does not cover district employees unless it is directly related to Earth Team volunteer work. Jarrod also stated the MOU states that district employees can use the vehicles upon the approval of the district supervisors. However, districts still need their own liability insurance. Supervisor Bechtel suggested renting a vehicle when needed. Supervisor Hunt stated that he is an Earth Team volunteer, and is covered by the state insurance. Jarrod will clarify with state regarding transporting volunteers. Supervisor Bechtel suggested that we review the policy and procedure manual regarding vehicle usage. She asked that the item be added to next month's agenda.

10. Conservation Easement Status (Discussion/Action Item)

Jarrod stated that Doug Merkler developed a map based on the easement documents for the Board to review. Doug also retyped the documents for the Board. Supervisor Bechtel stated we need to further research the easements to decide if they are outdated, or if the district should maintain them. Jarrod suggested hiring a legal surveyor to research the easements. Supervisor Hunt asked if we could talk to Teri Knight about visiting the site to check for environmental significance. Jarrod stated there is a levy in the area. Supervisor McAllister stated she contacted Ace about the easement and is still working on finding out more information. Jarrod stated the easement appeared to be for irrigation. Supervisor Bechtel asked that we keep this item on the agenda.

11. Letter to Richard Vigil Status (Discussion/Action Item)

Supervisor Bechtel stated the Board is still holding the letter to Richard Vigil. Supervisor Hunt stated he would like to send another invitation to Mr. Vigil to attend a CDSN meeting. Supervisor Bechtel supported sending another invitation to Mr. Vigil, and also suggested holding this item until the next meeting.

12. "Our Places Tell Stories" Conference, UNLV, January 25-27 (Discussion/Action Item)

Wilisha stated that Supervisor Currier informed staff about the conference and suggested that they attend. Supervisor Bechtel suggested that the staff give a report on the conference at the next meeting. Supervisor Hunt asked about the cost of the conference. Wilisha stated the conference is \$65 per person. Supervisor McAllister supported staff attending the conference.

13. Staff Report (Discussion/Action Item)

Wilisha reported that she is currently distributing the 2006 Environment and Conservation Calendar. She also met with DRI to discuss developing air quality science boxes to be distributed to all grade levels. Wilisha stated she met with Kim about taking on more hours to cover Gretchen's workload until we find a replacement. A budget for the new position was included in the board meeting packet.

for review. Wilisha also gave a progress report for the Wetlands Park for Kim. She passed around the designs for the park and additional handouts for the Board to review. Supervisor Hunt asked if there are any funds awarded to CDSN for the work on the park. Supervisor Van Gorp stated that the County is covering a cost for administration fees.

Gretchen distributed her letter of resignation to the Board. She stated she will look into extending the current projects, and is working on a spread sheet of the projects to pass to Wilisha and Kim. Gretchen will work with Kim on supervising the EPA and NDEP projects. Gretchen also met with Sheri Davies on the straw bale project. Supervisor McAllister stated that she is meeting tomorrow with Sheri Davies and Chris Green regarding the foundation of the structure. She is also meeting with the "Friends of Pirates' Cove" to identify the remaining materials for the structure. Gretchen reported that she submitted another grant for CWMA to map invasive weeds. She stated that the Valley of Fire weed removal project was completed in January.

14. Supervisor's Report (Discussion/Action Item)

Supervisor Hunt reported that he will be running for a seat on the RC&D executive council board. The next meeting is scheduled on January 22, 2006 at 11:00 a.m. He stated they will vote on a river grass project for restoration when Tamarisk is removed. There are currently two parties interested in the project, Moapa Valley High School and Mr. Bunker. The contract will be between BLM and the selected party. Supervisor Hunt stated that the DCP committee cancelled a few meetings. Supervisor Bechtel stated she will keep Supervisor Hunt informed on the status of the meeting.

Supervisor McAllister reported that she is working on establishing a conservation easement for the Ag Farm. She stated that Chris Green received a letter from the school district regarding the farm, which stated that CCSD will not sell the farm but could not support the easement. Supervisor McAllister stated the school district is writing an article about the Ag Farm. She also passed around PIC calendars

Supervisor Bechtel reported that she invited Mark Silverstein to the meeting, who may be appointed as the county alternate. She stated that the Conservation Garden Project will be managed by Mark. She also reported that Gretchen's position will be open soon, and the Board will need to decide the best way to recruit for the position. Supervisor Hunt stated that the last interview panel for the position consisted on Supervisor Hunt, Wilisha and Elyse Benson. Supervisors Hunt and Bechtel suggested looking in to a graduate intern, or an Ameri Corp volunteer/temp. Supervisor Bechtel said she would work with Wilisha on the recruitment process and keep the Board posted.

15. Open Discussion and Public Comment (Discussion Only)*

Ron Smolinski stated that the DAQEM and CDSN contract extension is in the finance department, and pending approval by the County Commission.

Everett Bartz stated that he is working with the CWMA's to address the Sahara Mustard Weeds. He stated that \$25-35K is available for the CWMA's to conduct an inventory for weeds. He encouraging the CWMA's to work with him to develop some projects and find volunteers for weed pulls. Supervisor Bechtel asked Gretchen to arrange a meeting to discuss possible projects.

Jarrold stated that NRCS is working with the Moapa Valley High School Farm, and provided a land level survey and design for ground water surveillance. He also stated that he visited the Bunker Farm to discuss the native seed planting project.

16. Next Meeting Date (Discussion Only)

The next meeting is scheduled on February 15, 2006 at 2:30 p.m. in the CDSN conference room.

17. Agenda Items (Discussion/Action Item)

- Liability Insurance

- Easement
- Letter to Richard Vigil
- “Our Places Tell Stories” Conference

18. Adjournment (Action Item)

Supervisor Van Gorp made a motion to adjourn. Supervisor Hunt seconded the motion. The motion was passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Hunt, Sec./Treasurer

Date