

**SPOKANE CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
210 N. Havana, Spokane, WA 99202  
**BOARD PLANNING SESSION MEETING MINUTES**  
Tuesday, July 12, 2016

**PRESENT**

**Supervisors:** Jerry Scheele, Jaki Shrauger, Wendy Knopp, Tom Miller

**Absent:** Randy James

**Associate Supervisors:**

**SCD Staff:** Vicki Carter, Cori Turntine, Ty Meyer, Scott Gail, Walt Edelen, Jim Armstrong

**Guests:** Shawn Smith, BIAS; Brian Werst

**Report of Accomplishments**

Vicki opened the meeting by reviewing the report of accomplishments provided by each SCD department manager. Vicki asked each supervisor to add any accomplishments that they remember by aren't listed and we'll make sure these items are added for annual report of accomplishments for WSCC.

Wendy added - 100% Committed \$5,200 from NWFCS was presented to VOTF through Upper Columbia RC&D. Wendy mentioned that for NWFCS's 100 yr Centennial each department formed a committee and elected a non-profit program to provide volunteer hours. Each employee also received \$300 per person to contribute to a community organization of their choice. Several employees elected Vets on the Farm as their organization to contribute to as well as to provide volunteer hours to. Nate developed a schedule and there's been between 2-5 people on the farm each week. Three work days are allowed for each employee and some are offering to volunteer additional hours.

Wendy and Vicki are working on establishing a Washington Chapter of the Farmer Veteran Coalition. This group is at the table on a national level so this will be a great move for Washington and will hopefully open up additional opportunities.

Wendy also suggested that we establish a licensing agreement for the partners of Vets on the Farm program. She suggested that we start working on a charter to establish standard practices and behaviors. This will give us some footing if another organization with a VOTF program is doing something that we don't see fitting the vision and intent of the program. Tom suggested as franchising agreement.

**Financial Overview & Budget Overview**

Chad Grief was unable to attend the meeting. Therefore, Shawn Smith attended in his absence. Shawn was hired by BIAS recently as the VP of Client Services. It was agreed by the group to table the financial overview discussion until our August board meeting when Chad is able to attend.

**SRF Analysis**

Ty mentioned that we're wrapping up our current DOE loan and will operate on our internal funds for the time being. We plan to submit an application for the next funding period. DOE doesn't allow SCD to charge administrative expenses to the loan funds. However, during the last funding period we were awarded a grant to cover administrative and monitoring expenses. Ty is hoping for a \$1.5M loan partnered with a \$500K grant during the next funding period. This would be really helpful in

improving the position of the SRF fund as the fund has operated with no margin for administrative expenses for years. Ty also added that there's potential for a forgivable loan in the next funding period as well. The program isn't sustainable without these components. Vicki added – RCPP support will help us rank high as the SRF loan program is a component of our RCPP award. She also mentioned that there may be potential for receiving funds directly from EPA. There are other districts across the US that receives direct awards from EPA.

Vicki suggested that we consider drafting a resolution for WACD addressing programs for highly erodible lands, where funding from FSA, CRP funds have been eliminated. Ty agreed to work with Vicki to bring draft language to our September meeting which can be moved forward to the NE Area meeting in October.

### **Equipment Sales**

Approximately 60-70K acres have been farmed with our drill, which is remarkable. We lost our custom operator, Travis Wilson, last year and Ty has been operating and running the program since. Ty just doesn't have the time to run the drill for 3-4 months out of the year. Ty estimates the drill is worth approximately \$260K and will be asking for the Board's approval at our meeting today to have the discretion to sell the equipment within a range of \$250-275K. He noted that at this price we are pretty competitive with a brand new custom drill so it may not sell quickly but that we should try to at least use this as a starting point. If we put it up for sale, Ty suggests that we do so right now and not commit to any drilling for the fall. We may need to break the equipment down into components but he suggests that we start with advertising the equipment as an entire unit. Ty will bring a proposal to the August meeting for the Board.

### **VSP update from Walt:**

Eleven applicants submitted interest in serving on the VSP committee. These individuals include experience from environmental and agricultural organizations. Walt presented a recommended list of membership to the County Commissioners this morning. Commissioner O'Quinn was absent so they were not able to accept the recommended membership list as they did not have a quorum. However, the BOCC mentioned they wanted to see more involvement from the CAPR group. The anticipated first work group meeting will be in August. Meetings are public but the workgroup will be the only individuals allowed to vote on decision making. Andy Duneau has been hired as our workgroup facilitator and Seth or Walt will attend each meeting.

### **Small Farms Project**

Scott presented an updated on the Small Acreage Program. We had a couple large producers back out after we already purchased chemicals and seed. Therefore, moving forward we need to consider requiring a deposit from customers over a certain acreage limit.

The logistics of moving and loading the equipment took far more time than anticipated. This is something else we will need to rethink moving forward.

Temperature has been a factor in the success of the program as well. The past use of the land has been a factor in many cases. Weed Board calls have not been coming in as expected.

Moving forward with our current equipment, it was noted that it takes about two hours to load the

equipment and about an hour to unload the equipment. The amount of time spent loading and unloading was not anticipated to take this long. Scott suggests that we need to purchase a new trailer to reduce this loading/off-loading time.

Scott reported that inactive pasture land success rates have been low. Over time this ground becomes hydrophobic and repel water, which is what we're seeing in many cases. Therefore, we need to figure out a way to break up this inactive ground. The ground needs to be tilled to open it up. Scott suggests considering vertical tillage practices to help break up this ground. The board asked if we can find a piece of equipment that won't require more horsepower than our current tractor. It was also suggested that a wetting agent can be added to the chemicals already used at a fairly low rate. Scott and Ty will continue to seek answers and report back to the Board.

### **Plan of Work & Update to 2017-2022 Long Range Plan**

Vicki presented and reviewed the 2016-17 Plan of Work and the 2017-22 Long Range Plan to the Board. Board members were asked to review and comment in June. Any changes were incorporated into the final.

### **Public Outreach to Legislators and Champions of the Conservation**

Vicki reviewed the importance of reaching out to our local representatives prior to session and our WACD legislative days. One way to do that is to keep them informed of our Champions of Conservation and request out-of-session visits with them. Vicki will continue to work with Board, staff and WACD on this front.

### **Legal Update & RCW 89.08 Review**

Brian Werst, legal counsel, presented an overview of RCW 89.08. During this discussion Brian demonstrated how broad conservation district's authority is. Because of this, Brian encouraged the Board members to keep these regulations available at all meetings for reference if necessary during a meeting and referenced when approving board action.

Brian discussed recent audit issues that have come up in other entities and have become an auditor focus:

**Independent Contractors** – LNI has determined in many cases contracts for services with individuals are don't meet the contractor test and are actually an employer-employee relationship. The relationship must satisfy the method, means test.

**Procurement issues with On-call contracts** – Reasonable period 3-5 years, not an ongoing contract. Vicki mentioned that SCD doesn't utilize any on-call contracts other than emergency issues like plumbing.

Non-unionized workforces – sanctioned with unfair labor practices, NLRA related to confidential information

### **Rates & Charges Update**

Jim Armstrong provided an update on rates and charges and suggested that we have a formal

presentation in October or November where he can give the Board a complete overview and recommendation on the conversion time-table.

### **Open Public Meeting and Records Request Update**

Executive Session – Brian Werst suggested that the board include the following statement when announcing an executive session (if action is anticipated): it is the intention of the board to take action or not upon conclusion.

Public Records – focus on exemption law. Brian suggests that we maintain a log stating the document request and specific reason why the record is not disclosable.

Electronic record – personnel cost for scanning or cost of outsourcing to create electronic records where they are not originally in an electronic format is a recoupable cost no due to recent case law.

### **Supervisor Leadership Training**

Vicki provided information for reference in tab 8 of the binder provided.

The planning session closed at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Cori Turntine

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Gerald A. Scheele, Chair

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Jaki Shrauger, Auditor