



Grant Soil and Water Conservation District
Kenneth H. Delano Agricultural Service Center
721 S. Canyon Blvd. - John Day, OR 97845 - Phone (541) 575-0135

MINUTES OF GRANT SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S
January 6, 2022 MEETING

Attendance

Directors Attending:

Phil St. Clair – Director - Telephone
Rick Henslee – Director – Telephone
Joanne Keerins – Director - Telephone

Roger Ediger - Director
Pat Voigt - Director

Staff Attending:

Pat Holliday – Program Assistant
Matt Wenick – Weed Control Coordinator

Kyle Sullivan – District Manager

Visitors:

Aaron Roth – Natural Resources Conservation Service

Irene Jerome

ADMINISTRATION

1. Call Meeting to Order – Pat called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
2. Approval of Minutes – Roger moved to approve the December 2nd, 2021 meeting minutes. Joanne gave the second with the motion passing unanimously.
3. Introduction of Visitors – There were no visitors that required an introduction.
4. Public Input – There was no public input.

REPORTS

5. NRCS – Aaron reported the John Day Field Office is back to having limited staff in the office due to increased COVID cases in the county. Staff has been sending out CSP renewal and annual practice reminder letters. They are also working on EQIP and RCPP contracts. The 2022 Grant County Local Work Group meeting will be held February 16, 2022 from 1:00 to 4:00pm. Due to the ongoing pandemic and increased case numbers in Grant County, the meeting will be held through Zoom. The meeting will have an increased number of partner reports and program updates. Aaron stated NRCS is looking at a new Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) proposal for stockwater within the John Day Basin, encompassing all nine counties, in response to the increased number of requests from landowners for assistance with stockwater. Aaron will conduct a Civil Rights Refresher at the February 3rd District meeting. Aaron handed out the US Drought Monitor map for Oregon, dated 12/28/2021 showing Grant County still in D4 drought conditions.

FSA – Emma Gabriel, Harney/Grant Farm Service Agency County Executive Director – Emma was unable to attend.

South Fork Council – Joanne reported the Council will conduct its self-evaluation at Monday's meeting. The staff is preparing for projects that will be implemented this spring and summer.

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

6. Grant Weed Control – Matt reported he recently submitted an ODA grant for \$34,351.00, to treat the top 5 priority weeds in Grant County. All reporting requirements have been completed, and the final payment was requested and paid, for the 2021 BLM contract work. Matt stated that due to price increases he has ordered the herbicide required for roadside and early broadleaf treatment. Matt, Nate, and Neil are studying for the FAA part 107 exam to fly drones, under 55 lbs., commercially. Matt said he believes it will be a great tool to use for survey work in remote areas. Rick expressed concern that the District be careful to not use the drones over private property without permission. He asked if the District had a policy regarding the use of drones. Kyle stated it did not, and that the issue can be discussed in more detail in the future. Matt agreed that drones should never be used without the landowner's permission. Matt stated he has been working with the District on a grant funded through SB762 for fire resilience. He has received commitments from Bayer and the Malheur Forest to partner with the District on the grant. The application requests funding to apply Rejuvra treatment on 30,000 acres as well as conduct forestry assessment on private lands.

7. District Programs – Kyle reviewed the Project Status Report included in the board packet. Staff are working on future project designs.

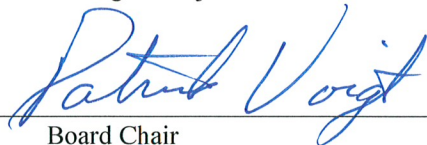
DISTRICT BUSINESS

8. Irene Jerome: Discussion on Transfer of her Duties to the District – Kyle stated the District has worked with Irene Jerome for over 10 years in several different areas, specifically with the Community Wildfire Prevention Plan, Firewise and Emergency Services. Irene has approached Kyle regarding the possibility of transitioning her various responsibilities to the District in the future. While Kyle said he is disappointed that Irene is thinking of retiring, it seems a natural fit for the District to assume her duties. Irene provided a brief history of her work in fire prevention, beginning in 2010, with the Title III program and the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. She stated there must be a succession plan to ensure a continued successful program including ongoing education efforts with landowners. There are tremendous opportunities to conduct cross boundary forest health projects that a forester position could play a vital role within the county. Irene said she is looking to transition her duties within the next few years. The Directors were supportive of researching the issue and the role the District could provide. The Directors expressed the need for the District to diversify and take its expertise into different areas. Pat asked Irene and Kyle to work out the logistics. Irene stated she will be thrilled to work with the District with this extremely meaningful work.
9. Approval of 2021 Audit – Pat Holliday reviewed the District’s 2020-21 audit, the Independent Auditors Report, and the Plan of Action with the Directors. **Joanne moved to approve Grant Soil & Water Conservation District’s 2020-2021 audit and Plan of Action. Phil gave the second with the motion passing unanimously.**
10. Hwy 395 Sidewalk Project Update – Kyle provided an update on the Highway 395 ODOT sidewalk project. The District received an offer from OR Dept. Transportation to compensate the District for losses due to the Highway 395 sidewalk project. The offer was based on an appraisal report conducted last fall by an independent appraiser. The appraiser recognized the parking spaces along Highway 395 would be lost but did not feel they were compensable. The District has a 45-day period to respond.
11. Ken Delano Building Dedication – Kyle stated things are on schedule for the Ken Delano Building Dedication Ceremony. The sign is ready, invitations have been sent and the press has been invited. Refreshments will be provided after the dedication.
12. ODA Visit to Grant County – Kyle stated he has been in communication with Marganne Allen of ODA, who is very interested in coming to John Day, and has tentatively agreed to meet the first week of February. Kyle hopes to be able to show Marganne a few completed projects.
13. All Staff/District Board Work Session – Kyle stated he would like to meet with the Directors and staff for a work session to discuss the District’s current operational model and how to adjust to the various changes in our community as well as the conservation industry. The Directors decided to hold the work session on February 9th, from 12:00 – 3:00 at the Grant County Airport. Rick stated he thought this was very important and asked Kyle to send out an agenda prior to the meeting.
14. Other -

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

15. Financial Report/Financial Summary – Financial reports for the month of December 2021 were reviewed.
16. Approve Bills – **Roger moved to approve the bills and financial reports for the month of December 2021. Phil gave the second with the motion passing unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50.



Board Chair

2-3-22
Date



District Manager

2-3-2022
Date