



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
April 7th, 2022 MEETING

Attendance

Directors Attending:

Phil St. Clair – Director

Pat Voigt – Director

Staff Attending:

Pat Holliday – Program Assistant

Matt Wenick – Weed Control Coordinator

Visitors:

Aaron Roth – Natural Resources Conservation Service

Shannon Bruebaker – Farm Service Agency

Maria Snodgrass – OR Dept. Agriculture

Joanne Keerins – Director

Ted Clausen – Associate Director

Kyle Sullivan – District Manager

Emma Gabriel – Farm Service Agency

Alec Oliver

Kristen Walz – North Fork Watershed Council – telephone

ADMINISTRATION

1. Call Meeting to Order – Pat called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
2. Approval of Minutes – **Joanne moved to approve the March 3rd, 2022 meeting minutes. Phil gave the second with the motion passing unanimously.**
3. Introduction of Visitors – Pat introduced Alec Oliver.
4. Public Input – There was no public input.

REPORTS

5. NRCS – Aaron reported the staff is working on the CSP Classic applications submitted this year. The Natural Resource Fair will be held April 12th at the Grant County Fairgrounds. Hannah has taken the District Conservationist position in Baker City effective May 9th. Her position in the John Day Field office will be filled in the future. Aaron provided the John Day Basin snowpack and Oregon Drought Monitor report as of April 3rd.

FSA – Emma Gabriel, Harney/Grant Farm Service Agency County Executive Director – Emma reported the first phase of the Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) is currently being implemented. ELRP will provide payments to producers who faced increased supplemental feed costs as a result of forage losses due to drought or wildfire in 2021 using data already submitted through the 2021 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP). Phase II of the program will be available later in 2022. Acreage reports are due July 15. Financial assistance is available for supplemental water and feed transportation costs. Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) applications can still be submitted retroactive back to 2021.

South Fork Council – Joanne reported the Council recently hired an office manager. The next round of RCPP sign-ups are open to any private landowner in the South Fork John Day Watershed. The Council will be participating in the Grant County Natural Resource Fair.

ODA – Maria reported the Ag Water Quality department is currently at 50% capacity due to staff leaving and retirements. ODA is working on an updated Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Environmental Quality. Plans are being made to update the 2024-28 Strategic Implementation Area (SIA) implementation schedule. OR Dept. Agriculture will be implementing the OR Disaster Assistance Payments (ODAP), a forgivable disaster loan program for Oregon's farmers and ranchers recovering from natural disasters in 2021 as well as a program for control and suppression of Grasshoppers and Mormon Crickets. Maria stated it was so nice to attend the meeting in person and that she will be participating in the Natural Resource Fair.

North Fork Watershed Council – Kristen reported the Council is making preparations for the upcoming field season and has recently hired 4 part-time summer staff members. The Council's next board meeting will be held in person, the first time in two years, on April 19th. The Council will also be attending the Natural Resource Fair.

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

6. Grant Weed Control – Matt reported treatment has been completed on 75 - 80% of Grant County roads and 90% of the rock pits. Right-of-Way residual treatment will begin soon on the Wheeler County roads. Matt stated he has been working with Bayer on the Rangeview program, a component of the Upper John Day Valley Landscape Resiliency Project. The District received two quotes for the aerial application of Rejuvra for the annual grass treatment. Quotes included application on 23,000 acres through the Landscape Resiliency Project plus 5,000 through the Title II 25% cost-share program. The quotes will be reviewed and ranked by several different people. Grant Weed will be doing a lot of seeding for BLM and the Malheur Forest this summer. Matt and Nate recently built a wall to separate the weed department and the FSA office. The Weed Department ordered a drone, which will be used to aerially view past treatment areas. The NorthStar Polaris Ranger side by side has been ordered. The range drill has been used by five landowners in the last month. Matt said for efficiency purposes, he would like to have a designated trailer for the side by side. **Joanne moved to approve the purchase of a trailer, with a limit of \$5,000, to be used by the side by side. Phil gave the second and the motion passed unanimously.**
7. District Programs – Kyle reviewed the Project Status Report included in the board packet. The Ritter Fish Project is nearing completion. Jeff Neal will give a report to landowners on April 29th. The Upper John Day Valley Landscape Resiliency Project has been receiving a lot of positive publicity.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

8. Grant County Natural Resources Fair – Kyle stated he is pleased with the agencies response and interest in attending the Resource Fair. The Weed Wagon will be there to provide educational information regarding noxious weeds and Matt will offer a free UTV/ATV sprayer calibration clinic. Local agencies, watershed councils and agriculture-related groups will man booths; guest speakers will speak at regular times on a variety of topics. The costs associated with the event will be divided among the District, South Fork Watershed Council, North Fork Watershed Council, Monument SWCD and the John Day Partnership. Kyle said he felt this would be good outreach to new and local producers.
9. Grant County GIS Services – The District has provided Geographic Information System (GIS) services to various departments in the county for several years. The District has been approached by Tory Stinnett, Grant County Economic Director, regarding the possibility of formally assuming this responsibility for the County. Kyle will work with Tory to develop a proposal to present to the County Court.
10. Engineering Program Staffing – Kyle stated the new BOR contract has deliverable deadlines that the District will have a hard time meeting with its current engineering staff. Mark has also asked the District to submit additional Task Orders. The engineering staff is currently at 1.6 FTEs (full time equivalents); historically it has been at 2.5 FTEs. Kyle believes the District should look at hiring an Engineer Technician. He and Pat will meet with Cole to review the financial impacts of adding the position. Pat stated he did not want the District to lose opportunities because of a lack of staff. Joanne asked Kyle to come up with a financial plan and present it to the Directors. The Directors agreed by consensus to look into the issue.
11. Retaining OSU Staff as District Employees – OR State University will be conducting the assessment and story map components of the SB 762 Upper John Day Fire Resiliency Project. A change in the university's overhead policy resulted in the need for the District to enter into employment agreements with key OSU staff on a part-time, limited duration basis to complete the assessments.
12. Other – The District's 2022 Annual meeting will be held on May 18th at 6:00pm at the Grant County Fairgrounds Pavilion. The Directors agreed to hold a regular meeting on May 5th.

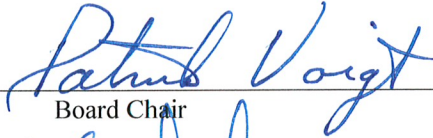
Kyle stated he would like to eliminate having a telephone call-in as an option for attending the District meetings. The Directors agreed, unless there was extenuating circumstances. Kyle stated he would check out any public meeting legalities.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

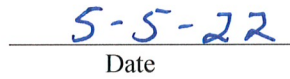
- 13. Financial Report/Financial Summary – Financial reports for the month of March 2022 were reviewed.
- 14. Approve Bills – Joanne moved to approve the bills and financial reports for the month of March 2022. Phil gave the second with the motion passing unanimously.

Pat expressed appreciation to Alec for attending.

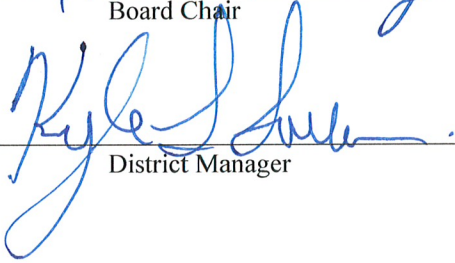
The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.



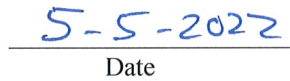
Board Chair



Date



District Manager



Date