

DESCHUTES COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting – November 21, 2019

Meeting location: NRCS 625 SE Salmon Avenue, Redmond

Current Board Members

Director Zone 1 (Redmond)	Leslie Clark, Treasurer
Director Zone 2 (Sisters)	William Kuhn, Co-Chair
Director Zone 3 (Tumalo)	Jeff Rola, Co-Chair
Director Zone 4 (Alfalfa)	Susan Altman, Secretary
Director Zone 5 (South County & La Pine)	Colin Wills
Director At-Large #1	Robin Vora
Director At-Large #2	Gen Hubert

Directors present: Jeff Rola, William Kuhn, Susan Altman, Leslie Clark, Gen Hubert, Robin Vora, Rex Barber (Director Emeritus)

Staff present: None

Excused: Colin Wills, Director; Todd Peplin, Staff

Other attendees: Stephanie Russo, NRCS; Victoria Fischella, NRCS; Theresa deBardelaben, ODA; Tessa Edelen, DEQ; Mike Tripp; Lisa Seales, FCA; Brad Moore, Energy Trust; Paula Latasa, Consultant

Order of business:

1. Call to order & introductions: Directors, partner agencies, and members of the public introduced themselves.
2. Secretary's report – Susan Altman:
 - a. **Motion #1 made by William Kuhn, seconded by Leslie Clark, and unanimously approved: receive the secretary's minutes from the October board meeting as presented.**
3. Treasurer's report – Leslie Clark: The district still doesn't have Quickbooks running since the transition of the manager's departure; she expects to have it later today. The district received two checks for grant funding and also had payroll since the last meeting. The current balance of the bank account is \$18,574.24. A formal report is tabled until the December meeting.
4. Agency Reports / Public Comment (*italics indicates written reporting*):
 - a. Lars Santana of NRCS prepared a written report as he could not attend the meeting: *We are actively working on forestry related contracts, conservation stewardship program contracts, and irrigation contracts.*

Through the OWEB technical agreement grant Todd has been helping with NRCS workloads related to Irrigation Water Management. The Three Sisters Irrigation District (TSID) has an RCPP

to implement 'on farm' related irrigation projects tied to PL566 projects and as part of those structural practices (like pipelines and sprinklers systems) there is a water management component. Todd has been meeting with producers in the Sisters area collecting irrigation records and discussing water management. This has been a big help for NRCS.

Forestry contracts tied to forest health and fuels reduction are continuing. Most of these existing contracts are from the previous 'Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership'. The U.S. Forest Service and NRCS are working together to improve the health of forests where public lands connect to privately owned lands. Through the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, the two USDA agencies are restoring landscapes, reducing wildfire threats to communities and landowners, protecting water quality and enhancing wildlife habitat. We are in active discussions with the forest service and other partners on trying to create a new joint chiefs proposal with the Forest Service, but we are at least a year away from developing a new proposal.

- b. *Victoria Fischella's CREP program report: CREP Technician, Victoria Fischella, worked on a project installing 2,200 Riparian Plants with 21 protective exclosures along the Deschutes River in the Tumalo area this project also entailed 9.0 acres of Juniper Removal. The CREP TA Grant has been secured through OWEB for the next biennium of 2020-2021. Victoria will spend the remainder of this biennium completing project implementation deadlines and submitting an end of biennium Project Completion Report to OWEB.*
- c. *Tessa Edelen said the TMDL for Deschutes Basin is underway; they have the data and will be modeling it. There will be public meetings for that and the district will be helpful with implementation.*
- d. *Theresa deBardelaben's ODA report: Theresa is currently working on a compliance case in La Pine regarding a large manure pile located near the Little Deschutes River. The landowner does not have the resources to move the manure pile herself. If anyone has any suggestion on how to assist her please let Theresa know. Theresa will work closely with Todd to get the landowner the assistance she needs.*

ODA has prioritized Strategic Implementation Areas per Agricultural Water Quality Management Area. Upper Deschutes is slated for 2020. Being as the SWCD currently do not have a District Manager there is a possibility that the SIA could be moved to 2021. Theresa will speak with Todd to figure out what would work best for the board on timing.

5. District Operations:

- a. *Status of existing projects. Todd had prepared a few spreadsheets to show active grant status as of 11/16/19, OWEB capacity grant funding, and the 2019-2020 operating budget. Jeff Rola would like to do a workload analysis to look at the workload and how much we can put toward employees. He appointed William Kuhn, Robin Vora, and Susan Altman to this committee. This differs from the personnel committee which looks at job descriptions and pay ranges.*
- b. *Discussion of pending and proposed projects. Todd and Theresa will be updating the ag water quality management plan in the near future. Some projects have overlapping tasks. The capacity grant is to help us do more. Jeff Rola said Todd Peplin finished a stakeholder grant for wildfire risk reduction and OWEB will decide that on January 16. Todd will also apply for a national forest foundation grant. There are other grant opportunities available through NACD – urban ag, local farm-to-table opportunities – that could be a \$40,000 grant.*

- c. Financial review. Rex Barber thinks that the district should settle in the plateau for a while and get things under control and operating smoothly in order to put us in a good position for a tax base. Jeff Rola said we are getting to a point of stability right now. We need to work on partnerships and look for solutions to general problems versus specific “one landowner” problems. Robin Vora thinks the district should continue to work on partnerships and projects in multiple areas.

6. New Business:

- a. District personnel committee hasn’t had a meeting yet but plan to before the December board meeting.
- b. Organization of files, records, assets – the files are on-site in Todd’s office and are secured in a locked cabinet.
- c. The workload analysis committee is William Kuhn, Robin Vora, and Susan Altman.
- d. New opportunities to support the SWCD mission: Rex Barber suggested that the district needs to work cooperatively with environmental groups to “adopt a POD” to come up with money to serve as matching funds if restoring the Deschutes is the goal. This is one way to do it. On-farm upgrades have benefitted the river. The community outside of agriculture is going to have to get involved; part of the problem is understanding the system. Jeff Rola brought up the issue of “wet water” versus “water on paper.” Actual wet water can be addressed but can’t be justified on paper. Rex said on-farm conservation projects allow water to back to the river. Gen Hubert said that is hard to show because saved water goes to junior water rights holders. Small farmers don’t want to put money into on-farm improvements. Rex said a lot of on-farm projects wouldn’t allow North Unit to store less water. Mike Tripp agreed that junior water users get the water before it goes back in-stream. Environmental funders will want to see how that’s worked out. Leslie Clark said that there’s an efficient hemp grower in Alfalfa who is willing to share COID water to go to North Unit but there is not a legal mechanism for doing that, and tracking it is difficult. Since 2017 COID & North Unit have an agreement in place to conserve water.

William Kuhn brought up the Skyline forest sale and asked if the district is interested in talking about it with other groups. Robin Vora suggested it would be good to be part of conservation but it is likely an uphill battle. William indicated he would be happy to participate.

7. Public comment / other:

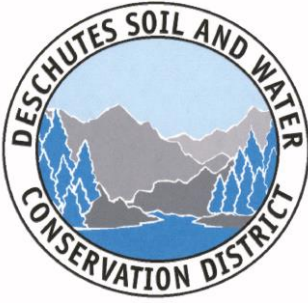
- a. Director’s reports:
 - i. Jeff Rola is on the OACD board and is going to the national meeting in Las Vegas in February.
 - ii. William Kuhn went to the LIT Sagegrouse meeting in Prineville to re-look at the Sagegrouse issue. He talked to Crook County SWCD person; William suggested Robin Vora attend future meetings.
 - iii. Susan Altman intended to go to the Sagegrouse meeting also but had a family emergency and could not attend.
 - iv. Leslie Clark commented that the DBBC just issued responses to public comments about HCP.
 - v. Robin Vora sat on a panel discussion of agency biologists where the topic was mule deer. The number of mule deer has gone down. The poaching numbers are equal to the hunting numbers and also roadkill plays a part in the decline. Robin suggested educating land owners on appropriate deer fencing.
 - vi. Gen Hubert had no report.

- vii. Rex Barber had no report.
- b. NACD and SDAO Annual meetings
- c. 2020 meeting calendar – Susan will work with the county to secure meeting room; meetings will continue to be on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 9 a.m.

The next board meeting will be on December 19 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Deschutes County Services Building (1300 NW Wall Street, Bend – DeArmond Room).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Susan Altman, Secretary



**Addendum: Motions of the Board of Directors' Meeting
November 21, 2019**

Motions made:

Vote result

Motion #1 made by William Kuhn, seconded by Leslie Clark:

Unanimous approval

Receive the secretary's minutes from the October board meeting as presented.