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TO: The Record
SUBJECT: March 1, 2012 Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: USDA Service Center, Okanogan, WA
FROM: Laura Clark, Administrative Program Coordinator

PRESENT:

Ivan Oberg, Chair	Albert Roberts, District Auditor
Wes Hover, Member	Lorah Super, Member
Gerri Oberg, Assoc. Supervisor	Craig Nelson, District Manager
Bob Clark, Technical Program Lead	Laura Clark, Admin. Program Lead
Kim Simpson, District Treasurer	Terri Williams, Conservation Planner
Randy Kelley, NRCS	Will Keller, NRCS
Jay Kehne, Conservation NW	Bill Eller, WSCC

Regular Meeting Call To Order: Ivan Oberg called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

Agenda: The agenda was presented. Add: New Business – watershed grant, Goroch letter, and WADE. Lorah Super made a motion to approve the agenda as changed. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Approval of Minutes: Ivan Oberg asked for comments on the **February 2, 2012 minutes**. Lorah Super made a motion to approve the February 2, 2012 minutes as written. Wes Hover seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Treasurer's Report #706, which covers the checking account activity for February 4, 2012 to March 1, 2012, inclusive was presented for the Board's approval. The following vouchers/checks are approved for payment:
Payroll direct withdrawals; on 2-17-12 totaling \$8,363.18,
Voucher (check) numbers; 9521 to 9534 totaling \$88,955.92,
Direct withdrawals on 2-7-12 totaling \$2,285.04, on 2-10-12 totaling \$365.00, on 2-16-12 totaling \$2,410.90, on 2-16-12 totaling \$11.31, on 2-17-12 totaling \$120.00, on 2-21-12 totaling \$2,804.29, on 2-23-12 totaling \$200.00, on 2-24-12 totaling \$217.43, on 2-24-12 totaling \$38.64, on 2-24-12 totaling \$25.00, on 2-24-12 totaling \$961.32, on 2-24-12 totaling \$221.66, on 2-24-12 totaling \$120.00, and on 2-29-12 totaling \$106.49, and deposits totaling \$94,511.53. Albert Roberts made a motion to approve Treasurer's Report #706 as written. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Supervisor Reports: Lorah Super advised that there will be a **wild game feed** in the Methow Valley. She attended a meeting with the Winthrop Forest Service and the National Forest Foundation regarding doing **fuels reduction in the Methow Valley**. They are looking to reach some high risk areas and partner with the local organizations to accomplish it. Lorah registered for the upcoming **Agritourism class** on March 10th at the Twisp Works. There is some conversation regarding reopening the **Alder Mill** site in order to mine ore.

Wes Hover stated he has just signed his contract with NRCS to install **irrigation pivots**.

Albert Roberts told the group that he just returned from a trip to **Mexico**. With only a portion of his goats done, he already has a large amount of **new kids** with many more on the way. The **Critical Areas Ordinance** notice will be out of committee soon. His **forest thinning** project is nearly done.

Ivan Oberg shared that he went to the **Spokane Farm Expo** and the **Smithsonian's "Dig-It" exhibit**. He recommended the Dig-It exhibit if anyone has a chance to go observe it, as it will be there until September 2012.

Associate Supervisor Reports: There were no associate supervisor reports.

District Manager's Report: Craig Nelson advised our **2012-2013 Annual Plan of Work** has been sent out to a variety of agencies, organizations, and individuals for comment by mid-March. The updated document will be brought to the April Board meeting for review and approval. The **Local Work Group** met and is working on ranking land use project priorities for the upcoming funding cycle. Their next meeting is on March 21, 2012. Craig is sending the requested comments on the WA State Conservation Commission **budget** template. The final court decision on the Mason Conservation District **assessment** case was shared with the Board. There is a bill in front of the legislators to establish a "rates and charges" method of funding for conservation districts. This is a method we should consider when we go to renew our assessment in 2016. The WA Association of Conservation Districts has again requested information on the **training needs** of district staff, which Craig is completing. Craig and Terri Williams have now both completed the Conservation Planner I and II trainings and are scheduled for the Conservation Planner III training this summer if there is room in the class. Craig will be presenting the District overview and programs to the **Okanogan County Farm Bureau** at their meeting on March 19, 2012. Craig will also be proving a District update to the **Okanogan County Commissioners** at their meeting on March 20, 2012. Craig was happy to announce our efforts in entering information regarding projects needing funding has paid off. The Commission's Conservation Project Data System (**CPDS**) showed a need to fund additional projects statewide and now our listed projects, totaling nearly \$65,000, may get funded.

Contracts & Conservation Plans

Lorah Super made a motion to approve the **Memorandum of Agreement with Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife** to allow us to perform projects on their land. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Agency Reports:

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Randy Kelley brought some conservation work program **contracts** for review and signature by the Board. The national level may be adding some funds for the **energy programs**. They are waiting to hear on the level of funding for the **Conservation Security Program**. Many **Conservation Reserve Program** acres are coming out of this program this year. Randy provided the group with the current **Snow Survey** results.

Conservation Northwest: Jay Kehne spoke on the **Wolf Task Force**, on which Albert Roberts is involved. There has been a better **tracking collar** developed and more wolves have received these collars now. This creates an improved tracking program which will allow the trackers to even determine where they stopped to eat. There is a book called **Low Stress Livestock Management** written by Steve Cote. The **Blackfoot Challenge** in Montana is a community process of agencies and ranchers where they ride with the range herds and remove carcasses. This has been highly successful and greatly reduced the loss of livestock from wildlife. There will be a meeting on April 25, 2012 in Colville to discuss this process and talk with ranchers about local solutions. The BBC's documentary on **why the wolves are returning** has now been released. They installed field cameras in order to understand the wolf population and its interaction with other animals. They are trying to get **range rider programs** funded by the Environmental Quality Incentive Program since it is a benefit to agricultural production. There will be a meeting on April 10, 2012 at the Community Cultural Center in Tonasket to discuss installing an **underpass for people and wildlife safety** between Riverside and Tonasket to reduce the amount of deer killed and vehicles damaged in that area. They will need letters of support to submit with their request for funding of the project. Jay is now a member of the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

Washington State Conservation Commission: Bill Eller advised that conservation districts are showing in the **budget** with anywhere from a 3% to 29% reduction in funding. We will have to wait for the final budget to see what the reduction amount will be. Bill made sure we were aware of the **assessment case** outcome. The Commission has done budget development and has requested comments be submitted by tomorrow. There will be a **Schedule 22 and Bars Code** webinar on March 28, 2012 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. As previously indicated, the Commission has begun their random **monitoring of projects** installed with the Implementation grant funding.

The group took a **break** from 6:00 PM to 6:25 PM.

Old Business

The **2012-2013 Annual Plan of Work** was discussed and is out for comments until March 16, 2012.

The **surplus sale** is now completed and we brought in over \$1,500.

The **plant sale** will be March 24, 2012 from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Most of the stock is pre-sold and we don't expect very much to remain after the sale. It was also determined that we will not continue to grow our own ponderosa pine as we continue to take losses on those every year.

The **Washington Association of Conservation Districts' Legislative Days** was done in March. More than 60 board supervisors attended and more than 90 appointments with legislators were conducted. Part of the conversations there were that the urban conservation districts need to spend some time informing their legislators on what work they do. One suggestion to accomplish this is to conduct a tour of projects.

Our **District Elections** work is completed and the documentation submitted to the Commission. Since Albert Roberts was the only person to submit a nomination for the open position, a physical election was not conducted and Albert automatically remains in that position. The Commission will certify all District Elections at their May 2012 meeting.

Task List

- #10 – Three agency memorandum of agreement – our work on this task is now completed
- #12 – District Elections – completed
- #13 – Surplus Sale – completed
- #14 – City of Tonasket annexation – in progress

Craig advised that Mark Peterschmidt, Department of Ecology, is attempting to locate \$20,000 in funding to do some beaver work in the Methow Valley. Our Backyard grant will have money remaining that would have been returned to the Department. Lorah Super made a motion to **use \$20,000 of the Backyard grant to fund the beaver project work in the Methow Valley** as long as it can be done without hampering our current work. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Public Comments: No public comments were given.

New Business

We are looking to create collaborative partnerships to address issues in **Salmon Creek**. There was a funding opportunity that began this year and we hope to have the partnerships and project concept ready to apply for that funding next year.

There is a potential to begin the **Beaver Creek Coordinated Resource Management** process again. Lorah Super will contact Greg Knott to see what needs to be done.

We will look at addressing various small **mine reclamation** projects.

The **wood mill infrastructure** is all but gone. We will look at what can be done to get that industry back up and running.

The Twisp Works was interested in installing a **native plant garden**. We checked with Department of Ecology to see if we could use some of our existing funding to assist with that project, but were denied.

There is **watershed assessment funding** available now to address HUC 8-10 digit watersheds with a rapid assessment process. The applications are due by March 19, 2012 and the projects will be completed April to September 30, 2012. After some discussion, Lorah Super made a motion to explore watershed assessment options in the Okanogan River sub-watersheds. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

We were asked for comment on the **Goroch water right transfer request** to Department of Ecology, which would transfer water rights from the Okanogan River watershed to the Columbia River watershed. After some discussion, Albert Roberts made a motion to send a letter to Ecology stating that we and the Okanogan River Planning Unit feel transferring water outside of the watershed is a “threat to the long-term ecologic and economic stability of the Okanogan Watershed”. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Lorah Super made a motion to send four staff to the **Washington Association of District Employees workshop** in June 2012. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Ivan Oberg **adjourned** the meeting at 7:25 PM.

Summary of Motions

Lorah Super made a motion to approve the agenda as changed. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Lorah Super made a motion to approve the February 2, 2012 minutes as written. Wes Hover seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Albert Roberts made a motion to approve Treasurer's Report #706 as written. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Lorah Super made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement with Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife to allow us to perform projects on their land. Albert Roberts seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

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Summary of Motions (continued)

Albert Roberts made a motion to send a letter to Ecology stating that we and the Okanogan River Planning Unit feel transferring water outside of the watershed is a “threat to the long-term ecologic and economic stability of the Okanogan Watershed”. Lorah Super seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

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Ivan Oberg, Chair Date

Laura Clark, Admin. Prog. Coor. Date