

AMENDED MINUTES
Amended at February 7, 2022

WEST CASSIA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DRAFT **MINUTES** – January 11, 2022 BOARD MEETING
Masonic Lodge, Burley, ID

Place: Masonic Lodge
Date: January 11, 2022
Time: 11:00 AM
Presiding: Richard Kunau

Supervisors Present
Richard Kunau- Chairman
Jordan Searle- Vice Chairman
Kathy Poulton- Treasurer
Ken Black- Member

Employees and Agency Representatives:
Rachelle Osterhout- Admin
Betty Carlson- Cotterel Boat Station Manager
Dinah Reaney- NRCS

Supervisors Not Present:
Brent Stoker- Member

ACTION ITEMS

- I. **Called to Order by:** Richard Kunau at 11:07 AM
- II. **Changes to the Agenda:** No Changes
- III. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting:** – Ken Black moved to approve Minutes of previous meeting. Kathy Poulton seconded. Motion Carried.
- IV. **Treasurer’s Report:** Kathy Poulton read aloud the treasurer’s report. Kathy Poulton moved to approve Treasurer’s Report for November. Jordan Searle seconded. Motion Carried.
- V. **Calendar of Events:**
 - a. **RC&D Meeting:** January 28th, 2022- Location TBD
 - b. **Soil Health Workshop:** February 3, 2022- Burley Best Western
 - c. **County Commissioner’s Meeting:** February 7, 2022 Time 10 AM and 10:10 AM (request for funding)
 - d. **Next Board Meeting:** February 8, 2022- Location: Masonic Lodge @ 11:00 AM

VI. AGENCY REPORTS

- 1. **NRCS Update-** Dinah Reaney attended the meeting on behalf of David. They have been working on applications. They have not received notice of what the Teams EQIP allocation is yet. The number of applications is down and they anticipate being able to fund the majority of them. Cleve Smith from Sublette presented at the Soil Health 5 for 5 on December 17, 2021. He did a great job! Dinah will send information to watch it on YouTube. David was wondering if the district would like to reschedule Maureen Pepper for a presentation on the National Water Quality Incentive program and to discuss local watershed plan? The board would like to reschedule and suggested the Tri District Meeting in May. A new Pheasants Forever partner has been selected. Her name is Brooke Morgan. She will be starting the end of January or first part of February. The Burley office had a Covid exposure January 6, 2022. NRCS policy has changed since the last time we had a case in our office. Currently, all NRCS employees have been vaccinated and so long as we do not develop symptoms we are allowed to continue to work. We are required to wear facemasks while at work including in vehicles and out of the office for 5 days if they test positive. Masks are required in the building when not at your desk. No guidance has been given for partners other than partners are to keep with office policy of wearing masks in the building and if they develop symptoms will need to work from home until cleared. David will keep SWCD posted on any changes. CRP sign-ups coming up for FY2022. David does not have the details. If you have any questions contact the FSA. Dinah said there will be a second round of sign-ups for some programs. She also said Irrigation Districts can apply for NRCS money. She is encouraging them to get started with applying. Office update Burley and Rupert offices are still operating at 50% (Rupert 2 employees and Burley 3 employees). At this point NRCS has not received any information that suggests SWCD

personnel are required to be vaccinated. Districts can hold meetings in the office. However, that cannot exceed the 50% occupancy rule. District personnel are allowed in the office and are subject to the 50% staffing rule as well. Curtis Elke would like to thank all SWCD's for their cooperation and wants to express his support and acknowledgement of the difficulties and inconveniences that COVID has caused.

2. **ISWCC Update-** Carolyn Firth was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. She did forward an email from Delwyne: Rob Sharpknack has accepted the CREP Manager position vacated in November by Chuck Pentzer. Until his retirement, Chuck has done a fantastic job managing CREP for the entire 15-year life of the project, so he left really big shoes to fill. During the nine years Rob has been with the Commission his responsibilities have included providing technical assistance to CREP contracts under Chuck's supervision. Rob also has prior program leadership experience acquired during his career with IDEQ. I know Rob is going to do an excellent job administering our CREP program and am thrilled he has agreed to take on this responsibility! Rob's promotion to CREP Manager opens up a Water Quality Resource Conservationist position. Agency leadership is considering all options for this position, including relocating the position to someplace outside of the Magic Valley if that is deemed necessary in order to provide the greatest number of Districts with the most effective service. If you have suggestions, I would love to hear them. We have not yet filled our open Eastern Idaho engineer position. At present we are working with DHR on recruitment options which might make the position more attractive to qualified applicants. The Governor will make public his budget recommendations for FY2023 during his State of the State address Monday, January 10th. Agency leadership is working with IASCD leadership and others to encourage the Governor and state legislators to appropriate funds to the Commission's Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA), which hasn't been funded since 2011. Historically, this program provided cost-share funds to Conservation Districts for ag BMP implementation and other water conservation projects and it would be so great to again have those funds available to help address water quality and water quantity issues across the state.
3. **TA 2020-** Melanie Nebeker was unable to attend meeting do to COVID exposure. She emailed an update of what she has been working on. In her email she states she has continued working on the 3 high tunnels, mapping and getting them ready for ranking. She is still receiving lots and lots of training. ARC Pro mapping training, CD/ CART Training (Conservation Desktop/ Conservation Assessment and Ranking Tool). Melanie has also been working on finishing up CRP stragglers, making phone calls and getting signatures. There have also been more mapping EQIP projects for David, currently she is working on a wheel line to pivot conversion. Rachelle Osterhout and Melanie completed the quarterly report for the grant ~~done~~ and it has been submitted. We will be finishing up the final report for TA2020 and will begin working in TA2021 grant.
4. **Cotterel Boat Station-** Betty Carlson had a few concerns pertaining to the US 93 Boat Station that she discussed with the board. One of her concerns is getting people hired and trained this close to the season starting. Betty is also concerned about the mileage she would be putting on her personal car going to and from the US 93 station/ She expressed she would rather focus on running Cotterel at this time. The board decided to not pursue the US 93 Boat Station, but would be willing at a later date to re-evaluate running it in the future. They asked for an update on the wage cap proposal, what is the anticipated start date for Cotterel, and has the state finalized the 2021 season ledger? Rachelle Osterhout had submitted the wage cap proposal to Nic Zurfluh in December and asked if they had finalized our ledger. She has not heard back from the State and will email Nic for an update on the above questions. Betty has talked to all of the boat station employees. All but 1 are planning on returning for the upcoming season. Betty would like to increase the inspector's wages when she reaches out to rehire them.

ACTION ITEMS

VII. OLD BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Admin Report:

- a. **Mail-** Received Envirothon donation request from Madison SWCD. As per budget, West Cassia will be sending \$50.00.

Idaho Ag in the Classroom also sent information about their program and request for funding. Kathy also explained the materials that teachers receive from this program and how helpful they are in the classroom. As per budget West Cassia will be sending \$150.00
Wood River SWCD and Gooding SCD will be holding a Pesticide/ Weed Workshop in Shoshone Idaho on February 11, 2022. Six credits are available for attending.

Kathy shared a few newspaper articles about potato farming from the past to the present and a few facts about potatoes. She also shared an article about the "MooLoos". Scientists are potty training cows to use the MooLoo.

2. Supervisor's Report:

- a. **Board Office Reorganization-** Ken Black made a motion to leave West Cassia SWCD board in current positions. Kathy Poulton seconded. Motion Carried
- b. **Employee Evaluations (Rachelle Osterhout, Doreen McMurray and Betty Carlson)** pursuant to Idaho Code § 74-206(1)(A)(B) Rachelle Osterhout was excused at 1:00 PM. Board members went into Executive Session to preview employee evaluations. They exited Executive Session at 1:15 PM. Kathy Poulton stated that Rachelle Osterhout is doing an excellent job and she hopes she is planning to stay with them for a long time.
- c. **Boat Station Bonus- (Minutes amended at February 2022 meeting)** The board discussed boat station bonuses be 33% or 1/3 of the admin fee split between Betty Carlson and Rachelle Osterhout. Admin fee total \$18,381.78 (1/3 or 33% \$6065.99 divided by 2 equals 3032.99). Kathy Poulton made a motion to round to \$3033.00 for each Betty Carlson and Rachelle Osterhout. Brent Stoker seconded the motion. Motion carried.
When ledger is finalized, Rachelle Osterhout will email the board with the final admin fee total.
- d. **Five Year and Annual Plan Review-** The board reviewed the updated Five Year and Annual Plan. Ken Black made a motion to approve the updated Five Year and Annual Plan. Jordan Searle seconded. Motion Carried

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:27pm by Ken Black. Seconded by Jordan Searle.
Respectfully submitted by Rachelle Osterhout