

Southern Conservation District

Special Board Meeting

January 31, 2022, 10:00 AM

The Southern Conservation District met for a Special Board Meeting called for specific business on January 31, 2022. The SCD met at their office location at 463 Ragland Road, Beckley WV.

Supervisors present :

Randall Patton Curtis Murphy Randy Prince Alvin Marchant
Fred Halsey

Supervisors present via teleconference:

Dennis Bailey Bill Harris

Staff present:

Dave Parkulo SCD, Kenneth Maiolo WVCA, Marty Walker-Owen, WVCA
Dennis Burns, WVCA

Those present via teleconference:

Jeremy Salyer, WVCA Judith Lyons, WVCA
Jeffrey Barr, NRCS

After the prayer and pledge the meeting began.

1. Equipment Committee Recommendations.

Randall Patton moved to increase the purchase price of the truck to \$75,000.00

Fred Halsey, seconded, Randy Prince voted no, motion carried.

Randall Patton discussed the addition of policy language which identifies the signers for loan documents. Dave Parkulo orally presented the specific language that he had written as a suggestion for the board to approve.

The Southern Conservation District allows for the district officers to sign loan documents for purchases on behalf of the district after board majority approval. There must be a minimum of two signatures as follows; signer number one, Chairman (preferred) and signer number two Treasurer. Second preference, the Vice-Chair and the Treasurer.

IF the Treasurer is not available, Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary combination may sign documents as approved by majority board. If multiple officer signatures are required they shall be in the order of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

Randall Patton moved to adopt the policy language addition, Curtis Murphy seconded, motion carried.

2. Expression of Interest Review submitted for engineering services (EOI)

Marty Walker-Owen made available the names and packets submitted to her to the board.

Jeremy Salyer provided guidance as requested by Marty and Dennis Bailey on how to proceed with the engineering firm selection. A day will need to be scheduled for interviews with each firm to visit the SCD and present.

Those firms submitted to the SCD were Potesta, Alliance and GAI. Marty confirmed these were the only three engineering firms submitted.

A discussion was held between Jeremy Salyer and Dennis Bailey in regard to the recent loss of the attorney on retainer and recommendation was made to move forward with an advertisement for an attorney on retainer at the SCD. It was also suggested to contact Mr. John Wooten whom also represents the SCD particularly for Raleigh County and seek his professional advice on moving forward with attorney replacement.

Returning to the EOI discussion, it was recommended that Dennis Bailey and Marty Walker-Owen work together on scheduling the engineering firm interview presentations and contact the board on those dates.

3. Brush Creek OMR funds

Judith Lyons stated there is an outstanding invoice for the cutting of Brush Creek. At this time, there is a lack of funds in place in Brush Creek co-administered funds to pay the invoice.

She made the recommendation that the board approve the cashing out of a CD to combine with Brush Creek's funds which will eliminate the remainder of the funds and pay the invoice. She stated that the fiscal section has communicated recently there is a CD under co-administered funds for the SCD, although the co-administered fund report doesn't reflect the CD in the amount of approximately \$5,000.00

She stated that all of the funding must be used from the BC regular account must be used for maintenance before any state supplemental restricted funds can be utilized.

Dennis Bailey asked Marty Walker-Owen if there was a CD for approximately \$5,000.00 at the district, she confirmed that she was not aware of the CD either. She stated this information came from fiscal at the end of last week. Marty spoke that she assumes this CD potentially could be a line item combined with the large CD as part of the co-administered funds but that isn't made available for her to access or review.

Randall Patton stated that he is not aware of a separate \$5,000.00 CD. He also spoke about his concern of the penalty of the CD being cashed in when it is not maturing until July, if this is part of the \$500,000 CD.

Judith Lyons reported that she inquired clarification on funds from fiscal section because the numbers on the monthly report do not match the number that was given to her when discussing the payment of the invoice by fiscal.

Dennis Bailey requested that an accounting breakdown be provided by the fiscal section to the SCD.

Jeremy Salyer reported that he will work with Marty and the fiscal section on clarifying the fiscal section reporting. He will be requesting a meeting to be held with fiscal and SCD so everyone is clear on financial tracking and reporting and any issues can be addressed.

Bill Harris commented his concern about the future of funds at Brush Creek once this immediate issue is resolved with additional work forthcoming and the account being to a zero balance.

Judith Lyons reported that she believed Marty Walker-Owen is doing research on the funding arrangement with County Commission to determine what has been paid by the County.

Marty provided an update regarding the Mercer County Commission sponsorship funds. She noted that we have received \$20,000.00 for FY20 and FY21 and she has deposited and sent information to Guthrie for a total of \$40,000.00 for the Brush Creek fund. She noted that the sponsorship match has not yet been released from the agency for either year and she has been working on this process. She has been informed this is due to the lack of an updated sponsorship agreement at Guthrie. The document has been sent from the district by Marty to County Commission and she has contacted County Commission following up on this document and it is to be updated and made current at Guthrie so the funds can be matched.

Marty noted for record and awareness the amount on the report sent for Co-Administered funds to her and Judith by Melissa Blount is \$20,234.58 in Brush Creek to work with and an additional \$5,092.00 within the CD in discussion.

Marty reported for awareness for the board and record that the outstanding SCD invoice in discussion in the amount of \$29,256.00 has been discussed at a couple different board meetings was submitted by Dave Parkulo on June 4, 2021, coded and sent to Judith Lyons by Marty Walker on June 9, 2021, Judith Lyons then verified and sent to fiscal by Marty also on June 9, 2021. After no payment or activity was made by fiscal, the invoice was inquired about by Marty in review of the end of year aging summary report. When following up again on the past due SCD invoice is when it was identified there was not enough funds available to process.

A discussion was held to decide which method to approach for remitting payment for the outstanding invoice. A partial payment was decided upon.

Judith Lyons stated she will need an email from the district requesting partial payment and she can proceed.

Randall Patton moved to approve a partial payment be accepted in the amount of \$20,000.00, Curtis Murphy seconded, motion carried.

4. Grazing Conference Request for Donation \$1,000.00

Randy Prince moved to approve the donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 to support the Grazing Conference, Randall Patton seconded, motion carried.

5. Approval of conference room cost proposal provided by WVCA-IT

Chris Ellison reviewed the amounts and specifics requested to update the system for better sound. He reported that the computer replacement will cost \$325.00.

He commented that an upgraded video conference system with extra speakers and microphones will cost \$1,097.00 The WVCA will reimburse \$500.00 towards the system. A monitor will also be needed for Marty's desk and associated cables (\$150.00) and speakers also added.

The estimated total will be between \$1,800.00-1,900.00

Randall Prince moved to approve the cost of the upgrade, Randall Patton seconded, motion carried.

6. Update on pursuit of Grazing Lands Conference Grant

Marty Walker-Owen presented information on the National Grazing Lands grant that Karen Brown has been working on. She stated that she and Karen had sat down and reviewed the grant. She provided the background information by print to the members of the board and reviewed the grant information pertaining to match, documentation and a request for approval of funds to support the match requirement.

A discussion was held between Marty and members of the board in review of the target, scope and mission of the grant and how it could tie into the district. (Grant paperwork is attached to the minutes)

Dennis Bailey recommended to submit a request of \$5,000.00 to the grant.

Randall Patton moved to approve pursuing the grant in the amount of \$5,000.00, Curtis Murphy seconded, motion carried.

Visiting Agency Reports

Jeffrey Barr was a guest on the call. He updated the board of items for discussion.

He recently attended a virtual meeting about local work groups. He noted that the current state conservationist strongly encourages local leadership in conservation.

He inquired from the board what he can do to assist for the board to be able to take a more active role in local work group planning and meetings.

Dennis Bailey commented that although he is supportive, he doesn't think the board is ready to take an active leading role in NRCS local work group initiative at this time.

Dennis Burns was a guest of the meeting. He made the board aware of a grant he has been working with for \$15,000.00 for the green infrastructure stormwater training. He will be going

back to DEP to discuss plans for the \$10,000.00 that he has not yet used. Dennis Burns mentioned the idea of installing a rain garden at the SCD for demonstration purposes.

Randall Patton and Dennis Bailey commented that the SCD would be receptive to this idea if Dennis would be able to provide a plan to the board at the next board meeting.

Dennis Burns reviewed the concept, design and purpose of a conservation rain garden.

The board requested that Dennis provide more details at the next board meeting for their review.

Jeremy Salyer made the board aware that he has received notice Friday, January 28th that the Administrative Specialist, District Manager at Greenbrier Valley Conservation District has submitted a two-week notice. He wanted to notify the board that he would be utilizing Marty for coverage of the Greenbrier Valley Conservation District until the new hire has been put in place. She also will be the mentor and training individual for the new position at GVD.

Curtis Murphy moved to approve the Special Board meeting be adjourned, Randall Patton seconded, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 11:44 PM

Closing Remarks & Meeting Reminders

The next meeting will be Regular Board Meeting, February 10, 2022

- A Committee Meeting for AgEP, Education & Marketing , Building was held after the Special Board Meeting.