

HEREFORD NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT (HNRCD)

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Palominas Fire District Training Center Facility

9222 S Kings Ranch Rd, Hereford, AZ 85615

A. Call to Order

Chairman John Ladd called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

B. Introductions

Board Present: Lucinda Earven, Mike Hayhurst, John Ladd, Jim Lindsey

Board Present by Telephone: Steve Boice

Board Absent: None

Others Present: Amber Ford, Agriculture Teacher Tombstone High School (THS)
Eric Baker, Bureau of Land Management (by telephone)
Barbara Bohlen, San Pedro 4-H
Jessie Colburn, San Pedro 4-H
Tom Crosby, Cochise County Board of Supervisors
Chuck Cunningham, HNRCD Cooperator
Ivette Cunningham, HNRCD Cooperator
Don Decker, NRCS Douglas Field Officer, District Conservationist
Tricia Gerrodette, Public (by telephone)
Matthew Jewell, AZ DFFM, Service Forrester (by telephone)
Peggy Judd, Cochise County Board of Supervisors (by telephone)
Joanne Roberts, HNRCD Board Clerk
David Thursby, THS Principle
Steve Usrey, Public Concerned Citizen

C. Call to the Public

NO RESPONSE

D. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. Regular Meeting October 21, 2020

Motion: Chairman John Ladd moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 21, 2020.

Motion: Supervisor Hayhurst moved to approve the meeting minutes.

Second: Vice Chair Earven seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: None.

E. Agency and Committee Reports

1. Upper San Pedro Partnership (USPP)

Vice Chair Earven reported the Partnership is having a Technical virtual meeting this afternoon from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. which they wanted the District to attend. She is not available to attend but if someone else can attend, please get with her on the specifics. She further stated the Committee is developing a web interactive hydrologic information portal.

2. National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Mr. Don Decker provided 2 handouts. He states he is submitting the Team Ranking Pool Report on or before November 30 to the State Office. Mr. Decker explains the pools will be used to allocate monies towards EQIP contracts and he is working with the Tucson Field Office District Conservationist to coordinate Team 7's request (which includes HNRCD). He also notes that he rearranged the Rangeland Conservation Implementation Strategies (CIS) from last fiscal year into the new Ranking Pool format. He is also incorporating the FY21 Local Work Group Questionnaire responses into the Ranking Pool Format. He noted it was not a great response but in general, the conservation resource concerns that had the most replies include plant pest pressure, degraded plant conditions, fire management, water management, wildlife (terrestrial) habitat, soil quality and source water depletion.

Mr. Decker explained the timelines for Arizona FY21 EQIP and briefly reviewed the Arizona drought conditions.

Mr. Tom Crosby asked to clarify the EQIP contract. Mr. Decker provided an overview of the program including its history, eligibility, developing conservation plans using NRCS conservation practices, when a contract is required and how it is implemented, project ranking procedures, incentive amounts, and how monies are distributed from a state level to a District level.

Chairman Ladd noted that any money received through the EQIP program is considered taxable income to the producer. The purpose of the program is to enhance the environment by improving the habitat to avoid a repeat of the "dust bowl" condition. Mr. Decker further explained the history dating back to the Dust Bowl Era and how the Districts were formed for local conservation planning on all land ownership types (e.g. private, state, federal).

3. United States Forest Service (USFS) – No one present to report

4. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Mr. Eric Baker notes that in the next two to three weeks the BLM will be sending out grazing applications. BLM is looking for realistic numbers from the operators for billing purposes and to inform the agency of any reductions in grazing due to drought. In addition, the four grazing allotments on the San Pedro are undergoing land health evaluations. The evaluations will have management and team reviews but the reports should be out for public comment by the end of the year.

Supervisor Hayhurst asked about the operator comment period for the four allotments on the San Pedro. Mr. Baker responded he believed it would be a 7 or 14-day comment period. Supervisor Hayhurst stated he believed it should be a 30-day comment period and there is concern about the E.coli management actions and conditions. A brief discussion ensued regarding this issue,

the level of DNA testing and associated costs, permit season of use, and possible ramifications to the operator(s). Mr. Baker suggested a field visit with himself, the (Az) DEQ hydrologist and the operator(s) to further discuss the objectives to insure all parties are all on the same page. Mr. Baker will coordinate the meeting.

5. Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) – No one present to report
Ms. Roberts stated that Ms. Sarah Gandaría, the AGFD Partnership Biologist was unable to attend this meeting. However, she did send an update which includes the following;
 - Habitat Partnership Committees (HPC) applications that were submitted were ranked by the statewide committee in October and they will be decided upon at the January 2021 funding meeting.
 - There is still some AGFD Landowner Relations and Habitat Enhancement Program (LRP) funding (reimbursement only) still available for shovel-ready projects with all permits already in place. Projects also must be completed by June 2021. Please contact her ASAP to get an application submitted.
 - Some project dollars (reimbursement only) are remaining from USFWS for private land. No deadline. Reach out to her if you are interested.
 - For projects that are not shovel ready, but you want to apply for funding, should be made shovel ready by July 2021. Ms. Gandaría can work with the landowner to see what they will need to get in place to make sure the project will have the best chances of being funded in July.
 - AGFD received Voluntary Public Access (VPA) money from the new farm bill. VPA dollars are to incentivize landowners to allow public recreational access to their private lands. This includes hunting and wildlife watching. Access can be tailored to the needs of the landowner. She requests that you reach out to her or Matt Walton to learn more.

Chairman Ladd added that AGFD is working with the Arizona Cattle Growers Association (ACGA) on a program to promote keeping watering systems on for wildlife due to drought conditions. Mr. Brad Falk, AGFD Region V can be contacted to coordinate on this effort.

6. Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network (CCRN)
Chair Ladd stated he had no update other than they met visa via ZOOM© recently but he does not have the schedule for the next teleconference.
7. Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Restoration Partnership (SLRP)
Supervisor Hayhurst states a meeting took place on October 28, 2020. He understands they received money that are to be used for conservation easements. Ms. Roberts states that Ms. Alanna Riggs is now a civilian employee on Fort Huachuca assigned specifically as the Sentinel Landscape Coordinator.

Supervisor Hayhurst stated he did speak with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) about these monies. Ms. Roberts noted Mr. Cameron Becker, ALWT (a Sentinel Landscape partner) responded to the Districts' Working Group questionnaire and reported the Trust received \$7,000,000.00 that will be applied to conservation easements and for implementation of projects. Specifics are forthcoming as the Trust is negotiating how the money is to be spent. She stated Mr. Becker was not able to attend the meeting today but will be reaching out to the District in the future for coordination. Chairman Ladd noted two primary goals and uses of the money is for conservation of the electronic atmosphere and brush management in the "mitten." Discussion continued on the previous work completed, how the money will be apportioned, meeting attendance, and the 2019 Sentinel Landscape Achievement report.

8. Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) – No one present to report
Ms. Roberts stated she had received communication from Ms. Natalie Muilenberg, Supervisor, Watershed Improvement Unit. She was unable to attend this meeting. However, she asked to be kept on the distribution list for participation in future meetings.
9. Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) – No one present to report
Ms. Roberts stated Mr. Josh Grace was not able to attend this meeting and we also have a backup contact if needed.
10. Arizona Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) - No one present to report
Ms. Roberts noted Ms. Deborah Smith was unable to attend today's meeting. She briefly noted that she would be reaching out to Supervisor Lindsey and Ms. Roberts after the first of the year on specifics regarding the recently awarded EPA Education Outreach monies.

Mr. Decker reminds the Board that AZ DFFM is on the phone. Ms. Roberts asks Mr. Matthew Jewel if he wants the Agency to be added to the recurring Agenda item. Mr. Matthew Jewel responded positively. Mr. Jewel discusses a Biochar program that is being piloted on a private ranch in St. David. The project has three phases and is now in phase 1. In future, it is desirable that the program becomes an income producing, locally sourced product. He is working with Mr. Decker and is able to set up EQIP applications that deal with forest related projects.

F. District Financial Reports

1. Payment Schedule
Motion: Supervisor Lindsey moved to authorize payment of items 1-2 on the Payment Schedule.
Second: Supervisor Hayhurst seconded the motion.
Vote: Carried unanimously.
Discussion: None
2. Financial Reports—File for Audit
Motion: Supervisor Lindsey moved to file the financial reports for audit.
Second: Supervisor Hayhurst seconded the motion.
Vote: Carried unanimously.
Discussion: None.

Chairman Ladd stated he would like to move to Agenda Item I, Education Program. Both Tombstone High School (THS) and the San Pedro 4-H have representatives here to address the Board. With no objections, Ms. Amber Ford of THS began her presentation followed by Ms. Bohlen and Mr. Colburn of San Pedro 4-H. See full minutes on this topic under Agenda Item I, 1 and 2 in this document.

G. Old Business

1. Local Workgroup Organization; Results of Questionnaire
Ms. Roberts stated she sent the Board the tabulation of the questionnaire and reviewed who responded and how the questionnaire was "marketed." Looking to the future, she stated The District needs to look for better /new ways to attract participation.

Mr. Decker believes he received enough information for the report with the exception of the names of the specific agencies that responded. Ms. Roberts will follow up with Mr. Decker.

Chairman Ladd and Vice Chair Earven commented on the effort to solicit participation but the lack of responses was similar to previous attempts to engage the community. Conversation continued to address the Local Working Group and ranking pools, the amount of outreach that took place for this effort, coordination with AACD, highlighting projects, applicable questionnaire responses that meets the Ranking Pool Report format, combining a Local Working Group meeting with a Regular Board Meeting, next years' report cycle, adding a Zoom© option, operational costs to the District, meeting rooms with hosts where internet is available to use and enough space.

2. Status and/or Nomination of New Advisors

Ivette and Chuck Cunningham were nominated for the position of small acreage land owner Board Advisors at the October 21 Board Meeting and a letter of invitation was sent to them after the meeting. Mr. Cunningham inquired about what the position entails. Chairman Ladd stated that with their involvement with the District over the last several years, starting their infrastructure on their rural property (Paloma), and dealing with Mr. Decker, that the Board believes these experiences will help advise new property owners on processes and working with Mr. Decker on property evaluations. Supervisor Lindsey stated what they had experienced as new comers to the rural area is typical of what many city people experience moving into a more rural community (e.g. vegetation, soil, and water issues) and since you [the Cunningham's'] are part of the organization [HNRCD] the Board believes your experiences will offer the Board the ability to communicate with the landowner.

The discussion continued with possible tasks such as screening requests, connecting the Board with the land owner, working with Mr. Decker and scheduling property visits, and reinstating a small land owner line item to the State budget/funding.

Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham accepted the nomination and Ms. Roberts will follow up with them with paperwork.

[Hold on Sidebar- Review of Mary Francis Clinton's property and Russian thistle management practices]

H. New Business

1. Certified Board Supervisor Records

Chairman Ladd stated he brought a copy of his certified affirmation paper work and noted that Supervisor Boice's paperwork had been lost and he needed to resubmit. A recommendation was made that when the signed copy of the affirmation paperwork is received by a Supervisor that it is scanned and added to the District's data file for Board of Supervisor members, which resides on the Districts' computer. The purpose is for a better way to track the cycle of elections as well as to respond to any inquiries from the State office.

2. General Fund Distribution

Ms. Roberts stated that Ms. Jackie Thomas had inquired about the how the Board prefers the next State funds be distributed, one lump sum or quarterly. The consensus is to receive the money in on lump sum. Chairman Ladd inquired whether or not the direct deposit was in place and Supervisor Lindsey responded negatively. Ms. Roberts will follow up with Ms. Thomas on the direct deposit since it has been over a year that the Board asked for direct deposit.

I. Education Program

1. Tombstone High School Ag Program

a. Report from Tombstone Ag Program

Mr. David Thursby introduces himself and his appreciation of the Districts' support. He appreciates the opportunity to work with District and how important the District is for the Tombstone program. Concerns expressed by the Board will be addressed in today's presentation by Ms. Amber Ford.

Ms. Amber Ford handed out a document that she wrote that addresses concerns expressed by the Board on communication and funding allocation. Ms. Amber notes the \$10,000.00 donated to the Ag Program last year has not yet been spent. She notes that the money is earmarked for students to attend the next physical FFA convention. Virtual attendance this year was paid for by the Tombstone Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.

Ms. Ford also noted that the Greenhouse and welding programs are functional seasonally. She states the Greenhouse is used when it is cool enough to do so. Currently the students are producing lima beans, green beans, and cucumbers.

Ms. Ford reviewed the 2019-2020 FFA program and noted student awards and clarified that many of the students are involved in 4-H as well as FFA. 4-H credits are transferrable to the students' FFA supervised agricultural experience (SAE) projects. She further presented information on leadership programs and conferences, workshop participation, fundraising events, levels of FFA degrees, competitions, and technical standards.

Ms. Ford reviewed the 2020-2021 school season beginning with the virtual FFA conference where all 100 students in the program were able to participate. The virtual conference consisted of preloaded content presentations, interactive college meeting rooms, and live virtual presentations. In person competitions are in flux due to the covid-19 concerns but virtual competitions are planned. Ms. Ford indicated that some students are attending school in person full time, others are a combination of online and in person attendance, while others are attending online only.

Ms. Ford reviewed the Tombstone District's plan to build an Ag facility with a fully functional shop and labs. She briefly discussed tours that she had taken of other high school facilities (Willcox, Safford, Benson). A Request for Bids is in place and it is desirable to award a company in order to break ground by summer 2021. She discussed a desired program to reach out to the community leaders to shadow professionals, fieldtrips, Board program visits, and future HNRCD workshops.

Supervisor Lindsey responded that he appreciates the presentation and he believes it gives the Board a better sense of what is going on with the Districts' donation and that there is thoughtful use of those monies. In future, MOA contacts will have list of deliverables. Supervisor Lindsey states that there is a need to have a follow up meeting to discuss where the monies are being spent. He further states that Ms. Ford indicated that last years' HNRCD donation is solely earmarked for students to attend the annual FFA conference. However, the Board would like to have the money more diversified as was the original intent of the donation. Diversified into the welding program, classroom materials, building structure, as well as the conference attendance. The Board believes this shows a good diversification of money utilization for reporting as well as showing how our public money is being well used, and for future funding opportunities. Supervisor Lindsey specifically identified these monies cannot be used for food or entertainment. The board

requires dollar amounts to specific items for reporting to the State Land Department. Supervisor Lindsey reiterates for any future donations, a MOA will be required. He also states a quarterly or at a minimum, a biannual presentation to the Board is desirable.

Supervisor Hayhurst inquired about the basic plan for the Ag building. Mr. Thursby reiterated Ms. Ford's information about touring other facilities, where the available land space is located, the design of welding booths, overhangs for animals, and the classroom portion of the program that will be connected to the shop. However, right now they are in the planning phase with a preliminary drawing. Mr. Thursby believes the program is growing and the School will reach out to stakeholders on what kind of facility and program they envision. The School has saved over many years an estimated \$150K to \$200K to spend specifically on the Ag facility.

Chairman Ladd restated that coming from State Land Department, things are a lot more involved with accounting of the expenditures. Supervisor Lindsey restated it will help with accountability by having the regular reporting through quarterly or biannual visits. Mr. Thursby agreed. Ms. Roberts asked for clarification on what is meant by visits. Supervisor Lindsey responded at a Regular Board Meeting.

Discussion continued on identifying program needs, MOA language, Regular Board Meetings at the high school, trainings, and workshops.

2. San Pedro Spirits 4-H Group

Ms. Barbara Bohlen and Mr. Jessie Colburn, of the San Pedro 4-H introduced themselves and a brief review of the K-12 program goals, mission and program content. Mr. Colburn noted their program is the largest in the County and reviewed the "wish list" previously provided to the Board. Mr. Colburn notes they are looking to expand support of the program by adding partners in support of the students. Ms. Bohlen reviewed the participants' activities during the covid-19 environment the small animal program which is popular with the students. There were 60 participants last year and currently there are 30 students enrolled. Enrollment continues through December and they expect the numbers will increase over that period.

Discussion on what the potential money would be used for, student monetary responsibility for individual programs, and program-wide equipment needs. The Board requests specific costs for specific items and that the same MOA process discussed during the Tombstone FFA presentation will also be required for the 4-H program.

Supervisor Lindsey stated that either he or most likely Supervisor Boice will be in contact and be the conduit between their Program and the Board.

J. Board Clerk Updates Time Permitting (actions may be taken)

1. Telephone access for Board Meetings

Ms. Roberts will follow up with the Fire Department Administrative Assistant regarding the telephone conference equipment as well as to inquire with other meeting room hosts.

2. Zoom®/virtual meetings, work sessions etc.

Ms. Roberts stated she thought it would be appropriate for Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham as the small acreage land owner Board Advisors to assist in targeted workshops for that audience and to participate in the virtual workshop.

3. Webpage

Ms. Roberts stated that she would be evaluating the website design after the release of the January 2021 newsletter. She also stated she would be contacting Ms. Ford about using the photographs and content from her earlier presentation for the Education Center page.

4. Newsletter – Supervisor Contribution, Section Topics

Ms. Roberts requested a small summary, from the Supervisors and Advisors, for the January newsletter that addresses why being part of the Board is important and the value of HNRCD. She requested a recurring contribution from Mr. Decker as the District Conservation. Mr. Decker responded positively.

Discussion on how frequently the newsletter should be published. The consensus is to publish quarterly but it depends on what activities are happening. Ms. Roberts stated the newsletter would have recurring topics such as water resources and rangeland best management practices will pull in State natural resource articles, local workshops, and District happenings. Ms. Roberts envisions the newsletter will become a forum of information for our cooperators thereby fulfilling our education outreach directive.

5. Tracking Volunteer Time – Reminder

Ms. Roberts stated the purpose for tracking hours. Chairman Ladd stated that while the Horseshoe Draw Project was active the Board of Supervisors and Advisors estimated 10 hours a month. There was a consensus that 10 hours will be the standard and if other hours are accumulated it is the Supervisor and Advisor's responsibility to let Ms. Roberts know, monthly.

K. Correspondence

1. Cooperator Form; Kathy Morris
2. Deluxe Checks Renewal Notice
3. Sierra Vista and Surrounding Area Telephone Local Pages Book
4. Cooperator Response to Local Workgroup Questionnaire (see Item G1 of this Agenda)
5. Three Checks from AZ Department of Administration (2- Education Center, 1-HNRCD)

L. Supervisor Comments (no actions will be taken)

Vice Chair Earven asked about receiving Cochise County Planning and Zoning Committee Reports on projects that are being proposed. Ms. Roberts will follow up with the County and report back. Vice Chair Earven stated she received a letter from the County on a solar energy proposal and public meeting scheduled for December 9, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. on a special use permit request. Chairman Ladd stated he thought Mr. Tom Crosby is our representative at the County.

Vice Chair Earven requested the time of the Regular Board Meeting to be moved to 9:30 a.m. and Chair Ladd stated he would like it earlier and prefers the Palominas Fire District Training Center Facility meeting room. Ms. Roberts will contact the Administrative Assistant and request a time change for December's meeting and will report back. Vice Chair Earven requested this topic be put on the December Agenda for further discussion.

A brief discussion on options available to Cooperators to pay annual dues. Ms. Roberts will follow up with Deborah Smith at AACD on the specifics of using an online payment method through an AACD web page link.

M. Future Meetings / Agenda Items

December 16, 2020 Regular Board Meetings:
Location: Palominas Fire District Training Center Facility
Time: 9:00 a.m. or 9:30 a.m. (TBD)

Wildlife Attractors Workshop- **Postponed until the University is Open**
AZ DFFM to be added to Agenda Item E, Agency and Committee Reports beginning in **December**
Meeting Location and Start Time – **December**
Cooperator Due Payment Options – **December**
Legislation on the Lawn Jan. 12, 2021 – **December (Deborah Smith, AACD)**
Update on the NACD Grant Technical Position – **December**
Update on Mary Francis Clinton Property Evaluation and Further Action by Board - **December**
Update on Local Working Group State Committee – **TBD (Deborah Smith, AACD)**
Regional Conservation Program July 2021 – **TBD (Sharma Torrens, AACD)**
BLM (George Ruhle) update SPRNCA Amicus Brief – **TBD**
BLM San Pedro Grazing Allotment Operator Sight Visits – **TBD**
Tombstone High School Ag Program Quarterly Presentation Report – **March 2021**

N. Adjournment:

Motion: Vice Chair Earven moved to adjourn the meeting.
Second: Supervisor Hayhurst seconded the motion.
Vote: Carried unanimously.
Discussion: None

Chair Ladd adjourned the meeting at 12:07 p.m.

Approved by the Board _____
(Date)

Signed _____
(John Ladd, Chairman)

ACRONYMS

AACD	Arizona Association of Conservation Districts
ADEQ	Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Ag	Agriculture
AIM	Assessment, Inventory and Monitoring Strategy (BLM program)
ALWT	Arizona Land and Water Trust
ACGA	Arizona Cattle Growers Association
ASLD	Arizona State Land Department
AZGFD	Arizona Game and Fish Department
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CCRN	Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network
CIS	Conservation Implementation Strategy
CRM	Coordinated Resource Management
CSP	Conservation Stewardship Program
CTE	Career and Technical Education
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FFA	Future Farmers of America
FLPMA	Federal Land Planning and Management Act
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FY	Fiscal Year
NC	Nature Conservancy
HPC	Habitat Partnership Committees
HNRCD	Hereford Natural Resource Conservation District
LRP	Landowner Relations and Habitat Enhancement Program
Mitten	Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Boundary
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NACD	National Association of Conservation Districts
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCWAY	Natural Resource Conservation Workshop for Arizona Youth
RCPD	Regional Conservation Partnership Program
RMP	Resource Management Plan
SARC	Small Acreage Resource Concerns
SHPO	State Historical Preservation Office
SLRP	Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Restoration Partnership
SPRNCA	San Pedro River National Conservation Area
SRM	Society for Range Management
TBD	To Be Determined
THS	Tombstone High School
U of A	University of Arizona
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USPP	Upper San Pedro Partnership
USPO	United States Post Office
VPA	Voluntary Public Access
WOTUS	Waters of the United States
WPF	Water Protection Fund

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