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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2025

YCCD Supervisors Present: Margaret Lenz, Ron Richards, Sonya Shaw, & Darrell Smith

Supervisors Absent: Chester Zwirn

Ex officio Members: Jake Prather

Staff Present: Tanya Fell, Shirley Deason, and Rafael Trejo

Call to Order:

President Lenz declared a quorum present and convened the meeting of the Yuma County Conservation District at 10:00 a.m. at the Wray NRCS Conference Room, following a budget workgroup session that began at 9:45 a.m.

Recess for Budget Hearing:

A motion was made by Supervisor Shaw to recess the meeting for the budget hearing. The motion was seconded by Supervisors Richards and carried unanimously. President Lenz recessed the meeting at 11:00 a.m. for the Budget Hearing. At 11:12 a.m., President Lenz ended the recess and called the meeting back to order.

Update to Mileage Calendar:

Updates were made by each board member to the mileage calendar.

Approval of Agenda:

After adding discussion of dates for the Annual Meeting to the agenda, approval of the amended agenda was made on a motion by Supervisor Shaw. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Richards and carried unanimously.

Approval of Previous Month's Minutes:

Supervisor Smith moved to approve the November 5, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Richards and carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Financial Statement and Pay Bills: District Manager Fell presented the monthly financials. Supervisor Richards moved to accept the financial report and pay the December bills. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Shaw and carried unanimously. The current bills paid from the general fund are:

- Employee Payroll
- Premier Accounting
- City of Wray - Pesticide Workshop Rental
- CACD - Camp Rocky
- Webster - Matching Grant

The current bills paid from the grant fund are:

- Rusty Plow Farm LLC -Safe Incentive
- Osmus and Sons – Safe Incentive
- Transfer to General Account

Cash Flow Needs: The Board discussed current and anticipated cash flow needs. Certificate of Deposit #104578 held at First Pioneer National Bank is maturing December 28, 2025. Renewal rates were not available at the time of the meeting.

Past Due Accounts Receivable: The Board discussed the past due account of Heather Schafer in the amount of \$24.45. Supervisor Shaw is to contact Ms. Schafer by telephone during the lunch recess

NRCS Report:

Jake Prather joined the meeting to provide the NRCS report on behalf of Daniel Palic regarding EQIP and CSP contracts. Mr. Prather stated that a partner Biologist position is currently open and they are seeking qualified candidates. Supervisors also discussed with Mr. Prather that Dam Safety Chief John Batka conducted inspections of the Wray Dams on October 30, 2025, accompanied by Devin Ridnour, Chris Kucera, Supervisors Lenz and Richards, conservation district staff, and city and county representatives. No major concerns were identified, and Mr. Batka will provide maintenance recommendations to the City of Wray and the Conservation District. Mr. Prather departed the meeting after receiving this update.

OLD BUSINESS:

Grants & Updates: District Manager Fell gave updates on the following grants:

- **Bonny Grazing Project:** Three grant applications have been submitted to fund the project at the Bonny Reservoir.
- **Restore Colorado Grant 2024 -NFWF:** \$320,000 grant request for Rejuvra for all of Yuma County: The Conservation District received the reimbursement request in the amount of \$75,690.91.
- **CSCB 50/50 Matching Grant 2025:** District Conservation Technician (DCT) Trejo provided an update on the 2025 CSCB 50/50 Matching Grant. Ron Blach has not submitted the well test, which is a requirement to receive funding. The Conservation District will issue a letter notifying him that the contract is out of compliance and that he may reapply during next funding cycle.

- **CSCB Supplemental Matching Grant 2025:** The Yuma Conservation District, under the administration of the Yuma County Conservation District, has been awarded a \$50,000 grant to support tree restoration efforts. District Manager Fell and District Conservation Technician (DCT) Trejo have been actively engaging with local producers to gather information on the specific needs for tree replacement, including weed barrier materials and drip irrigation components and mapping of the properties.
- **Mule Deer Foundation Grant - MDF:** The Conservation District has \$10,000 remaining from the \$20,000 grant with an additional \$22,500 available for projects in 2025.
- **CSCB 50/50 Matching Grant 2026:** \$50,000 grant to be used for Water Tanks, Pipelines, Solar Pumps, and Wireless Tank Monitoring Devices benefiting producers in the Yuma Conservation District and the Yuma County Conservation District. There is currently a waiting list of interested producers. Producer applications should be available towards the end of December.

Upcoming Grant Opportunities: District Manager Fell gave updates on the following grant opportunities:

- **NRCS Locally Led Targeted Conservation Project:** A locally led Targeted Conservation Project Proposal for fiscal year 2026 was submitted by the Yuma County Conservation District in the amount of \$500,000 for Cheatgrass Control, which would encompass Yuma County, Phillips County and Sedgwick County. No further information is available.
- **Conservation Partners Program - NFWF:** The application has been submitted for \$ 287,660. This grant would be for staff funding for Habitat Enhancement on Grazing Land or Soil Health Practices on Cropland. Awards will be announced in December 2025.
- **District Conservation Technician (DCT) Application Renewal - CSCB:** The Conservation District was informed that it had been awarded full requested funding of \$46,142.
- **Demonstration Grant #1 – CACD/NRCS:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$10,000 for Cheatgrass Control Test Plots.
- **Demonstration Grant #2 – CACD/NRCS:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$10,000 for Virtual Fence, Portable Corral System & Water Structure at Bonny Reservoir.
- **Habitat Partnership Program - CPW:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$50,555 for virtual fence, portable corral system and water structure at Bonny Reservoir.
- **Restore Colorado Grant – NFWF:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$349,242.77 for a watershed wide grant for cheatgrass control.

- **Climate Resiliency Grant – Colorado Department of Ag:** The Conservation District previously applied for funding through the Climate Resiliency Grant Program to support its Shelterbelt Tree Restoration Project. Building on the lessons learned from the prior application, the Conservation District submitted an application in the amount of \$30,000 for living snow fences.
- **Friends of NACD - NACD:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$2,500 for the “Garden in a Box” project.
- **Colorado Water Plan Grants - CWCB:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$112,500 for virtual fence, portable corral system and water structure at Bonny Reservoir.
- **Technical Assistance Grant- NACD:** This grant would fund a dedicated employee position to provide technical services on behalf of the district. Application submissions have been extended to January 8, 2026. Awards are expected to be announced in March 2026.

District Vehicle - Door Signs and Running Boards:

The Board reviewed proposed door decal designs for the Conservation District’s pickup. DCT Trejo will research pricing for producing and installing the logo only. He also reported that chrome running boards would cost \$375, black running boards \$275, with an additional \$125 for installation labor. The Board opted not to proceed with purchasing running boards at this time.

Workshops:

The Conservation District is planning an estate/succession planning workshop geared towards younger producers. District Manager Fell will follow up with CSU Extension Specialist Jeffrey Tranel regarding available dates in February.

The Board discussed the need to hold a workshop for landowners near the dams to emphasize the importance of keeping these areas clear of brush to ensure water flow is not impeded during significant rain events. The workshop is tentatively planned for June.

The Conservation District has scheduled a pesticide applicator workshop for March 10, 2026. The Conservation District will try to obtain sponsorships from chemical companies to help defray the cost of putting on the workshop.

Host CSCB Solar & Agrivoltaics tour for the Northeast Region:

District Manager Fell will follow up with Jordan Macknick (NREL) and Jeff Risley (Executive Director, Renewable Energy Farmers of America) about serving as speakers for an Agrivoltaics workshop in January or February.

Leadership Certificate:

Stephanie Scott is scheduled for the Leadership training on January 13, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Candidates for Conservationist of the Year:

The Supervisors discussed potential candidates for the YCCD Conservationist of the Year awards. Jake Prather with NRCS rejoined the meeting to provide input on nominations for each category. The following candidates were identified for consideration to be awarded at the Yuma County Conservation District 2026 Annual Meeting:

- Education Program of the Year: Wray Museum Prairie Chicken Program
- Education of the Year: Josh Melby
- Conservationist of the Year – Small Acreage: Sandhill Bloomers
- Conservationist of the Year – Farmer: Brad Wingfield
- Conservationist of the Year – Rancher: Nathan Andrews
- Outstanding Partner of the Year: CSU Extension – Travis Taylor

Supervisors will consider additional nomination, with voting to occur at a future meeting. Jake Prather departed the meeting following this discussion.

Wray Dam Inspections:

The Conservation District is still awaiting the official inspection report for the Wray Dams following the site visit conducted on October 30, 2025, by Dam Safety Chief John Batka. NRCS has requested that copies of the report be forwarded to their office once it is received.

Colorado State Unemployment Tax:

Last month, the Supervisors reviewed email correspondence from Premier Accounting to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) regarding the Conservation District's Colorado State Unemployment Tax Account. Premier Accounting had requested that all reports submitted in 2024 and the first half of 2025 be transferred to the new account created when the Conservation District changed from non-contributory to contributory status in 2024. They also noted that a CDLE letter dated August 25, 2025, had incorrectly identified the Conservation District as a 501(c)(3), potentially due to an incorrect NAICS code assignment.

The Conservation District is still awaiting updated information from CDLE. Premier Accounting will continue to monitor the situation and will notify the Conservation District once a response is received.

Computer for District Conservation Technician (DCT):

The board tabled the purchase of a computer for the District Conservation Technician.

NEW BUSINESS:

Property and Liability Insurance Coverage – Renewal Quote:

The board reviewed the insurance renewal documents from the Colorado Special District Property and Liability Pool. A motion was made by Supervisor Smith to renew the insurance policy. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Richards and carried unanimously.

High Plains No-Till Conference Sponsorship:

A motion was made by Supervisor Shaw to sponsor the FFA Day High Plains No-Till Conference in the amount of \$300. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Richards and carried unanimously.

2025 Colorado Weed Management Association (CWMA)– Partnership Award:

The Conservation District was notified that it was the recipient of the 2025 CWMA Partnership Award due to her outstanding efforts and dedication to weed management. The CWMA Awards Lunch will be on December 11th, 12:00 p.m. at the Pueblo Convention Center.

2025 CACD Annual Poster Contest Winners:

The 2025 CACD Poster Contest results have been announced. Dylan Gonzalez, the Yuma County Conservation District's Grand Place winner, placed third at the state level.

Christmas and New Year's Holiday:

A motion was made by Supervisor Richards to approve giving staff the Friday after Christmas off and the Friday after New Year's Day off with pay. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Shaw and carried unanimously.

2026 Annual Meeting:

The Yuma County Conservation District will host its annual meeting on February 10, 2026. Staff will check with local school groups to determine if any are interested in preparing sack lunches as a fundraiser and to obtain pricing.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Supervisor Richards to enter Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f), for the purpose of discussing personnel matters involving the evaluation of the District Manager, Office Assistant, and District Conservation Technician, all of whom were previously informed of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously with Executive Session beginning at 2:34 p.m.

The Executive Session ended at 3:34 p.m. and the meeting was reconvened at that time.

Supervisors noted that staff are performing well and expressed appreciation for the effort being carried out across district programs.

A motion was made by Supervisor Richards to approve a \$500 Christmas bonus for District Manager Fell, Office Assistant Deason and DCT Trejo, with the amount grossed up to cover employee Social Security and Medicare taxes so that each receives a net bonus of \$500. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Shaw and carried unanimously.

Raises for employees will be considered later in 2026, contingent upon budget conditions.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Supervisor Richards to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously with President Lenz adjourning the meeting at 3:47 p.m.

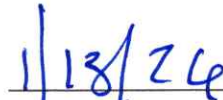
Next Meeting:

The next YCCD meeting has been scheduled for January 13, 2026, at the NRCS conference room in Wray, with Stephanie Scott presenting leadership training beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes submitted by: Shirley Deason, Office Assistant



Sonya Shaw, Secretary/Treasurer



Date



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2026 Budget Hearing Minutes

Date: December 3, 2025

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Location: Wray NRCS Office

Supervisors Present: Margaret Lenz, Ron Richards, Sonya Shaw, and Darrell Smith

Supervisors Absent: Chester Zwirn

Ex officio Members: none

Staff Present: Tanya Fell, Shirley Deason, and Rafael Trejo

Call to Order:

President Lenz declared a quorum present and convened the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Review and Approve 2026 Proposed Budget/Mill Levy Documents:

Office Assistant Shirley Deason gave an overview of the proposed 2026 Budget and Mill Levy documents.

Motion:

- Supervisor Richards made a motion to approve the 2026 Budget as presented.
- Supervisor Shaw seconded the motion.

Vote:

- Supervisor Richards: Yes
- Supervisor Shaw: Yes
- Supervisor Smith: No
- Supervisor Lenz: Abstain

The motion passed with a majority vote.

Approve Resolution to Adopt Budget:

Motion:

- Supervisor Shaw made a motion to approve the Resolution to adopt the 2026 Budget.
- Supervisor Smith seconded the motion.

Vote:

- Supervisor Richards: Yes
- Supervisor Shaw: Yes
- Supervisor Smith: Yes
- Supervisor Lenz: Abstain

The motion passed with a majority vote.

Approve Resolution of Appropriate sums of Money:

Motion:

- Supervisor Smith made a motion to approve the Resolution to allocate the necessary sums of money for the 2026 Budget.
- Supervisor Shaw seconded the motion.

Vote:

- Supervisor Richards: Yes
- Supervisor Shaw: Yes
- Supervisor Smith: Yes
- Supervisor Lenz: Abstain

The motion passed with a majority vote.

Approve Resolution/Ordinance to Set Mill Levies:

Motion:

- Supervisor Richards made a motion to approve the Resolution/Ordinance to set the mill levies for the 2026 Budget.
- Supervisor Shaw seconded the motion.

Vote:

- Supervisor Richards: Yes
- Supervisor Shaw: Yes
- Supervisor Smith: Yes
- Supervisor Lenz: Abstain

The motion passed with a majority vote.

Adjournment:

Motion:

- Supervisor Richards made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- Supervisor Shaw seconded the motion.


Vote:

- Supervisor Richards: Yes
- Supervisor Shaw: Yes
- Supervisor Smith: Yes
- Supervisor Lenz: Abstain

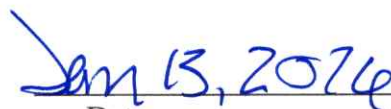
President Lenz adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Minutes submitted by: Shirley Deason, Office Assistant

Meeting Minutes approved:



Sonya Shaw, Secretary/Treasurer



Date