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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES November 5, 2024

Supervisors Present: Margaret Lenz, Ron Richards, Sonya Shaw, Darrell Smith, and Chester Zwirn  
Supervisors Absent: None  
Ex officio Members: None  
Staff Present: Tanya Fell, Shirley Deason, and Rafael Trejo  
Guests Present: Don Brown

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.

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

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda. Approval of the agenda was made on a motion by Supervisor Richards. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously.

Supervisor Smith moved to approve the October 8, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Zwirn and carried unanimously.

District Manager Fell presented the monthly financials. Supervisor Shaw moved to accept the financial report and pay the November bills. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Richards and carried unanimously. The current bills paid are:

- October payroll
- Tate Busse
- Burlington Conservation District
- NACD
- Plains Cooperative Telephone
- Wray Market
- Yuma Conservation District
- Transfer From WSB to FPNB
- Robert Dean Wingfield (50/50 Matching Grant – 2023)
- Marjorie Anderson Trust (50/50 Matching Grant-2024)
- Jack D Anderson Trust (50/50 Matching Grant-2024)
- Nathan Amrine (Star+)
- Aaron Waitman (Star+)

The preliminary budget for 2025 and plan of work was tabled until later in the meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

District Manager Fell gave updates on the following grants:

- 50/50 Matching Grant 2024: to be used for pipeline, new tanks, storage tanks, livestock tank monitoring. Applicants are Alva Deterding, Jamie Deterding, Randall Boden, and the Marjorie Anderson Trust. Leroy Deterding and Alyse Wenstrom have decided not to

participate. The Randall Boden, Jamie Deterding, and Marjorie Anderson Trust projects have been completed. Alva Deterding is working on installing a 30-foot stock tank, with concrete poured on October 31, 2024, and an estimated completion date of the project by mid-November.

- **50/50 Matching Grant 2025:** The matching grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the benefit of the Yuma Conservation District and the Yuma County Conservation District has been approved. The YCCD will administer grant funding for both conservation districts. District Manager Fell, in conjunction with the Yuma Conservation District, is planning to have the applications available in November 2024.
- **Bonny Demonstration Grant:** District Manager Fell and Travis Taylor, CSU extension agent, have a conference call scheduled with "Halter", a company providing virtual fencing solutions using solar powered collars on livestock. Mr. Taylor is hoping to meet with Duane Stegner, Bonny Reservoir property manager with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, to review accomplishments made during the year and what steps need to be taken moving forward. The Bureau of Reclamation plans to do a tour of the Bonny Project. Drone photos showing the effects of the grazing project were reviewed by the board.
- **NFWF Grant:** \$320,000 grant request for Rejuvra for all of Yuma County is approved. Spraying for cheatgrass occurred during the latter part of September. The Yuma County Conservation District is working on submitting a reimbursement request.

Producer Don Brown addressed the board concerning his participation in the program. Producer Brown stated that originally, he was offered a contract through US Fish and Wildlife, which he did not sign as he believed the agreement to be too restrictive. Producer Brown then switched to the Yuma County Conservation District/Mule Deer Foundation contract. Producer Brown stated that he did not wish to sign the Mule Deer Foundation contract as the jurisdiction was listed as Utah. Producer Brown then stated that rain was coming, and he had his fields sprayed before signing the Yuma County Conservation District contract as he thought that contract needed more work. However, Producer Brown stated he would still like to participate in the program if the board would allow it. Producer Brown left after stating his case. After discussion, Supervisor Smith made a motion to rescind the motion made October 8, 2024, to not allow Don Brown's participation in the program and to allow his participation if he signs a new contract by November 15, 2024. The new contract would pay \$21.1052/acre. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Shaw and carried unanimously.

- **Rocky Mountain Mule Deer Grant:** The conservation district has been informed that a grant of \$20,000 has been approved. Spraying for cheatgrass control in conjunction with the NFWF grant occurred in the latter part of September. The Yuma County Conservation District is working on submitting a reimbursement request.
- **RCPP – Rejuvra:** \$ 2,500,000 Grant application was submitted on by July 2nd. The conservation district was informed that the request was not approved.

- Colorado Soil Health Program – Dustin Wise, Brian Lengel, Nathan Amrine and Aaron Waitman have been approved by the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) for 2024 reimbursement. Producers John Kettelson, and Daniel/Beth Ray, have submitted reimbursement forms and are awaiting approval from the CDA for reimbursement. The conservation district has applications from Sandhill Bloomers and Darrell Smith and are waiting on paperwork from FSA to submit the applications to the Colorado Department of Agriculture. ~~Dane~~ <sup>Dain</sup> Wise is another possible applicant for the program.

Office Assistant Deason reviewed with board supervisors the preliminary budget for 2025. The plan of work for the upcoming year suggestions were to have more educational workshops to include wildlife ponds and habitat, cooperative water supply, assessment/survey of where water is located, farmer’s market/homesteader’s fair, and the Bonny project.

District Manager Fell, a representative from the City of Wray, and NRCS engineers conducted tours of all six dam sites in August. The board reviewed the inspection report for Dam #1. We are still waiting for reports on the remaining dam sites.

Conservation district highway signs were tabled for a future meeting.

The 2008 Ford Pickup located at the Wray office which is owned by NRCS has not gone up for auction yet. Supervisor Smith is monitoring the auction site to place a bid on the vehicle as authorized in the September 2024 board meeting.

The CACD annual meeting will be held December 2-4, 2024, at Colorado Springs. Supervisors Lenz, Richards, Smith and Zwirn plan to attend along with staff. Meals, rooms, and registration will be paid for by the conservation district.

The meeting recessed for lunch at 11:55 a.m. After lunch, posters submitted for the NACD “*May the Forest Be With You Always*” contest were judged with placings as follows:

School	1 <sup>st</sup> Place - \$20 Cash prize	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place - \$15 Cash prize	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place - \$10 Cash prize
Liberty 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Ledger Benton	Mila Madrid / Danielle Vaughn (Tie)	
Liberty 6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Kevin Glenn	Sullivan Sears	Aili Canady
Idalia 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Hunter Kaza	Sienna Johnson	Arleth Rascon-Trejo
Idalia 6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Amber Satterly	Booker Kite	Emelyn Lengel
Wray 6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Fernando Guzman	Danni Nolde	Tobin Smith

The Grand and Reserve Grand place winners were then selected from the above, with Grand to receive an additional cash prize of \$50 and Reserve Grand to receive an additional cash prize of \$25. The Grand Place winner was Ledger Benton and Reserve Grand winner was Kevin Glenn. The Grand and Reserve Grand posters will compete with other area winners at the annual CACD meeting to be held in December 2024.

Sarah Ashbrook, with NRCS/Pheasants Forever, gave a brief presentation to the board about the SAFE program.

AmeriCorps: The conservation district was informed they could apply for a ¾ time or full-time grant position. Supervisor Shaw moved to apply for a full-time position. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Richards and carried unanimously.

Friends of NACD Grant: The program will award top-ranking applicants up to \$2,500 each to conduct new activities or test novel approaches to their operations. Districts must submit a proposal and budget by Nov. 30, 2024. The conservation district may consider applying for a grant to establish a farmer's market.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

The CACD Resource Committee meetings being held during the week of November 18<sup>th</sup> will offer insight into the resolution process and the issues impacting Colorado Conservation Districts this year. Supervisors are encouraged to attend (via Zoom) all committee meetings.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is seeking applicants to serve on the Habitat Partnership Program State Council as a representative of Livestock growers. The Council is the oversight body for the Habitat Partnership Program (HPP), which works through 19 local committees to resolve conflict between agricultural operators and big game ungulates, assist with conservation efforts on private land, enhance wildlife migratory corridors, and assist CPW in achieving management objectives for deer, elk, pronghorn, and moose. No possible candidates were suggested.

On October 16, 2024, there was a newspaper article about the City of Wray and Solar Construction Lending, LLC. According to the article, SE Municipal intends to place a solar array on the city owned property south of Hillcrest Care Center, provided loan funding is approved. Ex-officio Jeff Wingfield is researching to find further information about the project. The conservation district may want to send a letter to the City of Wray noting the district's concern about the project and also the district's availability to provide guidance on best practices regarding soil disturbance. There is also a pending project in Yuma.

The Yuma County Conservation District received a letter dated October 22, 2024, from Chrystal Hammond, Yuma County Treasurer & Public Trustee, discussing the numerous attempts from the legislature to change the way property taxes are collected by Colorado County Treasurers. The proposal suggests moving away from half or full payments to a possible 12-payment schedule. This could potentially push revenue distribution into the following calendar year with no way to predict collections on a monthly basis.

Greg Peterson with the Colorado Ag Water Alliance has agreed to co-sponsor two meetings this winter to talk about "After the Well is Shut Off". The first meeting could include speakers discussing ways to use fields that were previously irrigated. Other topics could include an individual from Colorado Parks and Wildlife giving a presentation on bird hunting programs, NRCS discussing CRP and other programs, and dryland farming.

There will be a Dryland Agriculture and Water Roundtable with U.S. Senator John Hickenlooper on November 7<sup>th</sup>. District Manager Fell is planning to attend, weather permitting.

The conservation district received an email from Ed and Miriam Berry on their concerns of the effects of the conservation practice on CRP. Supervisor Shaw intends to contact the Berry's about their concerns.

District Manager Fell informed the board that the small trees have been ordered. This year, the conservation district does not intend to sell eastern red cedar trees due to the neighboring state of Nebraska having a tree eradication program for this species.

The board acknowledged the Thank You cards received from Sterling, Holyoke, Crowley County and Lone Star FFA chapters.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Richards to dispense with the executive session. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Zwirn and carried unanimously.

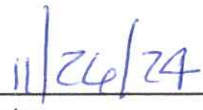
**ADJOURNMENT:**

President Lenz adjourned the meeting at 3:08 p.m.

The next YCCD meeting has been scheduled for November 26, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. with the budget hearing scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m. The meeting will be held at the NRCS conference room in Wray.

Minutes submitted by: Shirley Deason, Office Assistant

  
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Sonya Shaw, Secretary/Treasurer

  
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Date