



Harney Soil & Water Conservation District
PO Box 848
530 Hwy 20 South, Hines, OR 97738
Phone: 541.573.5010

July 15, 2019
USDA Service Center, Hines, OR
3 pm to 4:37 pm

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Board members present: Chairman Carol Dunten, Vice Chairman Louie Molt, Member Scott Franklin, Member Pat Sharp

Board members present via teleconference: Member Jeff Hussey, Member Rod Hoagland (note: these participants were not present and active throughout the entire meeting due to travel and technical issues)

Staff members present: Admin Barbara Pearson, Marty Suter-Goold (former District Manager who is assisting until new DM hired)

Guest present: NRCS District Conservationist Zola Ryan

Guest present via teleconference: Former Range Specialist Sarah Mundy

Chairman Dunten brought the meeting to order. Board members introduced themselves to the new administration assistant Pearson. Since this was a special meeting there were no public comments.

- 1) Two candidates turned down the District Manager (DM) position, which led to the first item of business: if the skills sought or scope of work for the District Manager position needed modification.

Board member Sharp emphasized the need for someone who can bring grants in and that perhaps a competitive wage might be necessary to draw such a candidate. She expressed concern over the last audit and the need for a DM to oversee financial functions. She read from the audit report citing “deficiencies in material weakness and cost control,” and that corrections needed to be made in a timely basis. The DM hired

would need to possess specific skills. She suggested the office would need to segregate to a third party regarding financial items.

Former DM Marty Suter-Goold said that the issues listed in the audit have all been addressed but the auditor has not yet provided comment. The segregation discussed is already present and would involve the new admin Pearson, a board member, and Oster employee Janae Trindle. Ms. Trindle currently oversees payroll and liabilities for the board and has been doing reconciliations with a board member. No staff member has signatory authority and as long as a third party can review felt the process was complete.

Board member Sharp stated she would meet with Oster's later to find the cost for reconciliation of checks and duplicate with record keeping.

There was further discussion on grants being written to include office personnel and OWEB and SWCD utilizes QuickBooks. The DM and admin assist would need training with the program.

Vice Chairman Molt expressed the board should decide if extra salary is needed. He said DM candidate Shannon Brubaker's duration could be contingent on obtaining additional funds and that she would need training on QuickBooks. He asked if candidate Brubaker should be hired. Board members Franklin and Sharp were in favor; Board Chairman Dunten was uncertain. Vice Chairman Molt suggested hiring someone now and give the person 3 months to prove him or herself. Candidate Brubaker would be available August 5, 2019. He asked if there was really any other option.

Chairman Dunten said she had requested samples of technical writing from candidate Brubaker but has not received them as of yet (note: the samples were forwarded to the admin assist during the meeting but were not reviewed until after).

Board member Sharp moved to hire Shannon Brubaker as Harney SWCD District Manager at the annual salary of \$60,000. Board member Franklin seconded. The motion carried with 3 in favor (Scott, Molt, and Sharp) and 1 opposed (Dunten).

- 2) Fiscal Management: Identify who will develop the annual budget. Former DM Suter-Goold provided a budget for basic SWCD operation without further grants coming in. Janae from Oster's will bill us for her hours and wages for the month. Board member Sharp motioned for Chairman Dunten to contact the ODA and ask for a second extension to complete the scope of work. Chairman Dunten said the first extension was 30 days and the deadline is July 31, 2019. A second extension would allow candidate Brubaker to work on the budget and scope of the work after coming on board as DM. Board member Franklin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (in favor: Dunten, Sharp, Molt, Franklin. Board member Rod Hoagland indicated he was present and in favor).
- 3) Sarah Mundy is no longer working for Harney SWCD as range specialist and in her final days of employment interviewed two candidates for GRSG monitoring

technicians: Taylor Crafts and Jesse Short. Their resumes and completed questionnaires were passed around to the board. She was pleased with both and advised the board of their different strengths and benefits. She recommended both be hired as funds are in place and summer is here. She said that Skyler Hickey from the BLM could show them how to do range work (if available) and suggested Emma Weidner provide a preliminary assessment on the project.

Discussion followed about how the work would be performed and salary. Board member Sharp moved to hire both Taylor Crafts and Jesse Short as seasonal GRSG monitoring technicians at the advertised salary of \$16 per hour. Board member Franklin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Board member Jeff Hussey announced he was participating in the meeting at this time and his vote was included.

Admin assist Pearson will send out offer of employment letters to both Crafts and Short. There was further discussion about who would actually be available with the onboarding process since Hickey from the BLM may not be available. District Conservationist Ryan said she would be able to provide background on the CCAA and privacy policies. Ms. Mundy said she could return but it would be as a contractor and subject to a contractor's salary if she were needed. Use of a district vehicle was also discussed. At this point (approximately 4 pm) Ms. Mundy left the meeting.

- 4) Presented by District Conservationist Zola Ryan. A grant application to the NACD had been submitted. Board Chairman Dunten signed the MOA and W9 at the last meeting. The grant purpose will be the help NRCS and fund two positions. One will be a full time cultural resource specialist and the other would be part time range management specialist.

The part time position could involve flagging and follow up on juniper cuttings or review documents on Medusa Head spraying. The funding would be for one year on an as-needed basis until July 2020. She said the board has the ability to bring someone on for this position without posting and had two recommendations (Cyndee Hill and Laura LaForest) as they would not require training. If they are unavailable, the board could then advertise. Discussion about hours and salary followed. Board member Franklin moved and Board member Molt seconded offering the position to Cyndee Hill (and if not available, Laura LaForest) for 13 month position as Range Management Resource at the salary of \$25 per hour and hours not to exceed 25 per week. The time of work would be flexible in that she would work when needed. The motion carried unanimously.

Regarding the Cultural Resource Specialist, DC Ryan said she would contact Rachel Gebauer from Klamath Falls for assistance in writing a job description. Hiring a contractor vs. employee was discussed. The benefits would be the contractor would be paid by surveys completed. Previously an employee would perform the survey and leave prior to writing the report. Chairman Dunten emphasized whoever did the field work also needed to complete the report.

Former DM Suter-Goold advised the board a cultural resource specialist is needed: the Burns Paiute Tribe wanted cultural surveys completed for any future juniper cuts done by the SWCD. A cultural survey was needed to protect burial sites and not having one here could delay projects. Board member Sharp concurred; work done on her property was delayed for one year.

Former DM Suter-Goold also reminded the board that it needed to provide some matching funds for the positions. The grant amounted to \$50,000. After further discussion it was decided to wait until DC Ryan contacted Ms. Gebauer for a job description and review contractor "Do's and Don'ts" and discuss further at the monthly board meeting to be held July 25, 2019.

- 5) Chairman Dunten presented an urgent last minute agenda item: B&M Timber completed a project on June 22, 2019. Since Oregon law states the payment needs to be received within 30 days and it will be too late for the July 25th board meeting, it needs to be acted on today. Discussion on required signatures, the lack of a completed report and pending grant payment followed. Former DM Suter-Goold suggested the board take the remaining funds from BPA, draw down on the line of credit for the remainder, pay B&M Timber and replenish both when the grant money comes in. It was acknowledged there was no other alternative at the time. Chairman Dunten moved that the board proceed as suggested. Board member Molt seconded. The motion passed unanimously for those present in the office (members Hoagland and Hussey may have dropped off the call. We did not hear their votes).

Business concluded, Board member Molt moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Franklin seconded. Those present in favor. This was approximately 4:37 pm

Respectfully submitted by Admin Assist Barbara Pearson

Approved: _____

Date: _____