EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PO Box 360 Eagle, CO 81631 ~ 970.343.0333

Regular Board Meeting Minutes February 13, 2019

5:00 pm, 3289 Cooley Mesa Road, Gypsum, CO

**Meeting called to order by Scott J at 5:06pm**

**Supervisors Present:** Scott J, Scott S, Clayton, Shawn, Jay & Ken

**Supervisors Absent:** Wendy

**Guests:** Stephen J, the Hammers, Denyse S

**Approval of Minutes :** motioned byShawn, seconded by Scott S, all board members approved

**Roll Call Reports:** Board member miles & hours spent on conservation starting with the last regular meeting held January 9, 2018

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **BOARD MEMBER** | **HOURS** | **MILES** |
| Scott Jones | 120 |  450 |
| Scott Schlosser | 40 | 120 |
| Wendy Sacks | - | - |
| Clayton Gerard | 4 | 10 |
| Shawn Bruckman | 12 | 116 |
| Jay Taylor | 4 |  7 |
| Ken Marchetti | 9 | 150 |

***Treasurer’s Report:***

Alpine Checking Account balance: $16,079.75

Money Market Account balance: $30,624.17

***Old Business***

*Annual Meeting*- Shawn has compost and book to donate, Ken has a few items already and a few in the works, Scott J is handling the gifts for the small and large acre conservationists, Les Owen is confirmed to come and we don’t need to get him a hotel room, what is he going to talk about? Scott S wants him to talk about stream mgmt. & grazing plans. Clayton is going to reach out to Tractor & Supply for a donation. Denyse will give a mini presentation/introduction, maybe about the insectary in Fruita and how insects can help with invasive species. The Biohumanetics folks want to show a 5 minute video during the meeting, the Board will decide after watching the video from an email that Scott S is going to send. Shawn will update the CoAgMet Station brochure and Ken will print them for the meeting. The Board decided to show up at 5:30 on the 28th to set up, DM & Shawn will arrive at 5. Honeywagon is going to donate compost bins so the event will be zero waste.

*Deep Creek update*- Scott J mentioned they were supposed to have the grazing meeting and they’re going to move it to Feb 26- all stakeholders meeting from 10-12 location TBD either in Eagle or Garfield County, Scott J thinks the meeting will go longer though. Scott S met with Kirsten Learner privately to come up with a game plan, heard about it (Deep Creek) on Aspen radio so word is spreading and it has some legs, because of that working with Kirsten’s attorney and hydrologist to create a stance since just flat out objecting the designation won’t make a difference. Working with the Deep Creek planners is the best bet. Mr. Hammer mentioned that Steve C has general ideas on how to protect future grazing permits, water access and projects (ponds, spring development), ensure that cattle will have access to water during droughts, ask for as much as possible that way hopefully we’ll end up somewhere in the middle. The BLM and the Forest Service are concerned with water accessibility to the caves, so the boundaries are 2 miles on either side of the Creek instead of the typical ¼ mile. 1041 permit could make grazing permits easier to obtain and more affordable. After the designation how will the land be treated differently? The BLM and Forest Service have already been treating it as the designation since 2006. The representatives from the BLM and Forest Service who have attended the meetings are out of the loop and only the managers and employees at higher levels know what’s going on. There is a worry that if folks don’t attend the meetings then they won’t have a say or vote. Concerns that the agricultural community won’t have any say since only a handful of folks have been involved, however the lack of communication about Deep Creek to the Ag community was brought up as a contributing factor. Ken mentioned that we should contact our state senators to see if they have an opinion on Deep Creek yet, how far in the pipeline is this project? The Board decided to write a letter to Senator Gardner, Shawn recommended that we create a template to send out to landowners to send in to the Senators. Stephen suggested that we create a letter and have community members sign it at our annual meeting and then send it to the Senators. What will the letter say? Shawn suggested that the letter say that we can’t support the designation because x, y & z, that way we’re not opposed but not supporting it either. Be diplomatic about it. Landowners, producers, and grazers oppose this therefore the District opposes it since we represent our constituents. Melinda mentioned if it comes to a vote it’ll be a three finger vote. Stephen mentioned don’t forget that the District has clout, we should also get CACD and other Conservation Districts involved. Make sure to have contact info for state reps available at the annual meeting. Scott J and Shawn are going to work on creating a letter.

*Eagle River Community Water Plan update*- Talks of the Cattlemens survey were had and how best to get folks to take the survey. DM and Denyse will bring tablets to the Annual Meeting so folks can take the survey during the meeting. The ERCWP is still in its infancy so the same issues as far as the plan being too far along in the process aren’t the same as Deep Creek so hopefully the District will have input. After the survey is complete and the results are calculated, the District will work with the ERWC to present the findings to our constituents sometime in May. The meeting on 2/11/19 was about participant survey on community outreach, getting stakeholders to rate the sections of the plan on importance, threats, perceived risks, etc., however Scott S mentioned that they’re going to back away from the survey since it’s technical and no one will fill it out. Ken mentioned what is the point of these water plans when there are prior appropriations, what is the end goal of water plans? Stephen mentioned that consumptive and non-consumptive water use is important to watch since water uses by ag community will change due to Climate Change, droughts, longer grow season, etc. so water consumption will more than likely increase in the future so protecting the rights are key. Our goal is to try to get ahold of as many community members as possible; Stephen mentioned that we should have quarterly meetings in areas other than the County building to increase attendance. The next meeting will be in Avon on Feb 21st (Ken will attend) and then another meeting in Eagle on Feb 27.

***New Business***

**Other Business:** Scott J met Kate Greenberg the new Commissioner of Ag. He’s nervous about her lack of experience, however she seems enthusiastic. A lot of folks are concerned where the future of agriculture is going. One of her big goals is to connect youth with landowners. CACD House Bill 1082 passed, it pertains to ditch water right holders can maintain and pipe without the landowners stopping or suing.

Scott S asked the DM to send an invoice to Eagle County for our $5,000 operating funds, the DM will look into past emails to see what the agreement was.

Walking Mountains wants to participate in our scholarship, $2,500 to go towards youth down valley to attend classes and programs at the WMSC. Shawn made a motion to spend $2,500 on scholarships to give to rural youth down valley so they can attend classes at WMSC, Scott S seconded the motion and all Board Members approved the motion.

Shawn went to the ag expo, CO is getting hotter but not necessarily drier. The State Climatologist would love to come and give a presentation at some point, he’s a good speaker, he was instrumental in creating the CoAgMet Station. Talks of a blow up tunnel that has a bunch of info on soil and climate change that she asked if we could use at upcoming events.

Denyse mentioned they have an empty refrigerator if we’d like to store seeds in there. Stephen will bring a few mixes to the next meeting so the Board can see some examples of what other districts do.

Denyse has an advisory committee meeting to prioritize her programs; she wants input from the Ag community as far as what they’d like to see.

**NRCS Report:** The Farm Bill passed so NRCS has enough funding for a few months. Water levels are at 114% in the CO River Basin, and doing well throughout the state, we are still in D1 and D2 droughts though. The CO Climate Center said even with the moisture we’re receiving Lake Powell will still not be at normal levels, down 2 million acre feet. They’re thinking of balancing between Powell and Mead to maintain hydro operations. Processing EQIP applications and should start approving projects in a month or so. TCP grant due in April, the District will go over it during the next meeting.

**Mail Review:** N/A

**Next Meeting Date: 2/28/19 Annual Event**

**Adjourn:** Motioned by Clayton @ 7:54pm

**Notes taken by: Courtney Grant (District Manager)**