EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PO Box 360 Eagle, CO 81631 ~ 970.343.0333

Special Board Meeting Minutes February 5, 2020

5:00 pm, 3289 Cooley Mesa Road, CO 81637

**Meeting called to order at 5:00pm**

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

**Supervisors Absent: Wendy and Clayton**

**Guests: Gretchen Rank**

**Topics to Discuss:**

**Meeting with Gretchen on Mill Levy Notes**

Colorado Soil Conservation Act is the legislation that allows CDs to get a Mill Levy- maxes out at a half mill. “Stress this to the landowners that this is the max we can ask for by law and we will never come back to ask you for more”- it was a good selling point to use on the campaign.

Develop the ballet language so the Mill Levy lasts forever, no expiration date. DOLA certification required for the ballet language to approve the time frame, you can “sunset” the levy, etc. bottom line the language needs to be figured out with a lawyer.

Figure out the amount each type of land will pay, example agricultural land, residential and commercial because it was a common question they received, be able to answer “how much is this going to cost me?”

As of 2018 there are 12 Districts in Colorado that have a Mill Levy

Help from CSCB, local county assessor/clerk and recorder, other CDs that have a Levy and legal

CDs are a Title 35 District- make sure to find a legal counsel that is familiar with this type of district, not Title 32! Gretchen recommends the legal team they used and can provide us with contact info

Questions to be able to answer, “why are you pursuing a Mill Levy”? “What is the District planning on doing with the funding and how will it benefit me?” “What will this cost me?” (figure out different answers depending on who is asking)

Maybe send out a poll first? Feel the water to see if folks would vote in favor or not

Work with County clerk and recorder and assessor’s office to make sure they know what our District boundaries are and finalize a map if needed, get this done years out if needed. If neighborhoods, cities were created after the District was formed then they are subject to our Mill Levy-for example Red Cliff, Minturn, Eagle city limits were exempt when our District was formed but Eagle Ranch would be in our District boundaries and thus subject to the Mill Levy.

You’re not promoting the Mill Levy, you’re promoting your District!

Type of election, coordinated with the county (November) which is cheaper or District (May) which usually has less competition. Talk with the county to see was services they provide and associated costs (i.e. they can handle everything or just some things)

Does your county assessor’s list of landowners include all landowners on the deed (et al) or does it just include the first and second names listed?

Two parcels of residential property donated to the District back in the 50s which is what they used to get their funds from to pay for their Mill Levy. In our case our County Commissioners might be a good source of funding, but Gretchen mentioned that you should be pretty confident that the Levy will pass and frame like it’s a one-time ask since we’d have plenty of future funding. There aren’t any grants that she’s aware of to help pay for this. Maybe other local nonprofits could donate to our cause if we agree on future partnerships or at the very least get contact lists from them and/or a letter of support? Figure out how much the election is going to cost first.

Hold a public hearing concerning the imposition of a tax levy around a year out so Spring 2021

Does the County help with mailing ballots? Does the County Clerk help with election judges?

The property owners list comes from the County Assessor’s office. The voter registration list comes from the County clerk and Recorder. These two lists are used to create your poll book.

Follow Fair Campaign Practices Act- Colorado Revised Statutes, Section 1-45-101- you cannot campaign as a paid district employee or spend district funds on campaigning; you can spend District money on the actual election though. The use of government money or resources to influence an election in Colorado is prohibited.

Create a campaign committee- she can provide us with their campaign materials

Develop a fact sheet to answer common questions- be prepared to answer questions from people who are opposed to the Levy.

1/3 of voters are NO TAX people, just ignore them. 1/3 of voters already believe in the work the District does and will vote for the increase. 1/3 needs more info and these are the folks you should focus on.

Mapping 26+ hours, Lawyer research/bids 13+ hours, additional board meetings 2hrs/month if coordinated election, prep/research ballot language 8+ hours. Corporate mailing 33+ hours), DEO paperwork 8hrs, Financial info for Tabor notice 7 hours, board member paperwork 8 hours, 22 days prior to election work 91 hours (polling place needs to be open for folks to drop off ballots and checking our po box daily). They had 1,200 eligible and 700 ballots were received.

Board Members whose terms are up in the same year will be on the ballot

They spent $9,800 on legal fees

Mail in ballots (UOCAVA list)- military ballots need to be mailed early. Election day is 7am to 7pm and office should be open during normal work week (which is published)

**Other business than Mill Levy-**

ERWMP, ERWSD Efficiency plan and Brush Creek Water plan- all doing their own thing and not necessarily working together. Because of this there is now a Climate Action Collaborative Subgroup Water Working Group that is working on connecting various organizations who are working on water plans to work together and inform each other of one another. They will have quarterly meetings, Shawn will forward the next meeting so more of the Board Members can be present to represent ag.

There was a brief conversation of projects the District could work on to justify the Mill Levy and the there was a talks that we should go the half mill not just the quarter mill since we could partner with other organizations to help fund their projects too (ERWC, WMSC, etc).

Ken brought up an email from Holly Loff with ERWC asking about ATMs, are District’s thoughts on ATMs and if we’d be willing to present on the issue or our thoughts on the issue. Ken thinks the presentation should just be informal but not persuasive; the District doesn’t want to endorse this.

CACD has new legislation HB1115- make fencing tax exempt

Ken made a motion to send Gretchen a $100 Amazon gift card and thank you card for taking the time to with us today, seconded by Scott S and Shawn.

Scott S mentioned that one of our Board Members really should be on the Colorado Basin Roundtable since there isn’t an ag rep from Eagle County.

**Next Meeting Date: 2/26/20**

**Adjourn: 8:00pm**

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