**EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**PO Box 360 Eagle, CO 81631 (970) 445-0307**

Monthly Board Meeting Agenda March 9th, 2022

5:30pm at the Road and Bridge Facility

**Meeting called to order at: 5:34pm**

**Supervisors Present:** Scott Jones, Scott Schlosser, Wendy Sacks, Shawn Bruckman, Ken Marchetti, Jay Taylor, Clayton Gerard

**Supervisors Absent:** N/A

**Guests:** Kallie Rand, Ben Berlinger, Denyse Schrenker, Stephen Jaouen

**Approval of Minutes: motion to approve**

**Roll Call Reports:** Board member miles & hours spent on conservation starting with the last regular meeting held February 9th, 2022

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **BOARD MEMBER** | **HOURS** | **MILES** |
| Scott Jones | 30 | 0 |
| Scott Schlosser | 15 | 15 |
| Wendy Sacks | 4 | 20 |
| Clayton Gerard | 5 | 0 |
| Shawn Bruckman | 8 | 14 |
| Jay Taylor | 6 | 0 |
| Ken Marchetti | 16 | 1 |

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Alpine Checking Account balance: $37,058.17

Money Market Account balance: $30,658.24

QuickBooks Update- Ken noted that Wendy has shared ECCD’s QuickBooks database to Laura. She installed the QuickBooks 17 program, provided by Ken for free. He further explained that since ECCD is expecting to be audited for 2022, it is important to make sure that the 2021 numbers were reconciled in QuickBooks so that we can then recirculate those numbers accurately in the exemption from audit form. We have until end of the month to file with the state. Wendy, Laura and ken will get together at 1pm on Friday to run through it all.

**Topics to Discuss:**

SRM Summer Field Day- Ben Berlinger, NRCS Rangeland Management Specialist: Pat and Niki Luark received the Colorado Section, Society for Range Management science conservation award. Stephanie Pitt and Stephen Jaouen nominated the Luark Ranch. Each year the award goes to ranchers in CO who have demonstrated rangeland stewardship to their land. Ben stated that the Luark’s are well deserving! They will receive a gate sign, a plaque and an opportunity to have a tour on the ranch. Ben wishes to invite the Conservation District to co-sponsor the field day and share some of the cost. An estimated registration fee will be around $10 per head with provide BBQ and a porta potty. He estimated around15-30 people will come from SRM, expecting roughly $250. He also encouraged ECCD to promote the event. Dates anticipated: either June 10 or June 17. Shawn asked who our expected audience is, and transportation and lodging. SRM will provide lodging in either Glenwood or Eagle, and are expected to travel on their own. ECCD is encouraged to promote to all interested county organizations and the community. Ken asked if ECCD can dually promote our VF project to enhance our program. Laura will work with Ben to build brochure and flyer with info on ECCD’s VF Project, collect registration, and provide BBQ catering options. Ken motioned for ECCD to provide a porta potty and dually promote VENCE as a part of the process. Clayton seconded.

Kallie Rand- Grew up in Eagle County; bachelors in CU Boulder for Biology; passion for land management and restoration; CSU masters in School of Agriculture for Weed Science; focus on Cheatgrass management and prescribed burning. Then worked with Parks Dept and Open Space management in Denver but had a 2-year old daughter looking for mountain living which brought her here. Started Dec 1st.

Carbon Sequestration meeting and Climate Action Week- CAC brought up Climate Smart Commodities, a grant opportunity to help sequester carbon for ag producers. Shawn also mentioned that CAC is creating a carbon fund in Eagle County to promote land conservation and carbon sequestration. In the last meeting, Shawn introduced someone from CO Dept of Ag, who puts carbon funds into Agriculture. He has raised already $100,000 to distribute to the state. How it works: you put your projects up on their website and they select projects to fund. There is also the Climate Smart Commodities fund, a $1billion grant, to put into sustainable agriculture. Both are opportunities for funding. Shawn explained the benefits of carbon sequestration. Scott Jones said we could use the funding for no-till practices and worm castings; Ken recommended we add this topic to next month’s agenda.

Local Work Group- Topic moved to next months board meeting.

ArtWalk- 2nd Friday of May, July, Sept- Wendy motions to approve for Laura to sign up for 3 events around $30 per event. Ken seconds the motion.

Mill Levy- Ken introduced a draft budget for the mil levy, and initiated a discussion for how future presentations should look. He wishes to be ready for questions like: why should I vote for that; and how much money can we spend in an effective way; how much can we anticipate spending on a annual basis? He said to use that to back into a mil levy rate. And then, can we broach this topic to our presentation to Land Trust? Shawn agrees that we should introduce this topic to our listeners. She asked is there any need to get our PR Consultant secured first to guide this conversation? She recommended a ¼ mil and suggested more money for events and education; more support for local organizations. Laura made everyone an editor and recommend to go in and edit! Scott Jones recommended we go big and go for a half mil! He would like to see ECCD own land and Clayton recommended ECCD could fund Vence collars, fence removal- both which are huge 20-30 year projects. Wendy would like to see CoAgMet projects where technicians assist homeowners with water use practices. Laura will connect with each board member to collect mill levy projects.

EVLT presentation- Laura, Ken, Shawn and Scott S will meet Tuesday March 22 at noon to update the PowerPoint presentation with new mill levy approach.

RFP Applications- Shawn noted a couple of differences between Cliff and Jens. The most important being that Cliff would assist in seeking and applying for grants to help ECCD with certain costs. Additional costs include web design, social media, advertising and they survey. Ken mentioned the possibility to have them come in and present or to have a committee reach out with questions. Scott S noted that both are great communicators and both well known. Scott Jones inquired which of the two knows ECCD and our motives better? 4 votes were Cliff; Wendy made a motion to vote for Cliff, seconded by Jay.

Walking Mountains Scholarships- Laura stated that ECCD provides $1500 for scholarships. The total amount of applications were under $1500. Wendy made a motion to award all applicants; Shawn seconded.

Drought Applications- Scott Jones recommended a non-public work session for the board to go over applications. The board agreed for Thursday, March 24th at 6pm at the place above The Boneyard. Scott S will book room.

VENCE Update-

1. Budget & ezFedGrants- Laura showed the board members the new budget tab for VENCE. It also has a quarterly reimbursement section showing when $ will be coming in and out. Ken would like to see section showing which $ are Federal and non-Federal.
2. Contract w/ Participants- Laura walked the board through drafted contract with participants. Scott Jones said there should be a line item stating that Technicians should inform ranchers 24 hours in advance when they will be visiting the property. Laura asked for Ken and Shawn to review and edit in more detail.
3. Technicians- Laure then showed the board the Technician Position document to post before Friday the 11th after noon. The board agreed to post it at $20/hour and if we receive little response to adjust the compensation to a higher number. Stephen recommended forwarding the position to SRM who have great access to rangeland specialists.
4. Workshop- Clayton would like for the workshop to be on Thursday, April 14th. Laura will confirm this date with other participants.
5. Collars- The board has to make a decision about what to do with excess collars for this year. There are 3 other participants outside of our county who would like to receive potential funding for collars. The options are:
	1. Save extra collars for EC participants in years 2023,2024 and maybe even 2025
	2. Provide 50/50 match for some collars for neighboring districts to kickstart Virtual Fencing (cut cost in half)
	3. Offer to pay for a half year program (cut cost in half)
	4. Pay for only the collars ($17.50) not the batter (cut costs)
	5. Recommended: reach out to EC potential participants (total of around 3,300 collars) and provide a deadline for opportunity to participate in 2023+ OTHERWISE, utilize collars for neighboring participants.
6. Towers-Laura told the board about the 5 towers provided by Federal funding. Those towers are not owned by ECCD, they are owned by NRCS. ECCD needs to find a way to allow those towers to be placed on Feder Lands. Scott Jones will reach out to his NRCS connection to work on it.

S.T.A.R. Update- Laura updated everyone on the STAR program. We have done 1 consultation with the Gerards and are setting up meetings for the rest of the participants. Last training session will be March 29th in the Front Range.

PTO & Vacation- Moved to next board meeting.

*Broad discussion on other events that have happened in the past month-* meetings, conferences, etc.

Scott Jones- Mountain lion bill got shot down; EC Grading permit issue- Scott wishes to work as CD to address the issue: if you move more than 0% dirt you need a permit. Laura will add it to the agenda for next month.

**NRCS Report:** Stephen recommended for the Drought applications to come up with a ranking system, so that we have something to fall back on. Provide justification. Ranking tools: resources- projects going to help-water, erosion, etc. Laura will check to see from Emily if Gar-Pit CDs have a ranking system. On Eagle County projects, the NRCS has never spent over $200,000 in the last 6 years, -keep in mind when thinking of a mill levy rate. Also when thinking about presenting on the mill levy- be broad about projects such as: rangeland improvements, irrigation infrastructure, etc. NRCS pays $1/foot for fence removal, and cost shares of 50/50.

The Eagle River valley- 92% of median average; upper basin down to 90%; Roaring Fork is doing well, Eagle River, not doing so well; contracts getting ready to announce EQIP participants to come mid-April and funding by end of April. Laura will get drought applications to Stephen by April 1.

**CSU Ext Update:** Rocky Mountain oyster fry- March 19th; go support 4-H, doors at 5pm. This summer- Native Masters at Betty ford Alpine garden: June 3, 10 and 17. Free self-led online coarse for wildfires. Avian influenza has been detected in the Midwest- poultry producers advised! USDA value added producer grant workshop March 15 Link for all info: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GlfG1TSTru-6_0YRhaJ1nJqeLQQ9IaAbbcX5vkpfR-Y/edit?usp=sharing>

**Mail Review:** 1 drought application; Invitation to open lands; Nursery License

**Next Meeting Date: April 13, 2022**

**Adjourn: 8:50pm**

**Notes taken by: Laura Bohannon (District Manager)**