



WINKELMAN NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Quarterly Meeting

February 20, 2018

Final Minutes

Location: General Kearny Inn, 301 Alden Rd, Kearny, AZ 85137

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

Board and Staff

Bill Dunn, Steve Turcotte, Francie Meyer, Gary Vinson, Carol DuBois, Hattie Hedrick, Chris Postel.

Agencies

Kristen Egen & Alisha Phipps (NRCS), Jeff Hampton (Az Land Water Trust), Willie Sommers & Aaron Casem (AZForestryFire), Jackie Thomas & Mario Preciado (ASLD), and Darrell Tersey (BLM)

Members and Guests

Becky Dunn, Rick Bader, Chris Fletcher (RNRCD), Robin Barnes (Asarco), Charlie Recker, Katie Cline, Celeste Andersen (TNC), Chris & Samantha Misita, Jack & Catherine Mann, Linda Leigh & Laurie Bryant (Oracle Community Learning Garden), Patrick Granillo, and Fran Evans.

Minutes of Past Meetings

Reviewed minutes: 11/15/2017, 01/11/2018 & 02/02/2018, Steve Turcotte moved to accept the minutes. Carol DuBois seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report: District/State funds, \$32,803.74 & \$8,819.86. The Balance Sheet & Income Statement were reviewed. Steve Turcotte moved to accept the financial reports. Francie Meyer seconded. Motion passed. Steve Turcotte discussed that the District's accounting should use a modified accrual versus cash basis, due to the fact that grants require modified accrual accounting. This topic will be added to next quarterly meeting's agenda.

Invoice Review

Copper Area News Publishers for \$64.88, cost to publish Election Notice for 2 issues.

New Business

- **EQIP Update:** Kristen Egen (NRCS-See Attached Report). Funding (\$439,705) for 3 years is for brush management. NRCS has another \$146,568 just for this year for projects outside of CIS. The Districts need to have a Local Work Group meeting to identify resource concerns. The NRCS LWG meeting will be held on April 11 at 10 a.m. to review/plan CIS for FY2019. A WNRCD LWG meeting will be held on March 26 at CAC, Aravaipa. They have 9 current contracts for WNRCD area and 4 applications for 2018 which will be ranked by the end of March.
- **May, 2018 Elections:** Jackie Thomas (ASLD) met with the Attorney General's office and 25 signatures are required for the nomination petition and an election must be held, even if only one candidate is running. Mail-in ballots can be used. The election will be held on May 5, 10 am to 2 pm, at the GKI at the GKI. Bill Dunn, Gary Vinson, Becky Dunn and Samantha Misita will be on the election board. Carol DuBois will be running for the open position.

- **Oracle Community Learning Garden (OCLG):** Linda Leigh (See attached slides) presented an overview of the 2 acre OCLG. Currently, they are looking for organizations to partner with. Francie Meyer made a motion to have Winkelman & Reddington jointly meet with them to develop a plan. Steve Turcotte seconded. The motion passed.
- **Moving the NRCDs from State Land to Arizona Forestry:** Per Bill Dunn, the House and Senate have 4 legislative bills regarding the move. The bills are out of committee and will be going to the floor. The bills will rename Arizona Forestry to "Natural Resources and Fire Management Department." If the bills pass; then, they would be given to the Governor for his approval (signature).

Old Business

- **Sunzia:** Per Chris Fletcher, Sunzia is doing outreach to keep the public informed, they have a regular update meeting on the last Friday of the month. Chris can be contacted at (520) 212-4279 after 7 pm or bar.jf.ranch@hotmail.com
 - Joint Meetings: The first joint meetings WNRCD-RNRCD will be held on March 6 at 6 pm at the San Manuel Elks lodge. These joint meetings will be held on the first tuesday of the month.
 - Construction Update: Sunzia is repounding to issues & comments. Transmission towers were re-routed due to FAA requirements at the San Manuel airport. The towers are a new lattice design being tested in Europe. The Plan of Development (POD) defines the specifications and what it will inspect to, such as species and who handles it for State Land, probably BLM. The POD will go to BLM for them to approve and issue a Notice to Proceed. Overall, the stakeholders (the Districts, Pinal County, Cascabel Working Group) say that there will be a lot of new roads and disturbed existing roads. We need to find out why they can't use more aerial construction vs. conventional construction. Also, how long will the construction take and how invasive it could be?
 - Post Construction Inspection: It was discussed who would do the post-construction inspections, BLM or ASLD and what would be the job requirements. Anything thru the State would require 3 competing bids. So, could the NRCDs do these inspections? More information and research is needed. Per Jackie Thomas, the Sunzia project is being handled by the Right of Way Department - Commercial Sales & Leasing.
- **Kearny River Fire Grant:** Per Willie Sommers, this grant has taken almost 2 years. The environmental review is completed; then, a wildlife (US Fish & Wildlife) review was submitted in November and should be done in 135 days. He has 4 projects with 2 in Pinal County and 3 have been cleared. They involve salt cedar removal and should start in the Fall. Aaron Casem was introduced and will take over once the grant is approved. They need to identify the volunteer component.
- **AACD:** The winter meeting was held in Yuma, Az. Five people went to the national meeting.
- **District Project Coordinator Position:** Stephen Williams reviewed the position description and gave some suggestions to Bill Dunn. Overall, no change in status.
- **CAC Nursery:** Bill called CAC about the approval & MOU status but no response as of this date.

Reports from Agency Personnel

- **NRCS:** Kristen Egen. Keisha Tatum is back. Working on the Camp Grant project.
- **BLM:** Darrell Tersey. Their new budget is unknown but expecting an 18% reduction. They have final jurisdiction over the Sunzia POD. He said that Sunzia would hire the monitoring contractor but would be approved by BLM. The contractor would send reports to State Land & BLM.
- **Az Land Department:** Jackie Thomas. Previously, she was a Range Resource Manager in northern Arizona and now is the full-time NRCD program manager at ASLD. She attended the national meeting

and met with other western states NRCDS. An ASLD NRCDS workshop will be on March 20 at 10 am in Phoenix for supervisors, clerks & cooperators. They will discuss their mission statement and 1-5 year strategy plans. Lunch will be provided; so, please call Jackie to register. Per Mario Preciado, he is reviewing the Camp Grant plan.

- **AZ State Forestry:** Willie Sommers: \$2 million has been funded for this year's for fuels reduction grants; so, he will start doing the ground work in March. The grants are due in September.
- **The Nature Conservancy:** Celeste Andersen. The Lower San Pedro Collaborative Watershed group is focused on watershed health and is looking for involvement from the Districts and other interested organizations. Pima & Pinal County are involved and Tanya Robertson is the facilitator.
- **Land Exchange:** Robin Barnes (Asarco). The comments are in and a final EIS was issued. A decision should be reached by the end of 2018.
- **Arizona State Land Trust:** Jeff Hampton: Still need workshop topics.
- **USFS, AZGF, UA Copper Ext, & Pinal County Sheriff - absent**

Supervisors Reports

Francie Meyer, 4 rabid foxes have been killed in their area; so, a severe rabies outbreak is underway. Chris Fletcher said that 2 rabid skunks were killed in the Reddington area.

Bill Dunn, Chris & Samantha Misita are new cooperators.

Call to the Public

Jack Mann: An ACJ meeting will be on Feb 21. Catherine Mann: a Southern Arizona Cattlemen's Protective Association will have a meeting on April 7.

Adjourn

Steve Turcotte made a motion to Adjourn at 12:03 p.m. for lunch. Francie seconded it. Motion carried

Education Center Meeting (Convened at 1:24 pm)

Financial Report: Checking account balance is \$17,513.00 and still has to deposit \$1,250. Cooperators have donated \$1,114 this year. Hattie had a letter from CAC to sponsor "College for Kids" scholarships. Motion by Steve Turcotte to fund 10 scholarships for \$2,100. Carol DuBois seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business

Ag & Science Career Day for High School students: Per Bill, talked to CAC but no response.

Call to the Public None

Adjournment

Motion by Carol DuBois to adjourn meeting at 1:33. Steve Turcotte seconded. Motion passed.

Minutes Submitted by: Chris Postel, Winkelman NRCDS Clerk Date: February 20, 2018

Approval of Minutes: _____ Date: _____

Winkelman NRCDS Quarterly Meeting – February 20, 2018
Next Quarterly meeting: May 16, 2018