

Colorado Association of Conservation Districts

April 9, 2014

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Via Conference Call

Attendees:

Gary Moyer, President
Don McBee, Vice President
Gary Thrash, Director
Anthony Lobato, Director
Brian Starkebaum, Director
Scott Nocks, Director
Jim Cecil, Director
Charlie Carnahan, Director
Brett Moore, CACD Lobbyist
Cindy Lair, Program Manager – CSCB
Larry Sweeney, President – Colorado State Conservation Board (CSCB)
Brian Neufeld, Former CACD Director
Sharon Pattee, CACD Executive Director

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by President Gary Moyer at 7:33 a.m. after establishing a quorum.

President Gary Moyer called for additions to the agenda. A request was made by Don McBee (Lower Arkansas River) to add brief discussion regarding the EPA/Army Corps of Engineers proposed expansion of the Clean Water Act to the agenda.

Prior Meeting Minutes:

President Gary Moyer entertained a motion to approve the March 2014 minutes. Scott Nocks made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Anthony Lobato, and without further discussion the motion to approve the minutes as presented passed unanimously.

Legislative Update:

Brett Moore reviewed his Bill Tracking Update as of April 6, 2014. Timing is about ¾ of the way through this session. We are following 544 bills total, with 184 introduced by the Senate, and 360 bills being introduced by the House. We are currently monitoring 36, in support of 5, and opposing 1—all of which deal with natural resource issues. Last month, CACD support of Senate Bill 14-052, dealing with soil erosion and county board of commissioners, earned CACD a place at the Governor's bill signing table on March 21.

SB14-179, which addresses debris cleanup from the South Platte floods last year, received a one year extension on relief. Brett was present to testify in favor of the extension. HB14-1028, Opposition to Federal Special Use Permits Water Rights is in limbo. It was sent to the "kill" committee, but will resurface in the next few weeks. Districts (particularly from Adams County Senate District 21), will be able to voice their opposition to the bill, in the coming weeks via email or telephone calls.

There was an amendment to the Long Bill of \$1.0 million for some tumbleweed mitigation/control; however it was never presented to the general public, so it quickly died. Turkey Creek CD brought forth a Resolution Action Item to their Watershed (Upper Arkansas River) for CACD to support funding for Tumbleweed cleanup efforts. It passed at the Watershed level on Thursday, 4/3, and has been sent to CACD's Soil and Land Resource

Committee for review and recommendation. There was word that another similar Resolution is being brought forth from the Lower Arkansas River Watershed, on Friday 4/11.

Brian Starkebaum (Lower South Platte), CACD's current Legislative Committee Chair, reported on the 2014 Ag Day at the Capitol program that took place on March 26th. The event was well attended by numbers of Colorado's Ag related entities, not only showcasing CO agriculture, but also providing a huge networking opportunity and show of support for CO's economic agriculture industries and cooperators.

Brett also reported that there are about 60 ballot initiatives, some that could affect Conservation Districts. More information and updates to follow. Additionally, funding for the Noxious Weed Grant was almost doubled, providing more grant opportunities for Districts and local government on noxious weed mitigation. These grants will cover the State's Noxious Weed listing, for A and B species.

Scott Nocks (Colorado River) asked about the CO Water Plan that had been heard in Committee last week. Brett reported that it has been referred to the Legislative Council. There is a SW Water Conservation District had an informational packet on the miscellaneous water ballot initiatives. Gary Thrash (San Juan Basin) will follow up in an email with the particulars, which can be sent out to the CD's.

Miscellaneous:

Scott Nocks is concerned about the length of the monthly Board conference calls. He spoke about a service from Yahoo that entailed some kind of a "chat room" group service that is password protected, in order to cut down on the length of the monthly BOD call. He made the motion to have CACD look into the Yahoo service, with Anthony Lobato (Rio Grande) making the second. There was a small amount of discussion, before a vote passed the motion presented.

CO State Conservation Board Updates:

Cindy Lair reported the Department of Agriculture is moving from Lakewood to a new location in the Interlocken Business Park in north Denver. It is likely the move will take place in late May at the soonest. She also said that Nikki Reed had given her notice, mainly due to the office move north to Broomfield. They will be looking for her replacement in the coming weeks.

Cindy reported on the status of the Mesa Conservation District's "in good standing" issue, or lack thereof, and whether or not they would be able to fix what needed to be fixed. The problem extends to the DCT that also works for DeBeque – Plateau Valley CD, now his position is jeopardized. There is a possibility that Mesa could merge with another CD, but there is a process that would need to be followed. She will update the Board as things progress.

Cindy asked CACD for feedback on the state's Envirothon project, i.e. what direction and what role does CACD want to take. There is feedback coming from West Greeley CD that they would like to have Mark Cronquist (CSCB) pull out of the educational advisory role, and that that role be handed over to Pam Wright (WGCD). Cindy also felt that WGCD would like to see CACD out of the project development as well and that WGCD would keep more of the ownership and control of the Envirothon program. Gary Moyer explained that it was through CACD that West Greeley CD received the amount of control over the project that they currently have, through NACD's national sanctioning. All felt that Mark's presence in the day to day workings of the program was good, maybe even a necessary thing. All thought that Envirothon should be a statewide collaboration and partnership. Anthony Lobato (Rio Grande), who is the CACD Board representative for the Envirothon project, said that he thought that there was some dysfunction currently, and that removing Mark would be a mistake. Anthony feels that a collective meeting needs to take place between CACD, CSCB, and WGCD and that WGCD needs to recognize that this is a "statewide" program, and should entail a group effort for success. Cindy reiterated that CACD needs to decide how they want to move forward with this issue and let her know as soon as practicable.

Lastly, Cindy said that felt good with the direction that Camp Rocky was progressing and that the “team” was working well together, without issues to date. She also announced that the summer face-to-face CSCB meeting would be in Trinidad, July 1 – 2. Anyone was welcome to join them.

NRCS Updates:

Phyllis Philipps (CO State Conservationist) was not able to be on this month’s call. She has announced her retirement, effective May 2.

Administrative Updates:

Sharon Pattee (Executive Director) started the administrative updates with asking Board approval to purchase and send flowers to Janette Terry, who was CACD’s acting administrator during the past four months, as a “thank you”. The motion was made by Don McBee (Lower Arkansas River) and seconded by Charlie Carnahan (Upper South Platte). There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Sharon then moved on to various other updates, specifically:

The 2013 Annual Meeting Survey that Janette had compiled the survey information on and the Board was encouraged to review. This info will be used in the planning stages of the 2014 Annual Meeting. Sharon asked the BOD to give some thought to a “theme” for the meeting in November.

The new website is being updated on a regular basis by Mike Macklin, who has submitted a bill for his web support in the amount of \$480.

Agreeing with Cindy Lair’s thoughts on the Camp Rocky (CR) progress, Sharon said that this was one “project” that seemed to be going well so far and that Amy Gossman, the 2014 camp co-director, is doing a great job. The CR “team” of staff and junior leaders has had two lengthy conference calls and has scheduled a face-to-face meeting in Denver for mid-May. It was also mentioned that Mark Platten with the CSU Extension in Woodland Park nominated Camp Rocky for recognition with the Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals (ANREP) and received the “Outstanding Team” award, and will be presented with the award certificate at the ANREP Conference on May 21, 2014.

It was Sharon’s desire to send out a request for news articles to the Districts and CACD’s partners, for a spring 2014 issue of The Conservator. She hoped to have something out within two weeks.

The suggestion of the Board’s summer face-to-face meeting, usually in the month of August, be held in the Leadville area was made by Sharon. This location would allow the BOD to view the Upper Arkansas River Restoration Project and is a nice fairly central location.

Financial Review and Updates:

Sharon Pattee reviewed various financial reports through the end of February 2014. She reported as of the end of February, the following districts have paid dues in full (\$1000): Center, Fremont, Haxtun, South Pueblo County and South Side. The following districts have paid partial (\$500) dues: Central Colorado and Douglas County. Gary Moyer entertained a motion to accept the financial reports. Anthony Lobato made a motion to accept the financial reports as presented. The motion was seconded by Scott Nocks. Motion carried. Sharon commented that she is very encouraged by the dues received so far. She is planning a follow-up letter to promote payment of district dues. She encouraged Board members to take every opportunity to reach out to districts to support CACD through payment of dues.

District Outreach Program Update:

Gary Moyer enlightened the Board about the status of the District Outreach Program, the NRCS/CACD collaborative agreement entered into last summer, in order to reach out to ten field offices around the state and provide an informational session to help CD's understand the partnership dynamic between CACD, NRCS, and CSCB, and the roles and responsibilities of the District and its Board of Supervisors to their landowners. In a mutual decision, CACD has released Dawn Smith as the contracted coordinator. Moyer suggested that this Program be taken over by the CACD Executive Director. He felt that this would be beneficial in a variety of ways, including but not limited to: CACD's ED's exposure to these less engaged Districts; the ED's thorough understanding of what CACD is trying to accomplish with this Program; and the comfort level that the goals of the Agreement should very likely be met with the ED performing this job.

Don McBee asked about how the compensation to the ED would be handled, since the Agreement allows for \$20,000 being paid to the contracted party. Moyer suggested that there would be no additional compensation to the ED. Jim Cecil (Republican) asked Sharon Pattee how she felt about taking on the responsibility of the DOP and without any compensation. Sharon responded that she had not given it much thought because she wasn't sure where the Board might go with this issue. She commented that this was not in the ED's job description and that it would be very time consuming, but she could definitely see the value in CACD's ED performing this task. A motion was made by Don McBee to have Sharon Pattee assume the responsibility of the DOP. The motion was seconded by Charlie Carnahan (Upper South Platte) followed by a small amount of additional comments, and the motion passed unanimously.

President's Updates:

Gary Moyer reported on his trip to the NACD 2014 Legislative Conference, March 25 – 28, 2014 in Washington DC. He was able to meet with all members or staff of the Colorado delegation, which included a total of nine meetings, speaking directly on five of Colorado's most contentious natural resource issues. Moyer had an important meeting with Congressman Polis' staff regarding HB14-1028. He also met with the BLM and the National Wild Horse Coalition as a Supervisor of the White River Conservation District, along with Callie Hendrickson. Gary stressed that this portion of the trip was paid for by his local CD and not CACD.

There was also little to report on the proposed agreement between CACD and the CDPHE. Randy Ristau, with the CDPHE, is still working on the particulars of the proposal that would involve certain Districts, with CACD acting as the fiscal pass through for funding certain water quality "projects". As soon as there is something definite to report, Gary will inform the Board. The same was said for the Big Thompson CD's request for CACD to act as a fiscal agent for their Little Thompson River Restoration Project. As soon as there is something more tangible to report, the Board will be brought up to speed.

Moyer said that although there was not much to report on the CACD Resource Committees, that there was an "Action Item" resolution that came forth from the Turkey Creek CD with respect to landowner assistance in tumbleweed clean-up. This resolution was passed at the Upper Arkansas River Watershed's spring meeting the previous week and now has been sent to the Soil and Land Resource Committee for their review and recommendation.

Other Business:

Don McBee commented about the EPA/Army Corps of Engineers proposed Clean Water Act changes. He felt that agriculture needed some exemptions in the proposed adjustments, in order to limit the impact on producers, and asked that CACD provide comment accordingly. He is in the process of reading the lengthy document and said that he will provide the Board with a written draft of recommendations as soon as possible.

Next Board Meeting:

Gary Moyer entertained a motion to schedule the next meeting for May 14, 2014. Don McBee made the motion with Gary Thrash providing a second. Without further discussion, the motion was passed unanimously for Wednesday, May 14, 2014 at 7:30 a.m. via teleconference.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:26am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Pattee
Executive Director