

**Colorado Association of Conservation Districts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 23rd, 2020 - 8:00 AM
Face to Face Radisson Inn – Denver NW Stock Show**

Attendees:

*Scott Jones, CACD President - Colorado River Watershed Director
Tyler Neely, CACD Vice President - Rio Grande River Watershed
Jim Cecil, Director - Republican River Watershed Director
George Fosha, Director - Upper Arkansas River Watershed Director
Nick Charchalis, Director - North Platte/White/Yampa River Watershed
Nancy Berges, Director – Lower South Platte Watershed
Bob Warner, CO Alternate Representative to NACD
Brett Moore, CACD Lobbyist
Bobbi Ketels, CACD Executive Director*

Absent:

*Mike Cleary, Director - Gunnison/Dolores River Watershed Director
Charlie Carnahan, Director - Upper South Platte Watershed
Steve McEndree, Director – Lower Arkansas River Watershed
Gary Thrash, Director - San Juan Basin Watershed /CO Representative to NACD*

Guests:

*Les Owen, CDA
Clint Evans, NRCS
Rachel Theler, CSCB
Larry Lempka, CACDEA
Mark Cronquist, Envirothon (called in)*

Call to Order:

*The meeting was called to order by **President Scott Jones** at 8:12 AM after establishing a quorum. **President Scott Jones** asked for any additional agenda items. The board discussed adding an Executive Session to the agenda. Without any additional changes the board agreed to add an Executive Session and moved on with the agenda.*

Legislative Update – Brett Moore:

***Legislative Liaison Brett Moore** extended Thank You's to the board for another successful evening at the rodeo with a nice mix of legislators and our award recipients. Brett passed out the bill tracking sheet and reviewed how the process works. The legislative calls will take place each month during the 2020 legislative session.*

*The **2020 Legislative Committee** includes **Scott Jones, Jim Cecil, Tyler Neely, and Steve McEndree** with assistance from **George Fosha and Nick Charchalis**. Brett discussed the duties of the legislative committee and policy subcommittee; the policy book will be reviewed and discussed for any needed changes through 2019. The **Policy Book Review Subcommittee** includes **Nancy Berges, Nick Charchalis and George Fosha**; with assistance from **Scott Jones and Jim Cecil**.*

The policy book with suggested revisions will be submitted to the watersheds and resource committees for review and input. It was discussed that action items should not be included as new policy, but that we should keep a list of annual action items and track our work on each one passed by membership. This list will continually be shared with the districts to keep them updated and to encourage their involvement.

Due to time and funding constraints; prioritizing these resolutions and action items will be part of the overall process. Once the cleanup of the book is complete, the committee will need to review with the entire board for final approval and a possible resolution to make the changes official with district membership.

*Brett circled back around to point out from the tracking sheet **CACD HB20-1115** - Sales Tax Exemption for Farm Fencing Material. This was a 2018 Resolution action item brought forth by the **Delta CD**. **Representative Catlin** is the sponsor. Board discussion took place regarding this bill. The date for the next legislative call will be January 30th, 7:30 AM.*

*Brett reminded everyone that **Ag Day at the Capitol** is March 25th this year and encouraged everyone to attend. He also reminded everyone that the **Ag Council** meets at noon every couple weeks and that Bobbi had emailed the schedule to everyone. Brett will continue to cover these meetings and encouraged everyone to attend one if possible. Brett and George reviewed the instream bills and board discussion took place. Brett talked about his intern Mary and how she is starting to work with Bobbi on the some of the social media activity and website updates, as she does for Brett with some of his other clients.*

CDA Update-Les Owen:

***Les Owen** started with legislative agenda items concerning CDA. One of the bills is restating the severance tax dollars that go to the acre 3 program (the renewal energy grant program with the department). The severance tax transfers went away back in 2016 or 2017. This is to restate that. The pot of funds that they are using now will be depleted in about a year and this bill is to replace this source of funding. It used to be a tier 2 severance tax program that gave up to \$500K. Hemp rules are changing, and state rules need to get in line with USDA rule. There are a handful of sunsets going through as well.*

There are some budget requests in the long bill funding for some positions within acre 3; which includes organics, the soil health program and other different programs. There is some legislation that deals with pesticide restrictions and there is one that deals with notification to pesticide applicators if they are being investigated. Discussions took place on state funding opportunities. Nick stated we need to get Sam from the energy department on one of our upcoming calls to discuss some available sources of funding.

Federal input is needed on several items. There are some interim rules for EQIP open for comments until February 16th. NEPA regulations comments are due March 9th. The Denver NEPA meeting in February is already sold out. Brett will reach out to some of his comments about the NEPA concerns.

BLM submitted a notice of intent on grazing regulations and comments are due March 6th. BLM has an online map showing vacant allotments. BLM is accepting nominations for the resource advisory councils. There are a couple of different ways for folks from districts to get in on one of these councils. Les gave some information on the Rocky Mountain Restoration project. NRCS is in it and this is in SW Colorado. Rio Grande Forrest plan has ongoing information coming out. GMUG will have a draft forest plan out in a few months for comment. Eastern Colorado; BLM is in the drafting stage for Eastern Colorado. The final proposed WOTUS rule is rumored to be announced today.

NRCS Update-Clint Evans:

Clint Evans stated the 2018 Farm Bill rules are out for public comment. EQIP public comment is closed. Regional Conservation Program is nearly closed. USDA must approve state level HEMP plans statewide. State Technical Advisory Committee meeting was not going to be well attended so the date will be changed. EQIP incentive programs **will** be available for input. This is going to be an important meeting. CACD needs to be there if **possible, to** share their input on these program changes from the Farm Bill. Clint said there will be a teleconference call-in option.

Clint distributed the project narrative piece of the year-three amended agreement between NRCS and CACD. Clint gave a brief overview of the amended agreement and how some additional funding was approved as submitted by CACD. Clint talked about a new three-year agreement if CACD was interested in entering into a new agreement starting in 2021. He said the soft deadline date would be the end of March. He discussed the possibilities of a new contract, adding funding to existing programs, or possibly changing and/or adding some programs to this cooperative agreement.

Clint brought up the Arizona Intern program and gave a brief description of how a similar program might work for CACD within our cooperative agreement. Clint stated he would get a template of the Arizona program for our review. Clint will be attending the NACD Annual meeting in Las Vegas, NV coming up in February and mentioned maybe there would be more opportunity to have further discussions about the intern program. The board confirmed Gary Thrash and Bob Warner would also be attending. Clint wanted to catch up with Frank on how the intern program is working for them.

Clint stated the objective is to establish an 8-week internship program for high school juniors and seniors who may be interested in careers in natural resources conservation. It gives them hands-on internship in a field office to participate in day to day work activities working with producers and learn about conservation planning. As well as an additional training to help get them set up to go into the NRCS pathways internship program. They are not eligible for that until they get through their sophomore year of college.

For NRCS this is a grassroots development program to help staff offices in the future by getting the students interested and get them on a path where they are getting the right degrees. Clint stated this would be a new program for Colorado. We could even target freshman and sophomores in college which would still give them time to adjust their course for getting the correct degrees.

Arizona Intern Program: Identified 4 locations, budgeted \$45K for these four locations. It is \$8K to develop the internship, bring them on board for the summer and then \$30K to cover the 8 weeks. This includes working with local CDs, FFA, Cattle Growers, Farm Bureau, and 4-H to recruit a diverse group of individuals to apply for internship positions, develop job descriptions employment applications and paperwork. As well as to include providing administrative management, including interviews, process new hires, payroll, travel arrangements, etc.

When Clint sends this for CACD to look at, to decide if this is something CACD wants to do in-house or sub award down to a local district. The second aspect of this is to hire the four interns for 8 weeks including travel and to develop training material relevant to professional development, business communications and the USDA pathways program. Student interns will receive professional development business communications and pathways program training. This includes three days of intern travel. Clint felt this would be a great opportunity for Colorado districts. The board agreed. Example: \$50K for 5 interns with a 10% admin fees.

The new three-year match agreement will need to be approved by the end of March. We possibly could add the intern plan in this agreement and make adjustments to it at a later date to make the enhancements needed. It may be possible to do a 75/25 match. The program with Arizona is 100% funded by NRCS, but for

Colorado this would mean it would have to be open up for compete. College credits would need to be explored. This is not something that is in the Arizona program.

The students would have to compete to get into the program, but once in and once graduated with the right training and degree requirements and the go through the pathways program NRCS would be able to offer them a job straight out of college, noncompetitively. We need to pick spots where there is staff to do adequate training. We have to make the commitment to make this work or we will be in the same position years down the road with the problem of finding employees to hire.

Clint said there is a college scholarship of \$2500, intern salary of \$4K and a travel budget of \$1K given to each intern. Clint said again to think about the option of having a more targeted approach where districts have the capacity. In this case CACD acts as the umbrella and admin. Similar to the CSCB DCT program. We do not have to follow exact to what Arizona has done. Clint will have to get more information on budgeting for the on-call program, so this will come later. Everyone agreed to further discussion at the NACD meeting and on the next CACD board call which has been changed to February 19th at 7:30 AM.

Envirothon-Mark Cronquist:

Mark Cronquist called in to give an update on Envirothon. He gave an update on where they were on finalizing the logistics of the 2020 program. He discussed how they are working on four various entities on funding sponsorships, discussed staffing details and staging of the rooms for the event. Discussion took place on the contract between Mark and CACD. Bobbi asked if Mark would agree to extend it through July 31, 2020, to allow for time to wrap-up the national competition. Mark agreed to the extension.

Set up is April 20th with the event running April 21-22. We will have to do our own setup. Four volunteers will be needed for setup. Mark is working on securing a block of rooms and working with the Pueblo County 4-H to see if they are available to cater a dinner meal. Mark went on to discuss plans to put in place safety procedures for the event. He continues to communicate and work with topic experts. Mark discussed changes to the presentation portion of the competition and explained that he is working with the National Envirothon Committee to get details on the new procedures at the national level. Mark confirmed he is still looking for an aquatics topic expert. **Alyssa Clarida** will be the volunteer coordinator and there will be a list of volunteer positions with a description of responsibilities for each position. **Rachel Theler** is uploading revisions to the state competition website. Some revisions to the website are pending new rule information from the national committee. Mark and Bobbi will work on an email blast to all Colorado districts asking for sponsorships and volunteers. Bobbi reviewed Envirothon state financial information with the board.

CACD VP Tyler Neely stated he had read through Mark's contract and felt comfortable with it and had no problem with Mark making the change to extend the contract period to July 31, 2020. **President Scott Jones** asked for a motion. **Director George Fosha** made the motion to allow Tyler and Bobbi to give final approval on the CACD contract with Mark Cronquist once revised, without further review from the board. **Director Nick Charchalis** gave the second. Motion carried.

CSCB Update-Rachel Theler:

Rachel Theler started with saying Mark's position had not yet been hired. The **Soil Health Program** is moving along, and it is still pending if this program will run under the direction of **CSCB** or directly under the direction of **CDA**. There are listening sessions taking place around the state. Helen Silver is heading this up as a partner effort, but this effort is completely separate from what CDA is developing. The collaborative group is there to gather information and pass it along to CDA as to what is truly needed. The coalition continues to work on getting a lot of producers at these meetings.

Rachel briefly spoke about some changes to her position in the near future. She will still support some districts and also take on an outreach program for the entire state. Rachel is not sure how many districts she will cover going forward. Marketing and communications will be important and key to this new role.

Rachel will be able to help CACD draft materials on any outreach and marketing. This will not include FB or the website and will not control content put out by CACD. Rachel may be able to help with formatting the **CO Conservator** magazine, but it would depend on what her new role entails. Right now, she does not have the time. Further discussions took place on what the future of the **CO Conservator** looks like.

Per **CO Employee Association President Larry Lempka**: all districts are trying to create something, and it may be more feasible to combine all these efforts together. Rachel shared many ideas, and she mentioned taking a look at the **Washington State Association** and what they have developed. **SCC.WWA.gov** is the Washington site with the marketing tool kit that they developed.

Rachel reviewed Board changes: **Margaret Lenz** was term limited at the end of the year and this position had not yet been appointed by **Governor Polis**. **Don McBee** is now the representative to the board from the **Lower Ark Watershed**.

NACD Updates:

Executive Director Bobbi Ketels read an update for **CACD Director Gary Thrash** who was not able to make it to the meeting. Gary will be attending the NACD Annual meeting in Las Vegas, NV. Gary will include the issue of the **Wolf Reintroduction Ballot Initiative** during the NACD regional meetings. He will also discuss the wild horse/BLM issue and the drought issues, along with grant opportunities for Colorado.

Colorado will host the 2020 Wildfire Summit June 22-25 in the Denver area. NACD is covering the costs and will partner with CSCB, NRCS, CACD, JCCD and other state partners to be determined. The focus will be on pre & post fire mitigation. Venue location and tour sites are yet to be determined. Gary Thrash will be the CACD lead for this summit. Bobbi mentioned she would like to attend.

The upcoming NACD Fly-In is March 25 and the cost is approximately \$2,400.00. **Gary Thrash** will attend, and **Tyler Neely** may be able to join him if approved by the board. **President Scott Jones** asked for a motion for approval to send Gary and Tyler to the NACD Fly-In. **Director Jim Cecil** made the motion and **Director George Fosha** gave the second. Motion carried. The NACD summer meeting will be in Bismarck, ND.

Prior Meeting Minutes:

President Scott Jones asked for a motion to approve the **December 2019 minutes**. **Director George Fosha** made the motion to approve and **Director Jim Cecil** gave the second. Without any further discussion, the motion to approve the CACD BOD's **December 2019 minutes** was passed unanimously.

Monthly Financial Update:

CACD FINANCIALS: 12-31-19

Beginning Balance in checking on December 2nd, 2019, \$145,866.70

Checks/Payments Cleared -\$55,258.85, Deposits Cleared \$24,493.96

(Total Cleared Transactions -\$30,764.89)

Ending/Cleared Balance in Checking as of December 31st, \$115,101.81

Total Uncleared Transactions= -\$ -11,718.24 Checks/Payments - Deposits \$0

Ending Register Balance as of December 31st, \$ 103,383.57

Reserve remains at \$26,075.15 (remaining payback due to reserve total \$15K)
Funds allocated for AM 2020 \$5,000.00
NOI as of 12/31/19 \$73,308.42

Credit Card Ending Statement Balance as of 01/07/2020 \$0.00
Total District Dues Paid as of 12/31/2019 \$61,300.00 (5) Anadarko Credits \$2300.00
2019 Total Dues \$63,600.00
Individual & Lifetime memberships collected \$600 +150=\$750.00

UARRP Activity 2019: Total pass-through income \$241,918.54
Total pass-through expenses -\$230,237.07
Total CACD Net Income Earned 2019 \$11,681.47 (Includes 5% Admin & Payroll Reimb)
Balance of Federal Funds Available \$150,797.09

NRCS Agreement

2018/2019 Remaining Workshop Funds \$230.07 – 2019 open invoice \$2008.34
2018/2019 \$56,100.00 original contract amount – CACD Admin Fees \$5,610.00 earned
2019/2020 Approved Amended Contract \$74,800.00 (CACD Admin Potential \$7,480.00)
2019/2020 Annual Meeting Match Reimb \$18,836.61 & Admin \$1883.66 (Open Invoice)
Potential \$25K, 10% Admin \$2500 – Balance \$6,163.39 & Admin \$616.33

The board reviewed the normal monthly financials that had been previously emailed with hard copies distributed at the beginning of the meeting. **CACD VP Tyler Neely** made the motion to accept the **December financials** as presented, subject to **Director Mike Cleary's** final review of all year-end financials. **CACD Director Jim Cecil** gave the second. The motion to approve the **CACD December financials** subject to Mike's final approval carried.

Director Mike Cleary received detailed end of year reports, including P&L per Class and Balance sheet 2018/2019 comparison. Mike will review all monthly and year-end financials and then approval will be given to proceed with 2019 tax return preparation by turning over final financials and supporting documentation to our CPA by January 29th. Mike will review on Monday following this meeting and approve by phone since he was not able to make the face-to-face meeting.

Discussions took place on the annual meeting financials. Income and attendance were down, but CACD saved on overall expenses by \$10K in comparison to cost at Embassy Suites. CACD did not lose money on the Annual Meeting. Bobbi reviewed the expenses allowed for reimbursement under the CACD cooperative agreement with NRCS.

Bobbi explained that after working the numbers and preparing the invoice, there were still funds left over to help pay for board of director mileage this year if this is something the board wanted to do. **President Scott Jones** asked for a motion to pay mileage on the 2019 annual meeting. **VP Tyler Neely** made the motion. **Director Nick Charchalis** gave the second. Motion carried. Discussions took place about CACD directors' ability to make individual donations to CACD.

Discussion took place on the UARRP grant. The renewal contract will expire August 31, 2022. The last year of the 2018/2019 NRCS/CACD cooperative agreement has approximately \$230 remaining. This small balance will roll over into the 2020 funding, which is the last year of the current agreement, as discussed earlier with **Clint Evans**. **Bobbi** is working on a revised reporting system in order to report all education and outreach

applications approved through this agreement, details of the workshop, total amounts approved, workshops completed, funds reimbursed and NRCS reimbursement back to CACD.

Executive Director Bobbi Ketels asked the board to designate remaining Envirothon funds earned in 2019 (after clearing up balance reimbursement due back to CACD of \$3177.89), in the amount of \$9,629.01 to the 2020 Envirothon budget. **CACD Director Nick Charchalis** gave the motion. **Director George Fosha** gave the second. Motion carried.

Executive Director Bobbi Ketels asked the board to designate remaining Camp Rocky funds earned in 2019 in the amount of \$1200.00 to the 2020 Camp Rocky budget. **President Scott Jones** asked for a motion. **CACD VP Tyler Neely** gave the motion. **Director George Fosha** gave the second. Motion carried.

Camp Rocky:

Bobbi gave a brief update on planning. Waiting for further Child Care laws update on background checks and any other changes prior to signing 2020 contract and paying the required deposit. CACD will implement any childcare laws as required. This still includes the 1/12 ratio of minors with supervisors. Expenses of background checks will be reimbursed by CACD. Bobbi asked for CACD Board approval to move forward with 2020 Camp Rocky contract. **President Scott Jones** asked for a motion. **CACD Director Jim Cecil** made the motion. **CACD VP Tyler Neely** gave the second. Motion carried.

Annual Meeting:

Bobbi asked the board for volunteers to be on the 2020 Annual Meeting committee. **VP Tyler Neely** will chair the committee. Other members of the committee include **President Scott Jones, Director Nick Charchalis**. Bobbi will discuss with **Director Gary Thrash** to confirm he is still willing to be in charge of the awards selection, awards slide show and awards ceremony.

President Misc. Discussion and Updates:

Discussions took place about CACD BOD Calls and partner updates. **President Scott Jones** will reach out to partners and further discussion will take place at a later date. **CACDEA President Larry Lempka** is trying to put together a blog for district employees. He is looking into the logistics. **President Scott Jones** officially swore in **Tyler Neely** as the CACD representative of the Rio Grande Watershed and new 2020 CACD Vice President.

Bob Warner stated that if CACD talked to United Airlines and they were willing to give ½ airfare sponsorship to the Envirothon winning team going to Nationals, he will pay the other half. Bob stated that if United is not willing to sponsor, Bob will still pay ½ of the airfare costs for the 2020 Colorado team. Bob also shared that his cousin in KY is (arranging for the American Farm Bureau Federation National Directors and some staff) offering to take board members on a retreat up to Cheyenne for Cheyenne Frontier Days and back to Denver & Estes Park and then to Bob's ranch for a BBQ. This will be around July 24th.

Director Jim Cecil moved to go into Executive Session with **ED Bobbi Ketels** at 1:45 PM. **VP Tyler Neely** gave the second. Motion carried. **Director Jim Cecil** moved to come out of Executive Session at 2:37 PM. **VP Tyler Neely** gave the second. Motion carried.

Director Jim Cecil made the motion for **Scott, Tyler, Mike and Bobbi** to interview and enter into contract for administrative assistance. This contracted position does not include any benefits and is limited to 10-20 hours per month at \$19.00 per hour for a 3-month evaluation period with the option to continue on a 12-month contract basis. **Director George Fosha** gave the second. Motion carried. Any further paid assistance is subject to board discussion and approval at a later date.

President Scott Jones reminded everyone the next CACD BOD call will be February 19th, 7:30 AM. **Scott** asked for a motion to adjourn. **Director George Fosha** made the motion. **Director Nick Charchalis** gave the second. Meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Bobbi Ketels
CACD Executive Director