



Winkelman Natural Resource Conservation District

Quarterly Meeting

January 15, 2014

Minutes

Florence Presbyterian Church
Florence, Arizona

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m.

In attendance:

WNRCD Board & Staff

Bill Dunn, chair; Francie Meyer; Gary Vinson; Peter Else; Steve Turcotte; Hattie Hedrick; Diana Stirling, clerk

Other Agencies

Katie Cline, NRCS; Rana Tucker, AzGFD & NRCS; Joe Sacco, AzGFD; Matt Walton, AzGFD; Everett Rhodes, UA Cooperative Extension; Shawna Loper, UA Cooperative Extension

Cooperators & Guests

Molly Yoder, Stanley Yoder, Walt Meyer, Pat Reed, Miriam Reed, Becky Dunn, Jan Wilson, Jennifer Wilson, Carl Dubois

After the introductions and the pledge of allegiance, the Board reviewed the consent agenda. They split the consent agenda and voted on separate components, as follows:

A motion was made by Francie to accept the minutes of the October Quarterly meeting. Steve seconded. Motion carried.

Peter moved to accept the minutes as amended of the December teleconference meeting. Steve seconded. Motion carried.

The Treasurer reported the following balances:

State funds	\$6676.39
District funds	829.00

The Treasurer sought approval to pay the following bills:

Carolyn Harbison	\$ 84.00
Clerk	653.25
Postage for a certified letter	11.25

Francie moved to accept the Treasurer's report and pay the bills. Steve seconded. Motion carried.

Report on Lower San Pedro Initiative committee:

Bill reported that action on the refuge by the Fish and Wildlife Service has been suspended. The Committee is going ahead with plans for a CRMP for the watershed. Boundaries for the project have been established, with additional contiguous properties being considered for inclusion. They are now engaged in a search for funding and for a coordinator.

Long Range Planning:

Long Range Planning will be discussed at the next quarterly meeting or at a special meeting of the Board.

WNRCD Election:

The WNRCD election is scheduled for May 3. Francie and Steve are serving in positions that will need to be filled.

They would both like to run, but to switch positions such that Francie will run for the 2-year term and Steve for the 6-year term. Gary and Peter's appointed terms will also expire May 31. Peter plans to step down.

Stan and Hattie will serve as judges, and Molly will be the inspector for the election. The election will be held at the Multi-Generational Center in Dudleyville.

New Business:

Bill announced that the AzNRCD Legislative Meeting will be held at the State Land Dept. Feb. 18 & 19. He urged people to attend. Francie suggested that we create a poster session for this meeting.

Mutual Agreement and Cooperative Working Agreement Renewal with NRCS and the Civil Rights for Districts items were both addressed at the last meeting.

Old Business:

Bill urged participation in the Local Work Group planning process because this could have a real impact on future funding for applicants to these programs. He explained that the Districts will have greater input into funding priorities with the new process.

Bill and Walt reviewed their request to the Pinal County Board of Supervisors for \$250,000 to help fund the Sonoran Desert Tortoise project. The proposed project involves modeling the desert tortoise population and following up on monitoring projects by Game and Fish. The goal is to generate reliable scientific data to be considered in 2015 when the decision about whether to list the tortoise as endangered will be considered.

Matt mentioned that there may be Game and Fish money available to help with the tortoise monitoring project. If a benefit to large game can be demonstrated, tag monies may also be available.

Francie reported that the Best Management Practices for Grazing and Desert Tortoise Monitoring document is almost finished. The document describes common sense conservation measures for activities around the ranch. After approval by the board, this document will be released first to the grazing groups for feedback. This document could also be included as a 4D rule if the tortoise becomes listed.

Reports from Supervisors and District Personnel:

Peter explained some of the issues with the proposed SunZia project. He mentioned that the Lower San Pedro Watershed Alliance is working on a film about why it is so important to protect the Lower San Pedro ecosystem as the last remaining riparian ecosystem in southern Arizona.

Steve introduced himself and described his conservation background relevant to his service as a Board member and future plans for his ranch.

Francie gave an update on the wind turbines and weather towers that will be erected on land the Meyers lease from State Land Dept.

Reports from Agency Personnel:

NRCS

Katie reminded everyone that the CSP deadline is Feb. 7, and the EQIP & WHIP deadline is Jan. 17.

Rana announced that Working Lands for Wildlife funds are available. Willow flycatcher funds are available for private property along the San Pedro. The application deadline is Jan. 17.

AZ Game and Fish

Matt and Joe explained the requirements for posting and right-of-ways on private property, right-of-ways on leased property, and Game and Fish access rules. They responded to many questions from meeting participants.

Pinal County Agricultural Extension

Everett announced that 2014 is the centennial year of Cooperative Extension. On October 4 there will be a celebration at the Ag. Center in Maricopa County. Shawna distributed materials that describe focus areas and

contacts for the educational programs they provide.

We adjourned for lunch at 12:31 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 1: 06 p.m.

Call to the Public

Hattie announced a free Pinal Partnership Open Space & Trails workshop about economic development to be held at the Apache Junction campus of Central Arizona College on January 30.

The Executive Session item was moved to after the Ed Center meeting.

Ed Center Meeting

Hattie reported a balance of \$25,119.82 in the Ed Center account.

Mountain Vista School has requested funds for an Outdoor Education Day for 3rd & 4th graders at Oracle State Park. The cost is \$2/per child. Francie moved that we allocate up to \$250.00 to sponsor the Outdoor Education Day. Gary seconded. Motion carried.

Becky reported that Maricopa Ag Center offers an educational program for kids. Peter moved that we allocate not to exceed \$500.00 to sponsor a field trip to Maricopa Ag Center for students of Ray Elementary School. Francie seconded. Motion carried.

Katie has designed an informational brochure for the WNRCD. Hattie is going to check on the cost of printing the brochure.

The application to reinstate the 501(c)(3) status of the Ed Center was submitted in October. No response has been received yet.

Francie moved to charge the website and newsletter costs to the Ed Center. Peter seconded. Motion carried.

The Board decided to consult knowledgeable advisers regarding the possible use of the Ed Center as manager of Lower San Pedro Initiative funds.

Francie moved to adjourn the general meeting and convene the executive session. Gary seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 1:41 p.m.