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*Providing resource conservation for a quality environment demonstrated through active leadership, cooperation, and partnership*

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**Board of Supervisors  
February Regular Meeting  
February 15th, 2020 9:00 am  
Whitfield Wildlife Conservation Area  
2424 Hwy, Belen, NM 87002**

**Board of Supervisors Attending:** Chair Abel Camarena, Vice Chair Teresa Smith de Cherif, Treasurer Andrew Hautzinger, Supervisor Richard Bonine, Supervisor Sue Small, Supervisor Joseph Moya, Supervisor Gail Goodman.

**Others Attending:** District Manager Madeline Miller, Friends of Whitfield President Eileen Beaulieu, County Commissioner Tom Mraz and Teresa Mraz, Duana Draszkiwicz, NRCS Field Representative Team 2 Office Gabriella Coughlin, NMSU Extension Agent Newt McCarty, Vicky Husbands, Tommy Aber, Julia Dendinger, and Angela Gonzales with Pattern Energy.

\*U.S. Representative Xochitl Torres-Small, with her constituent representative Kayla Laywell visited with the Board and others prior to start of meeting to find out about the District. Board Supervisors discussed challenges with outreach, the East Valencia Urban Gardens program for local food access needs in the County, and the erosion issues in the Rio Puerco watershed. Richard noted that 120 miles of the river is within the District delivering the most sediment load of any into waterways; the Rio Puerco Committee is a federally chartered committee. Also there were comments from residents about the Western Spirit wind energy transmission line installation traveling through southern Valencia County and threatening their livelihood on their land.

**Meeting Minutes**

- 1) **Call to Order:** Chair Abel Camarena verified quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.
  - **Approval of Agenda:** The Chair asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Gail Goodman asked for discussion to be added to the agenda item for approval of committee charters.

**Motion was made to approve the agenda with discussion added to review of the committee charters.**

**1<sup>st</sup>: Sue Small**      **2<sup>nd</sup>: Andrew Hautzinger**  
**For: all**      **Against: 0**      **Abstain: 0**

**No further discussion.**  
**Absent: 0**      **Motion carried.**

- **Approval of the January 18th Regular Meeting Minutes.** The Board reviewed the minutes for January 18<sup>th</sup>. In the guest attendees list, Tommy Aber and Julia Dendinger needed to be added.

**Motion was made to approve January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes as amended.**

**1<sup>st</sup>: Sue Small**      **2<sup>nd</sup>: Andrew Hautzinger**  
**For: 6, Against: 0, Abstain: Teresa Smith de Cherif,**

**No further discussion.**  
**Absent: 0**      **Motion carried**

- Public Comments: The Chair invited those who signed up for public comments to speak.

1) Tom Mraz stated he was newly appointed as the District 2 County Commissioner. He added that one of his goals is for park and recreational opportunities for youth and believe much can be accomplished in partnership with the District and other agencies. He added that he also serves on the Juvenile Justice Board, and the Meadow Lake Park Area Association Board.

2) Duana Draszkievicz comment was to ask people to look at the Western Spirit Transmission line for wind energy in a different light; to consider the Permian Basin destruction and devastation of fracking to the environment vs. transition to wind energy.

- Western Spirit Transmission Project concerns:

Vicky Husbands, Valencia County resident and farmer commented that PNM is the driver of the train for the installation of the project. 700 feet of lines is impacting her farm which could be buried. She also commented that the wind turbines, state of current technology requires 500 gallons oil for each pole (each day?). She stated the impact on the Valley will be huge and requested a letter of opposition from the VSWCD Board.

She added there continues to be farmer opposition; many have 200 years legacy on the land. The County will not profit monetarily from the line, and Texas and Wyoming contractors are already clearing the land, while still making changes to the route. There was Board discussion about Ms. Husbands request and concerns, and consideration of preparing a letter of inquiry and concern to Pattern Energy. The Land Use Plan committee proposed to obtain the NEPA to review and gather additional information for report back to the Board in March.

**Motion was made to waive preparing a letter of inquiry to Pattern Energy until the Land Use Planning Committee could obtain answers to some of the Board's questions.**

**For: 5**      **Against: Abel, Gail**      **Abstain: 0**      **Absent: 0**      **Motion carried.**

Angela Gonzales – in public comments – introduced herself as a representative for Pattern Energy and left her card with the District Manager for follow up.

## 2) Regular Business:

- **Election of Officers:** The Board considered nominations for office of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer.  
Andrew Hautzinger nominated Abel Camarena to continue as Chair. There were no other nominations. Voice vote - all yay, and **Abel Camarena accepted the nomination for Chair.**  
Richard Bonine nominated Teresa Smith de Cherif to continue as Vice-Chair. Gail Goodman nominated Andrew Hautzinger for the position. In a voice vote for Teresa Smith de Cherif, 5 Supervisors yay, 1 opposed. Andrew Hautzinger declined nomination and **Teresa Smith de Cherif accepted nomination for Vice-Chair.**  
For Treasurer, Teresa nominated Andrew Hautzinger to continue. There were no other nominations. The Chair declared Andrew Hautzinger as nominee. **Andrew Hautzinger accepted nomination as Treasurer.**
  
- **Reports: The written monthly NMDA, District Manager, Whitfield Manager, East Valencia Urban Gardens, and Education Reports were provided for review before the meeting.** Meeting additions:
  - **NMDA Report:** The Board and staff reviewed the Report for February. There was discussion regarding an attachment to the report for petitions to NMDA for adding plant species to the New Mexico Noxious Weed List. Richard Bonine commented that there is a problem with *rubber bitterweed* on Laguna Pueblo lands. As petitions were due by February 25<sup>th</sup>, the Board endorsed Richard Bonine submitting comments (a petition) to NMDA on *rubber bitterweed*.
  - **Laguna Report:** Richard reported he was on the 2020 Range Management Conference planning committee and they need help.
  - **NRCS Report:** NRCS Team 2 Field Office soil conservationist Gabriella Coughlin provided updates to the Board including the incoming acting District Conservationist for Team 2 is Roxanne Moore expected to start in April. Her background is in range and forestry. Gabby also noted there would be a 'Pathway' intern coming to the Los Lunas office to work with April and Fauna starting sometime this Spring. She added she was planning for meetings in our District about programs under the new Farm Bill (2018).
  - **Whitfield Manager's Report:** Ted Hodoba announced his resignation end of May and offered to work part time during the transition following.
  - **Friends of Whitfield Update:** Eileen Beaulieu, Friends President noted upcoming Friends event, their sponsorship of the Earth Day Science Fiesta event at Whitfield. For the

Annual Meeting in April they would have a poster contest again with winners receiving binoculars, a field guide, and their winning picture on a plate.

- **Budget and Accounting:**

- **January 2020 Expenditures:**

The Treasurers reviewed the January Expenditures report with the Board.

**Motion was made to approve the reconciliation report for the Wells Fargo general fund and expenditures for January 2020.**

**1<sup>st</sup>: Richard Bonine    2<sup>nd</sup>: Joseph Moya    There was no further discussion.**  
**For: all    Against: 0    Abstain: 0    Absent: 0    Motion carried.**

- NM Envirothon 2020 contribution request: There were no teams participating in this year's statewide competition but a letter request for support from the District for the winning team to travel to the international competition in August.

**Motion was made to approve \$500 for the NM Envirothon organization.**

**1<sup>st</sup>: Richard Bonine    2<sup>nd</sup>: Sue Small    There was no further discussion.**  
**For: All    Against: 0    Abstain: 0    Absent: 0    Motion carried.**

- **Personnel Committee – Organization changes:** Abel let the Board know that both the Whitfield Manager and District Manager were planning to leave by the end of the fiscal year. The Board gave feedback on consideration of staff needs along with budget cutbacks going into the next fiscal year. Teresa recommended reviewing existing positions and reorganization of resources. Abel added the committee would have a recommendation at the next Board meeting.

- **Mil Levy Committee Update:** Sue Small updated the Board that the committee met with a mentor of the SCORE program. The committee is still waiting for response from the Attorney General's office to questions asked last June.

- **East Valencia Urban Gardens Program:**

- Revised Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Youth Development Incorporated (YDI) Teresa reviewed with the Board the revised Memorandum with the YDI agency.

Changes were minor including addition of the intern program administration to the partnership.

**Motion was made to support the Vice-Chair signing the revised MOA with YDI on behalf of the Board with amendments proposed.**

**1<sup>st</sup>: Andrew Hautzinger                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Richard Bonine      No further discussion.**  
**For: all                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Absent:0      Motion carried.**

➤ USDA Beginning Farmers and Rancher Development Program 3-year grant proposal: The Board discussed the EVUGP coordinator's proposal (outline provided) for this grant opportunity. Teresa's recommendation (Chair of EVUGP committee) was to not apply for the grant this year. During discussion Gabby Coughlin noted NRCS could be a liaison for this program and there are more opportunities for interns and young farmer programming.

- **Approve Committee charter updates:** The Board discussed revised committee charters. Gail stated she wanted more language in the Charters on the rationale for the committee work; some thought the explanation was in the charters.

**Motion was made to accept the revised charters for all committees as presented.**

**1<sup>st</sup>: Teresa Smith de Cherif                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Richard Bonine      There was no further discussion.**  
**For: TSC, AH, AC, JM, RB, SS                      Against: GG                      Abstained: 0                      Absent: 0**  
**Motion carried.**

- **Financial Assistance Program 2020:** Andrew reviewed the written memo recommendation for awards for the 2020 financial assistance budget. He explained the process for review of applicants this year including a new ranking for cost share rates on different conservation practices. There were 9 agricultural and 5 community applications submitted. All 9 of the agricultural applications were recommended for award with Robert and Phyllis Sanchez's award to be funded in the following fiscal year. Also one of the 5 community applications, for Ronald Sanchez, was not yet actionable. For this year's funding the committee was proposing the Board approve all requests for 2020 for a total of \$42,573, exceeding the total approved budget of \$40K.

**Motion was made to approve \$42,573 for awards recommended for 2020, and the award for Robert and Phyllis Sanchez to be funded in fiscal year 2021.**

**1<sup>st</sup>: Sue Small                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Teresa Smith de Cherif. There was no further discussion.**  
**For: 6 Against: 0                      Abstain: 1 Absent: 0                      Motion carried.**

Abel asked Gail why she abstained from the vote? She responded she wanted to more information about the proposed awards.

Andrew also discussed with the Board that currently contractual services for technical support services from Cliff Sanchez is part of the financial assistance budget and requested it be reallocated to dedicate all budget funds for awards.

**Motion was made to move \$5K of general operating funds to the financial assistance fund to cover technical support contracting along with the approved awards.**

**1<sup>st</sup>: Joseph Moya 2<sup>nd</sup>: Teresa Smith de Cherif                      There was no further discussion.**  
**For: all                      Against: 0    Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0                      Motion carried.**

**• Supervisor Round Robin:**

- Richard noted he was interested in submitting a Laguna project for the NM Soil and Water Conservation Grant Program. He also stated his hours are changing and he is now available on Fridays.
- Joseph Moya mention he visited the Capitol twice about the capital outlay requests.
- Sue Small mentioned she is attending Village of Los Lunas monthly meetings and will be attending the next County Commission meeting.
- Andrew mentioned that the dialogue with Karen Martinez, and her financial assistance request is still ongoing; presently she is reviewing proposed erosion mitigation measures from Applied Terrain Systems directly with them.
- Gail Goodman commented she attended the MRGCD partnership meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup>. She noted the Friends of Bosque del Apache attended and focused on the Western Spirit Transmission line issue.
- Teresa noted that she wanted to review NM EMNRD clean water funding at the next Board meeting. Abel stated he would contact her about it.

**3) Adjournment**

**Adjournment: Motion was made by Joseph Moya at 12:52 pm to adjourn. Teresa Smith de Cherif seconded. All were in favor, motion carried.**

***Signatures:***

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***Abel Camarena, Chair*** ***Date***

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***Madeline Miller, District Manager*** ***Date***