



133 Interstate Lane, Kalispell, MT 59901 | www.flatheadcd.org | 406-752-4220

CALL TO ORDER & ATTENDANCE: Chair Pete Woll called the May 13, 2021, Budget & Strategic Planning meeting to order at 9:30 A.M. in the conference room.

Board members present

Pete Woll, Chair; John Ellis, Vice Chair; Lech Naumovich, Secretary/Treasurer; Donna Pridmore, Scott Rumsey Supervisor; being a quorum of the Board.

Board members absent: Verdell Jackson, Supervisor. Absence is excused.

Also, in attendance were Hailey Graf, Samantha Tappenbeck, Ginger Kauffman, Flathead Conservation District (FCD) Staff; Fiona Handler, Big Sky Watershed Corps Member.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No one was present to comment on items not listed on the meeting agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

FCD Office Lease Agreement: The district's current office lease with Mountain States Leasing - Kalispell will end June 13, 2021. The lease notes that Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) pays for 150 square feet for the district, however, it is not clear what that square footage is for. Discussion held regarding FCD staff, supervisors, and public access to the building during the pandemic. Supervisors agreed that the lease needs to be amended, and suggested removing payment from NRCS, and outlining building access, openings and closings, use of conference room, restrooms etc. Hailey Graf will draft the lease, which will be reviewed by the Board and legal. Hailey noted that the district also needs to take a more active role when the NRCS Cooperative Agreement is revised and include verbiage regarding office space.

John Ellis motioned "to have staff set up a meeting between FCD Supervisors and NRCS to discuss office space." Lech Naumovich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Programmatic Planning: Samantha Tappenbeck provided a list of current Landowner Assistance and Education programs, provided charts showing the percentage of the district budget that goes towards these programs; discussed issues and opportunities to update/expand current programs and create new landowner assistance programs; and provided suggestions for funding of those programs in the next fiscal year. Suggestions for specific programs were as follows:

Conservation Grant Program: \$50,000. Program improvements, updating contract verbiage and providing contingency %.

Watershed Support Program: \$50,000. Re-prioritizing areas, being more flexible on project size, and contracting with consultant/s on an as needed basis.

Seedling & Native Grass Seeds Program: \$5,000. Providing funding to small landowners that order seedlings below minimum order sizes for conservation practices. Providing funding for native grass seed mixes which the district helped to design.

Pollinator Initiative – \$1,000 - \$5,000. Expanding opportunities and funding, educational outreach, and providing technical assistance.

Education Grants Program – Combining education-related programs into Education Grants Program to include the following categories: 1) Education Grants for pre-K through 12th grade educators, (\$15,000), 2) College Scholarships (\$15,000), 3) Youth Camp Sponsorships (\$10,000). Marketing upgrades, updating program information, and increasing funding flexibility.

Youth Camp Sponsorships: Hailey Graf suggested that this line item be left in the upcoming fiscal year budget for tracking purposes, but not funded.

Noxious Weeds Grant Program – \$5,000. Providing funding, developing integrated weed management plans, treatment methods, actual treatment of weeds and working with the Weed Dept. to fund a part-time employee.

Supervisors agreed that the suggested changes provide both a dramatic increase in what the district does and public benefit. Supervisors were in support of expanding programs and of the funding proposal as presented and will consider the proposal when developing the 2021/2022 fiscal year budget.

Office & Resource Planning: Hailey Graf requested to hire a full-time Administrative Assistant. She stated that FCD wants to expand programs and create efficiency in administering programs, however, with current staffing levels we can only do that up to a certain point. With additional help in the office, the conservation that happens on the ground would be drastically higher and allow other staff to focus on program implementation, restoration project implementation, and 310-administration. Over the past several years the district has budgeted for other positions, but not hired, so funding is available. Hailey provided a list of duties for an Administrative Assistant at an approximate cost of \$50,000 and noted that the request is well within budget and workload.

Donna Pridmore motioned “to hire an Administrative Assistant.” Lech Naumovich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Annual Work Plan Updates: An Annual Work Plan meeting was scheduled for Thursday, June 10, 10:00 A.M.

Matters of the Board & Staff

- Supervisor 310 area assignments
- Big Sky Watershed Corp Member reimbursements
- Creation of packets that include 310 information, program brochures etc. which Staff and Supervisors can easily provide to landowners when on site.

The next Business meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 24, 2021, 7:00 P.M. via ZOOM.

Adjournment: Donna Pridmore motioned “to adjourn.” Scott Rumsey seconded. Motion carried unanimously. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 A.M.

Submitted By:

Ginger Kauffman
Administrator

Hailey Graf
Resource Conservationist

Samantha Tappenbeck
Conservation Program Manager

Minutes approved by FCD Board motion made on:

<u>06/14/2021</u>	<u>Pete Woll</u>	<u>Chair</u>
(Date)	(Signature)	(Title - Chair etc.)