



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

Board of Supervisors Regular Monthly Meeting

November 16, 2023

Conducted in person and remotely via Microsoft Teams

Board of Supervisors attending: Chair Abel Camarena, Vice Chair Teresa Smith de Cherif, Treasurer Duana Draskiewicz, Richard Bonine, Gail Goodman, Priscilla Abeita, and Pam Cordova.

Others attending: District Staff—Director Andrew Hautzinger, Conservation Manager Johnny Chavez, Environmental Education Manager Laura McCann, and Business Manager Megan McCready. Savannah Johnson of Los Lunas office of the Natural Research Conservation Service (NRCS); New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) Technical Specialist Katie Mechanbier; and President pro tempore of the Friends of Whitfield, Rob Raucci, also attended.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Abel Camarena called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

- 1) **VERIFY QUORUM, CONDUCT PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND REVIEW AGENDA:** Chair Camarena verified that a quorum was present. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Camarena. The meeting agenda was reviewed. Supervisor Bonine moved to approve the agenda; Supervisor Cordova seconded. A roll call vote was conducted: Smith de Cherif—yes; Draskiewicz—yes; Bonine—yes; Goodman—yes; Abeita—yes; Cordova—yes; Camarena—yes. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2) **APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 19, 2023 MINUTES:** Supervisor Bonine moved to approve the October 19, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes; Vice Chair Smith de Cherif seconded. A roll call vote was conducted: Smith de Cherif—yes; Draskiewicz—yes; Bonine—yes; Goodman—yes; Abeita—yes; Cordova—yes; Camarena—yes. Motion carried unanimously. *Note: Approval of the September meeting minutes was not on the agenda and, therefore, the September minutes will be reviewed at the December Board meeting.*
- 3) **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Vice Chair Smith de Cherif reported positive remarks made by 3 members of the public who attended Whitfield Under the Stars.
- 4) **DISTRICT STAFF MONTHLY REPORT:** District Director Hautzinger and District staff presented highlights of the monthly Staff reports. The full reports are available on the District's website and will be attached to these monthly meeting minutes.

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- 5) LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS: Vice Chair Smith de Cherif briefed the Board on the results and noted that the Soil and Water Conservation District drove the record election turnout, the highest in the state, after those of the large cities.
- 6) UPDATES/PARTNER REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/OTHER: NMDA Technical Specialist Mechenbier pointed out several available grants and noted that the Soil and Water Conservation Day at the New Mexico Legislature will be January 31, 2024. NRCS representative Johnson indicated that the EQIP deadline has been extended until April 26, 2024. Vice Chair Smith de Cherif requested that NRCS advise stakeholders, including the Pueblos of Isleta and Laguna, of the deadline extension, and asked that the next Working Group meeting be held at the Pueblo of Laguna; Supervisor Bonine agreed and asked that FSA be included, as well. Friends of Whitfield President pro tempore Raucci announced that the Friends' Annual Meeting and Whitfield Birthday Party will be on December 9 at 10:00 a.m. He also indicated that the Board of the Friends passed a motion to support a Conservation Program Assistant internship at the rate of \$17 per hour for 10 months, and that the Friends would pay for half the costs of retrofitting the water fountain with a bottle filler.
- 7) NMACD ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS BANQUET: The Valencia SWCD was named New Mexico's Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District of the year, and the commemorative plaque just arrived in the mail.
- 8) BOSQUE ECOSYSTEM MONITORING PROGRAM (BEMP) 2024 PROPOSAL: Kin Eichhorst briefed the Board about BEMP's 350 monitoring sites along the Rio Grande, including 8 in Valencia, and indicated BEMP plans to add sites outside the Bosque with water and air quality monitoring. Vice Chair Smith de Cherif moved to fund BEMP's work with its customary, annual contribution of \$15,000, before the end of this year; and, if additional funding is available, contribute another \$5,000 before the end of Fiscal Year 2024; Supervisor Bonine seconded. A roll call vote was conducted: Smith de Cherif—yes; Draszkievicz—yes; Bonine—yes; Goodman—abstain; Abeita—yes; Cordova—yes; Camarena—yes. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was paused at 5:40 p.m. and resumed at 5:47 p.m.

- 9) PERSONNEL COMMITTEE UPDATE: Chair Camarena reported that the Personnel Committee unanimously recommends the Board adopt the job description for a District assistant in the Conservation Program. Supervisor Bonine moved to approve the job description for a District assistant internship within the Conservation Program; Treasurer Draszkievicz seconded. A roll call vote was conducted: Smith de Cherif—yes; Draszkievicz—yes; Bonine—yes; Goodman—yes; Abeita—yes; Cordova—yes; Camarena—yes. Motion carried unanimously.

10) EXPANDED WHITFIELD VISITATION: Chair Camarena and Vice Chair Smith de Cherif noted that staff occasionally opens the conservation area, especially on holidays. Board members have also help expand hours, in an effort to serve the public.


11) TREASURER'S REPORT (Budget and Accounting):


- a) Reconciliation Detail: Supervisor Bonine moved to accept the Reconciliation Report ending on October 31, 2023; Supervisor Cordova seconded. A roll call vote was conducted: Smith de Cherif—yes; Draszkievicz—yes; Bonine—yes; Goodman—yes; Abeita—yes; Cordova—yes; Camarena—yes. Motion carried unanimously.
- b) Quarterly Report to the Department of Finance (DFA): Supervisor Bonine moved to approve the First Quarter Report to the DFA; Treasurer Draszkievicz seconded. A roll call vote was conducted: Smith de Cherif—yes; Draszkievicz—yes; Bonine—yes; Goodman—abstain; Abeita—yes; Cordova—yes; Camarena—yes. Motion carried unanimously.
- c) Retrofitting of Water Fountain: Supervisor Bonine moved to match the Friends contribution of \$1,200 to upgrade the water fountain with a bottle filler; Supervisor Goodman seconded. A roll call vote was conducted: Smith de Cherif—yes; Draszkievicz—yes; Bonine—yes; Goodman—abstain; Abeita—yes; Cordova—yes; Camarena—yes. Motion carried unanimously.
- d) Grant updates: Vice Chair Smith de Cherif briefed the Board about the submitted funding application she envisioned and wrote, with assistance from Director Hautzinger, entitled, *Building Economic Resiliency in the Aftermath of the 2023 Big Hole Fire*. Director Hautzinger reported that the AmeriCorps VISTA program cut the District's award to one funded staff member and noted that CASC-SC and USFS-AIM grants were submitted and are pending notification.

ADJOURNMENT: Supervisor Bonine moved to adjourn at 6:59 p.m.; Supervisor Cordova seconded. A roll call vote was conducted: Smith de Cherif—yes; Draszkievicz—yes; Bonine—yes; Goodman—yes; Abeita—yes; Cordova—yes; Camarena—yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Signatures:

Abel Camarena, Chair  Date: 12/21/2023

Andrew Hautzinger, District Director  Date: 12/21/23