






**Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD)
Natural Resources Committee Meeting
Wednesday, October 18, 2023, 9:00 am to 10:30 am**

HB2560 requires that all Oregon public meetings held by a governing body of a public body, excluding executive sessions, must provide to members of the public an opportunity to access and attend the meeting by telephone, video or other electronic or virtual means. This meeting will be held by video conference and by telephone.

-  **Link to Video Conference:** [Zoom Link Here](#)
-  **Meeting Call in Number:** 1 253 215 8782
-  **Meeting ID:** | **Passcode:** 838 1782 7407 | 507254
- Staff Contact:** Becky Pineda, becky.pineda@marionswcd.net


Agenda

Chair: Call Meeting to Order, Agenda Changes & Approval

Item #	Topic	Presenter	Time
	Approval of Minutes	Chair	5 min.
1	Updates	Staff	5 min.
2	Partial Payments	B. Pineda	20 min.
3	Fencing Practice	C. Blank	20 min.
	Meeting Adjournment	Chair	

Agenda Brief

Item #	Brief	Action
1	Program updates by the staff.	No action needed
2	The Board gave approval at the November 2022 board meeting for the NR Committee to look further into the topic of partial payments. Please see minutes from 8-16-23. Continuing discussion for the October committee meeting.	Discussion, recommendation
3	We would like some clarity on what practices the District will allow funding for fencing, and what types of fencing can be funded.	Discussion, recommendation

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Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members	Present/Absent	Staff	Guests
Dave Budeau	Present	Chelsea Blank	
Rochelle Koch	Present	Sarah Hamilton	
Leland Hardy	Present		
Becky Pineda	Present		
Susan Ortiz	Present		

Item #	Minutes	Action/ Vote Count
	Meeting called to order at 9:00AM.	
0	<p>Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes The August 16, 2023 meeting minutes were reviewed; there were no comments or recommended revisions.</p>	<p>Becky motioned to approve the August 16, 2023 minutes, 2nd by Dave. Motion passed unanimously.</p>
1	<p>Updates Becky advised that the CAG Cycle 2 deadline is October 19, 2023; the CAG Review Committee will meet in November to review the applications and provide recommendations for approvals to the December Board Meeting. The Cover Crop Program is accepting applications through the end of October; so far 6 applications have been funded. The applicants are a mix of new and previous participants.</p> <p>Koch inquired regarding the NRCS Steps Program that was discussed at the August meeting. Blank provided a brief overview of the Steps program, noting that rather than a landowner completing a Conservation Plan or Forest Management Plan they could go through the applicable portions of the Steps program to create a plan for the natural resources on their property.</p>	
2	<p>Partial Payments</p> <p>Pineda reviewed the current options for partial payment which include payment upon payment for a practice once it is complete, and an advance of up to 50% of the grant with receipts due within 120 days.</p> <p>Ortiz recommended utilizing the previously approved partial payment of up to 50% of the grant</p>	<p>To be brought back to the December committee meeting.</p>

amount with receipts due within 120 days; and payments on completed practices that can stand alone. She suggested that there could be a policy change / addition would be to enumerate that applicants out of compliance with the terms of their grant are not eligible for any additional funding until they come back into compliance.

Budeau and Hardy raised concerns regarding advances on projects. Hardy would like to have a list of practices where partial payment can be requested, and have a signed statement from the grantee with a statement akin to “cannot complete this practice without advance funds.”

Budeau noted that there is a difference between partial payments for completed practices and advances; advances are actually short-term loans for which the District currently does not have stops in place to address. He also noted that the lack of advance funding can be a barrier for some grantees. Conversation continued regarding how to place side barriers to advances to protect the interest of the District, which included the District paying the contractor or vendor directly and as such owning the service or product.

Committee split on whether to allow advances at all, however there was agreement to continue to allow payment on completed practices.

District staff voiced concerns regarding not allowing advances on grant funds and how it is a barrier for some even prior to award.

Budeau offered that there would need to be a method to collect funds that were advanced to a grantee, perhaps using a collections agency.

Ortiz noted that in order to implement any different recommendations the committee would need to recommend that the Board rescind the 50% advance payment policy. Koch noted that the committee is currently split on the issue.

Discussion continued.

Budeau proffered a suggestion for reimbursement on receipts prior to completing a practice, where it would not be an advance or “loan” on the grant funds. Hamilton reminded that on projects which are multi-year practices there can be a lot of expenses without a practice being complete.

It was noted that for payment on completed practices a 50% cost share must be met.

Discussion continued regarding how the District can ensure that the project will be completed if any funds

are put forward prior to project, even just practice, completion

Koch asked staff to bring back a policy with options for partial payment to the December committee meeting; with an emphasis on ensuring a project will be completed when the District provides upfront, advances or reimbursed funds.

Fencing

Pineda and Blank brought forward for consideration that NRCS was revising their Fencing – 382 practice specifications to include temporary fencing. It was noted that there are many instances where temporary or portable fencing would be beneficial for many projects, such as installing a hedgerow along a pasture where the fencing would keep out livestock while plants were establishing.

Ortiz noted that under the CAG/LAP projects, temporary fencing has been allowed as a match, but not as a grant expense as temporary/portable fencing will not hold up to the 20 year life expectancy per NRCS Specifications for 382-Fencing; in addition, because the fencing is temporary and portable it has generally be treated as a tool or equipment.

3

Conservation regarding how much flexibility the District projects have in relation to adhering to the NRCS practice specifications. Committee would like to see the new NRCS practice specifications for 382-Fencing.

Koch asked staff to bring back a policy to allow temporary fencing and / or the new NRCS standard for 382-Fencing.

To be brought back to the December committee meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:43AM
