Churchill County Mosquito, Vector and Noxious Weed Abatement District

Board of Trustees

Churchill County, Nevada

7400 Reno Highway

Fallon, NV 89406

Meeting December 22, 2020

OPEN MEETING SESSION

1. **Call to Order:** Chairwoman Christy Lattin called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present were the following:

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Chairwoman, Christy Lattin

Vice Chairman, Michael Spencer

Trustee, Marion Jonte, Jr

Trustee Tom Hutchings

District Manager, Nancy Upham

Assistant Manager, JD MacKay

Board Secretary, Melania Sagi

**Public Present**

None

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:**

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **Public Comment:**

None

1. **Review and Adoption of the Agenda:**

Chairwoman Christy Lattin made the motion to approve the agenda as is. Vice Chairman Michael Spencer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

1. **Discussion and Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the December 10, 2020 open session was tabled for a future meeting.

1. **Certificate of Posting:**

District Manager, Nancy Upham, stated that the meeting was posted according to NRS statutes.

1. **Correspondence:**

None

1. **Appointment:**

None

1. **Old Business:**

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the selection of an Accountant or Bookkeeper to fill the position that Thomas Lukas had with the District. Ms. Upham explained the candidates and their bids. The candidates were presented with a list of the job expectations to assist with bidding for the position prepared by Thomas Lucas and Jim Sciarani. The candidates are Phyllis Dowd, June Young, and Widmer & Mills which would be as a firm and would include CPA services.

Ms. Lattin offered some background on the candidates; Ms. Dowd was in charge of business services for the Churchill County School District and Comptroller for Lyon County School District as well as winning some awards for government accounting, Debbie Conway from Widmer & Mills is also qualified, and Ms. Young does the books for the golf course overseen by Alan Kalt, formerly the Churchill County Comptroller. Ms. Lattin expressed her preference for Ms. Dowd as her starting price of $1050 is slightly higher than Ms. Youngs but Ms. Dowd has the government accounting experience.

Vice Chairman, Michael Spencer, inquired about Thomas Lukas's charge and Ms. Upham responded that he started at $1,000 but by the end of his term he was collecting $1250 a month which is comparable to the bids that were received. Which is the main benefit of the year contract so that the candidate can get a good understanding of the job expectations and the Board can reevaluate the cost at the end of the year. Ms. Upham stated that she has asked Mr. Sciarani to figure out the wording for a contract that would allow the District to choose another candidate before the year end should the chosen candidate not be a good fit.

Widmer & Mills submitted an hourly rate, June Young and Phyllis Dowd submitted a monthly bid. Thomas Lukas currently works approximately 25-30 hours a month; however, there are months, such as at the end of the year when more hours are needed and some months when less are enough which is what makes a monthly bid more attractive. Ms. Lattin interjected that Ms. Dowd had bid at 30 hours a month for $1050 and Debbie Conway from Widmer & Mills bid was $1950 a month after estimating the hourly rate.

Ms. Young would need the reports and bills transferred to her somehow as she will be working out of her home and prefers not to come into the District building in person. Trustee, Tom Hutchings stated that he had worked with Widmer & Mills in the past and was satisfied with their business; however, their proposal seems open ended with more possible hours. There are no concrete estimates for their services.

Ms. Upham stated that the benefit of making the decision during this meeting gave the candidate the opportunity to work with Thomas Lukas before the year is over as Mr. Lukas is adamant about not working into the new year.

Mr. Jonte added that the Widmer & Mills and Ms. Young's proposals seem shallow and did not go into as much depth as Ms. Dowd's proposal does. Although Mr. Jonte's interactions with Ms. Young have been pleasant, Ms. Dowd's proposal stated that once she becomes familiar with the District, she would be able to reduce her hours. Mr. Jonte requested that should the Board choose Ms. Dowd, there should be a limit of hours allowed per month.

Ms. Upham stated that there will be occasions when the candidate needs to be on the property to go through inventory so there are physical aspects involved as well.

Mr. Hutchings made a motion to accept the Widmer & Mills proposal and hire them as the District's bookkeepers. There was no second motion. Ms. Lattin stated that they were the most expensive and Mr. Hutchings explained that it may be beneficial to have a CPA firm while the District is in between accountants. Ms. Lattin responded that the District has had CPA firms handle the books in the past and she does not believe they have been any more or less efficient that regular bookkeepers. Mr. Hutchings withdrew his motion.

Mr. Jonte made a motion to accept June Youngs proposal and hire her as the Districts bookkeeper. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

1. **New Business:**

None

1. **District Manager’s Report and Operations Review:**

None

1. **Board Member’s Reports:**

Ms. Lattin requested an update on the layoff of the technicians and the discussion that they would be working under reduced hours instead. Ms. Upham stated that she had been discussing the matter with Assistant Manager, JD MacKay, and had decided to gift the employees with her remaining leave hours as they could not be carried into the new year. If the weather cooperates there will be no layoff this off season. There are a number of projects the technicians are becoming involved with that still allow them to stay separated while this pandemic is still going on.

Mr. Jonte inquired if there were projects other than weeds that the District could be involved in. Mr. MacKay responded that there are some Tamarisk clearing projects and grants that they are looking into. Ms. Upham is attempting to figure out the best plan of attack for the Tamarisk plant and if a winter, spring or summer application would be the most efficient.

Mr. Spencer inquired if the District had won the Timber Lake grant yet and Ms. Upham responded that she did not have an update about that yet. Ms. Lattin established that there was meaningful work to be done then, not sweeping the garage floor all day. Mr. MacKay stated that there are numerous projects that need to be done but they are looking at ways to do them efficiently and without injury. Mr. MacKay supports a reduction in hours to help avoid injuring the technicians while still giving them the opportunity to complete the task at hand.

Mr. Jonte inquired about what was involved with the Tamarisk removal. Ms. Upham clarified that those plants could not be put into a woodchipper on site as their remains would prevent other plants from growing there. The only viable option for Tamarisk is to bring it back to the facility and destroy it on the District property. The goal is to use all the tools at the District's disposal to provide efficiency and prevent injury. Ms. Lattin requested that documentation be maintained during the process so that it can be presented to the other Districts when discussing involvement.

Ms. Lattin requested that management plan ahead and notify employees in advance for any days off they may give them that way they can plan for appointments or anything else. Ms. Upham responded that this is the off season and as soon as she knows what the weather holds, she can plan accordingly but the employees can take time off whenever they like and has yet to deny a leave request. Ms. Lattin inquired about the feeling of the employees concerning the reduction of hours. Mr. MacKay responded that for the most part the employees were receptive to the idea. Ms. Lattin reiterated giving the employees notice in advance of any schedule changes that may occur.

Mr. Jonte stated that he remembered one of the technicians making a comment that some of the sites were difficult to get to and asked if that was one of the projects that management had considered taking on. Ms. Upham responded that management was looking into that on a case-by-case basis. Last year the technicians spent three weeks cutting down trees on private property in order to reach a water source and Ms. Upham believes that is a waste of District time. Another option is to consider each source and what the most efficient approach is then clearing an area just wide enough for the Argo to drive into and out of to treat. Management has also been assessing Google Earth to see how much chemicals they will need and what area needs to be covered. This helps eliminate sites that the drone can treat saving the technicians, equipment, and time.

1. **Any Request for Future Agenda Items:**

None

1. **Expenditures:**

None

1. **Public Comment:**

None

1. **Adjournment:**

Adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

SIGNATURE: Chairwoman or Vice Chairman

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DATE: