

MINUTES

Branson - Trinchera

Conservation District

DATE: Friday, December 12, 2025

PLACE: Kim, CO (@ the Church)

TIME: 5:00pm

Dale Yocam called the meeting to order at 4:55pm.

I. BUSINESS MEETING

A. Call meeting to order and roll call of attendance:

- Dale Yocam, President—present
- Dick Loudon, Vice President—absent
- Harold Unwin, Secretary/Treasurer—present
- Lori Green, Member—present (on phone)
- Will Ward, Member—present (on phone)

B. Introduction of Guests: Garth Schaefer, Keith Mantelli, Sammie Molinaro, and Lori Chatterley were in attendance.

C. Approval of Minutes from November 17, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Harold Unwin. Second: Will Ward. Motion carried 4-0.

D. TREASURER'S REPORT

Harold Unwin gave the report.

- Income: none reported
- Bills: paid SP-PR for the DM \$3542 & DT \$3000; \$400 to Big R; \$2100, 949.23 to cost shares; leaves less than 10% for admin. on the CSCB Matching Grant. Great job expending the money.
- Current Balance: \$19,569.02

E. INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE

1. 2025 Matching Grant Report and Reimbursement Request is due Dec. 20—Harold gave Lori C. a copy of the last check payments written.
2. 2025 Grazed Forage Acreage Condition for Las Animas County—shows a 5% loss of forage production
3. Certification of legal notice posting for the 2026 Budget—for the records

F. OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE

1. **Publicity piece for CSCB Matching Grant**—Lori shared the piece she wrote with the statistics of what the matching grant cost share was able to accomplish under Keith's stewardship.

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. **2026 Budget Public Hearing**—no public was present to discuss the budget

2. 2026 Final Budget, Mill Levy Certification, and Budget Attachments Adoption

Harold mentioned that there was a \$925 correction out of Mill Levy this year that was actually water testing. The board went over the income from mill levy and grants. Garth mentioned that the Annual Report can bump up the direct assistance grant \$750.

Expenses are standard from previous year. Motion to approve the budget and attachments by Harold Unwin. Second: Will Ward. Motion carried 4-0. Motion to approve the mill levy certification by Lori Green. Second: Harold Unwin. Motion carried 4-0.

3. **Discussion: Exemption from Audit**—Lori C. asked if the board wanted a quote from Stacey and Harold will get one from a guy from Divide, CO. Still a few months so just get some quotes for the next meeting.

H. OLD BUSINESS—none

I. OTHER BUSINESS –the board gave Keith a card. This is Keith’s last meeting. He has been the DCT for 5 ½ years. Keith expressed his appreciation for the district and enjoyed his time and relationships. He said anyone can call him in the future if needed. He’s out of the job, but not out of the area and decided that if we need anything, he is free to answer and assist as possible. There was a short discussion about hiring a new DCT—the position is open.

J. NRCS REPORT –Sammie presented 3 plans for the CRP Grasslands: Ida Spahr, Russell Freeman and Nikki Shannon. These are 15-year contracts. Motion to approve for signature by Harold Unwin. Second: Lori Green. Motion carried 4-0.

Sammie also reported there was still no Farmbill but NRCS is funded in the Continuing Resolution through the end of September, even if the government shuts down in January. USDA looking at comments and then starting reorganization. The staff have still been assisting Springfield. Keisha will be leaving the end of January. Sign up for NRCS programs with EQUIP and CSP is January 15. There is also a new pilot program: Regenerative Ag on croplands. Sammie also talked about the Community Wildfire Protection Plan meeting tomorrow. There was a question about programs that can help with wildfire damage. NRCS or Farm Service also can do emergency programs if someone’s land/fence/infrastructure/livestock are destroyed with fire. It was reported than moisture is 50% of normal. Dale said the district did get some good rain two weeks ago and the wheat and grasses are fine so far.

Lori C. mentioned there was a new grant just released from CDA for soil health and optimizing water; several parameters but up to \$50,000. She will sit in on the webinar on the 17th and send out some notes. Individuals can also apply and she could help if needed. It’s due January 20. Garth pointed out there is no match and it could be worth considering.

K. DISTRICT TECH. REPORT

Keith went over the work he did for the district with matching grant cost share participants.

- Cost Share Completions: Steven Greenlee \$2029.25

Motion to approve by Harold Unwin. Second: Will Ward. Motion carried 4-0.

L. NEXT MEETING January 21, 2026 at 5pm in Branson.

M. ADJOURNMENT—Dale Yocam adjourned the meeting at 5:29pm