

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2015**

I. Time and Place of Meeting.

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Whatcom Conservation District (WCD) was held at the Ag Service Center, 6975 Hannegan Rd, Lynden, Washington on October 8, 2015, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

The following Supervisors, being a quorum of the Board, were present:

Larry Davis, Chair
Joe Heller

Dan Heeringa, Treasurer
Larry Helm

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director
Shana Joy, WSCC Regional Manager
Debbie Adelstein, Whatcom County Auditor

Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant
Rod Perry, farmer

III. Meeting Called to Order.

Larry Davis, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

IV. Supervisor Elections, Debbie Adelstein, Whatcom County Auditor.

Debbie Adelstein, WC Auditor, appeared at the invitation of the board to discuss costs associated with her office holding a Supervisor election on the general ballot. After introductions, George gave an overview of Conservation District Supervisor elections and concerns expressed by some voters following the last election.

Debbie Adelstein explained that costs for elections are based upon the number of voters entitled to vote. For the Conservation District that would be the entire list of voters in the county because its jurisdiction is the entire county. Other agencies, such as a cemetery district, would be much smaller. The estimated cost of holding an election for a supervisor during the 2013 general election would have been \$63,000. If more than two candidates file a primary election would be required and that would cost an additional amount. She estimated that it would be in excess of another \$20,000. Debbie said that in presidential elections (even years) the election would be even more expensive.

Due to the high cost of a general election process, there was discussion regarding ways that the county auditor's office could be used with the current election process. The possibility of having the ballots printed and sent to those that requested ballots and then counted by the County Auditor's office was discussed. Debbie Adelstein is going to check into the cost of printing and counting ballots.

V. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Contracts –

Since Rod Perry was present, the Board opted to review his project first. Rod explained that there were 4 or 5 ponds, swamp and bad terrain in the area proposed for CREP. It was not conducive to modern day farming. The proposed wetland buffer practice had been added since the original project was installed. He explained that the area was a water recharge area.

Larry Helm moved to approve the CREP maintenance contract provided by Emily Hirsch for: Rod Perry. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Public Comment (written or in person).

The District received a letter from Okanogan Conservation District thanking the District for Andrew Phay's help in the work following their fires this summer.

Bill Zachmann, EPA project manager, sent a glowing note in close out of the Birch Bay Pilot Project complementing the Whatcom Conservation District for meeting, and in some instances, exceeding the deliverables promised in the grant.

Brian Cochrane, Washington State Conservation Commission, sent a note of thanks for Emily Hirsch helping him with the CREP inventory.

Steve Groen sent a thank you for help on his CREP project.

VII. Consent Agenda.

The Board adopted a consent agenda for approval of the previous meeting minutes, financial report and accounts payable. The financial report was mailed to the Board with their draft minutes from the September meeting. Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant, presented the financial report. A copy of District invoices and incurred expenses, as listed in the Accounts Payable Report, were reviewed and approved. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting.

Larry Helm moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the September Board meeting as mailed, the financial report and authorize payment of District invoices and incurred expenses (below), as listed in the Accounts Payable Report. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Sept 2015 - balance | | | | | |
| Voucher (check) numbers | <u>22962</u> | through | <u>22985</u> | and totaling | <u>10,217.89</u> |
| Payroll check numbers: | <u>22986</u> | through | <u>23005</u> | and totaling | <u>32,761.13</u> |
| October 2015 | | | | | |
| Voucher (check) numbers | <u>23006</u> | through | <u>23026</u> | and totaling | <u>25,475.31</u> |
| Payroll check numbers: | <u>23027</u> | through | <u>23042</u> | and totaling | <u>32,380.81</u> |

VIII. Action Items.

A. Approval of Conservation Plans & Contracts.

Small Acreage Livestock Farm Plan Approval and Whatcom County PIC Cost-share – CD staff completed an inventory and standard farm plan for Burkwood Farms (Paige Wagter). It fulfills the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommended Board approval. Burkwood Farms is seeking cost-share through the County PIC cost-share program.

Joe Heller moved to approve the standard farm plan for Burkwood Farms (Paige Wagter). Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Joe Heller moved to approve a Whatcom County PIC cost-share application for 75% of expenses, not to exceed \$3000.00 for costs incurred after the execution of the cost-share agreement for Burkwood Farms (Paige Wagter). Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Shellfish Cost-share –

The Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) has funds appropriated by the legislature for cost-share for producers in Shellfish Watersheds. The WSCC staff met to select projects for funding from the list of applicants on the statewide database (CPDS). We received notification on October 1, 2015 that the following list of applicants (below) were approved for funding. The Board had previously reviewed, concurred with staff ranking then approved their being added to the list of applicants from Whatcom. Staff are confirming that the producers still need the assistance and are willing to go forward with the projects.

Joe Heller moved to approve and authorize signature of cost-share contracts of Shellfish Cost-share funds for 75% of actual costs up to allocated amounts as listed for:

- **Seth Snook - \$50,000**
- **Sherm Polinder - \$50,000**
- **Tim Vanderhaak - \$50,000**
- **Ron Postma (Fedema Farms) - \$2,460.**

Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Contracts –

CREP is a joint federal and state program to enhance fish habitat and protect water quality. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) is the administrative lead. District resource specialists (Wayne Chaudiere, Frank Corey or Emily Hirsch) works with a landowner to develop a conservation plan that includes practices meeting the landowner's needs. It is reviewed for technical sufficiency by the Natural Resources Conservation Service representative (Alex Hall) and George Boggs. The landowner signs the plan and it is passed on to FSA. The FSA County Oversight Committee (COC) approves all CREP plans. The current District policy is that once FSA approves the Federal Contract and CREP plan, then the CREP maintenance contract is brought to the Board for its approval. Absent unusual circumstances, the Board approves the standard-language maintenance agreement prescribed by the State Conservation Commission.

There were 9 additional CREP maintenance contracts submitted for Board approval.

George Boggs read a letter from Steve Groen seeking approval of his proposed CREP project. Rod Perry offered his insights into the various projects.

Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Wayne Chaudiere for Steve & Sheri Groen. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 for and 1 abstention.)

Larry Helm moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Emily Hirsch for Bob King. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Emily Hirsch for Curt & Joy Hawley. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Frank Corey for Karen Kuipers. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dan Heeringa moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Frank Corey for Leroy Harkness & Kristi Vanerstrom. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 for and 1 abstention.)

Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Frank Corey for Daniel & Katherine McGee. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dan Heeringa moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Frank Corey for Rafael & Shukyo Mithuna. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Frank Corey for John (Sasch) Stephens. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Brandi Hutton for Sally Yorkston. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Authorization to Hire a Research Assistant.

Nichole Embertson submitted a letter and job description requesting authorization to hire a research assistant to the Board. Larry Helm had questions. George reminded him that the Board had hired Nichole to do research and help make farms more viable. She was not hired to write dairy farm plans. George reiterated that Nichole had received some funds for these projects, including WSCC Technical Professional Development Workgroup Discovery Farms component and a NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant to take the ARM system nation-wide. George explained that Nichole and Aneka need assistants to help their programs meet the expectations previously identified by the Board.

Larry Helm moved to authorize hiring a research assistant for Nichole Embertson. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Partnerships.

City of Lynden –

The Department of Ecology has funds to support education outreach efforts and activities through the NPDES (stormwater) process. The City of Lynden and Northwest Washington Fair Association would like to partner with the Whatcom Conservation District to develop a funding application for Fishtrap Creek Education and Outreach.

Joe Heller moved to approve the proposed partnership with the City of Lynden and Northwest Washington Fair Association and write a letter of support for a Department of Ecology grant application to lead water quality education outreach efforts in Fishtrap Creek. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 for and 1 opposed.)

Whatcom County –

The Portage Bay Shellfish Advisory Committee has a series of recommendations for enhanced outreach and communication strategies to promote awareness, nurture values, and encourage conservation action to protect shellfish growing areas in Portage Bay. Whatcom County is proposing an enhanced and continued Pollution Identification and Control (PIC) effort through Department of Ecology non-point source pollution funding to implement these recommendations.

Dan Heeringa moved to approve and authorize the Executive Director to submit a letter of support for the grant application from Whatcom County Public Works to support a coordinated approach to water quality outreach and communication, Community Solutions to Clean Water. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 for and 1 opposed.)

IX. Other Business.

A. Supervisor Reports.

Larry Helm –

Larry Davis, George Boggs and Larry Helm attended the Northwest Area Association annual area meeting in Bremerton. Larry reported that there was a big discussion regarding Supervisor elections. He would like future agendas to focus less on the Washington State Conservation

Commission and Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) and other partnership organizations. Their reports cut into the discussion time of the area Conservation Districts.

Larry reported on other meetings that he attended in the county.

Larry Davis –

Larry reported that all seven resolutions presented at the NW Area meeting passed.

He stated that he would send out a written report of his other activities.

B. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Budget Report –

George reminded the Board that the Long Range Plan needs to be updated this year. He gave a presentation on the District's budget for the current fiscal year.

Natural Resources Conservation Service –

George spoke with Roylene Rides at the Door at the NW Area meeting. They talked about CREP plans and a narrow hedgerow study.

Building Remodel –

George reported that it appears that the USDA will still be in the building until the end of the year. To keep the building permit current to extend the construction window for the remodel, the balance of the permit fee is due.

Larry Helm moved to pay the building permit fee of \$2,100 to keep the construction window open for 6 months to allow for a rebid on the project, seeking bids for the December Board meeting. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Shana Joy, Washington State Conservation Commission.

The Conservation Commission now has a new email/delivery system for sending out email notifications and other reports. Shana recommended that everyone sign up for it.

Shellfish Cost-share –

The first round of Shellfish Cost-share funds have been allocated.

D. Miscellaneous.

WACD Annual Meeting –

The WACD Annual meeting is scheduled for November 30 – Dec 3 in Spokane. The deadline for early registration is November 13, 2015.

Next Board meeting –

The November meeting is November 12, 2015. The Election Resolution will be approved at this meeting.

X. Record of Board Actions.

15-97 Larry Helm moved to approve the CREP maintenance contract provided by Emily Hirsch for: Rod Perry. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

15-98 Larry Helm moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the September Board meeting as mailed, the financial report and authorize payment of District invoices and incurred expenses (below), as listed in the Accounts Payable Report. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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- 15-99 Joe Heller moved to approve the standard farm plan for Burkwood Farms (Paige Wagter). Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 15-100 Joe Heller moved to approve a Whatcom County PIC cost-share application for 75% of expenses, not to exceed \$3000.00 for costs incurred after the execution of the cost-share agreement for Burkwood Farms (Paige Wagter). Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 15-101 Joe Heller moved to approve and authorize signature of cost-share contracts of Shellfish Cost-share funds for 75% of actual costs up to allocated amounts as listed for:**
- Seth Snook - \$50,000
 - Sherm Polinder - \$50,000
 - Tim Vanderhaak - \$50,000
 - Ron Postma (Fedema Farms) - \$2,460.
- Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 15-102 Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Wayne Chaudiere for Steve & Sheri Groen. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 for and 1 abstention.)**
- 15-103 Larry Helm moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Emily Hirsch for Bob King. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- 15-104 Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Emily Hirsch for Curt & Joy Hawley. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
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- 15-106 Dan Heeringa moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Frank Corey for Leroy Harkness & Kristi Vanerstrom. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 for and 1 abstention.)**
- 15-107 Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Frank Corey for Daniel & Katherine McGee. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
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- 15-110 Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Brandi Hutton for Sally Yorkston. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 15-111 Larry Helm moved to authorize hiring a research assistant for Nichole Embertson. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 15-112 Joe Heller moved to approve the proposed partnership with the City of Lynden and Northwest Washington Fair Association and write a letter of support for a Department of Ecology grant application to lead water quality education outreach efforts in Fishtrap Creek. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 for and 1 opposed.)
- 15-113 Dan Heeringa moved to approve and authorize the Executive Director to submit a letter of support for the grant application from Whatcom County Public Works to support a coordinated approach to water quality outreach and communication, Community Solutions to Clean Water. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 for and 1 opposed.)
- 15-114 Larry Helm moved to pay the building permit fee of \$2,100 to keep the construction window open for 6 months to allow for a rebid on the project, seeking bids for the December Board meeting. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

XI. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Joe Heller moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:04 p.m. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 10:04 p.m.

Dated: November 19, 2015

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant