

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
Public Meeting Minutes  
August 9, 2018**

**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 August 9, 2018, at 1:00 p.m.

**II. Attendance and Quorum.**

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

Larry Davis, Chair  
Suzzi Snyder, Treasurer  
Theresa Sygitowicz

Heather Christianson, Vice-Chair  
Alan Chapman (via video conference call)

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director  
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant  
Alison Halpern, WSCC  
Sharon Shewmake

Alex Hall, NRCS staff  
Aneka Sweeney, Education Outreach  
Andrew Damitio, NRCS  
Paul Campbell

**III. Meeting Called to Order.**

Larry Davis, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**IV. Agenda.**

There were no suggested changes or additions to the agenda.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the agenda as presented. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**V. Election of Officers.**

The Washington State Conservation Commission certified the District election at its July 19, 2018 meeting. The resulting change in Supervisors necessitated the election of new officers.

Chair –

Nominations for Chair were opened up. Theresa Sygitowicz nominated Larry Davis. Suzzi Snyder seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. The nominations were closed. Larry Davis was elected as the Chair.

Vice-Chair –

Nominations for Vice-Chair were opened up. Suzzi Snyder nominated Theresa Sygitowicz. Alan Chapman nominated Heather Christianson. The nominations were closed. The Supervisors conducted a written secret vote with Alan voting via text message to George Boggs. Heather Christianson was elected as the Vice-Chair.

Secretary/Treasurer –

Nominations for Secretary/Treasurer were opened up. Theresa Sygitowicz nominated Suzzi Snyder. The nominations were closed. Suzzi Snyder was elected as the Secretary/Treasurer.

Following the election of Board Officers, the bank signature cards and Washington State Conservation Commission Authorized Signature Cards were signed. The Board authorized Dawn Bekenyi to submit online forms for travel vouchers, addendums, invoice vouchers, grant

documents, timesheets, grant close-out forms, and online Cost-share Partial Payment Request forms.

**VI. Public Comment (written or in person).**

Sharon Shewmake introduced herself. She is running for state representative. Paul Campbell introduced himself. There were no further comments, written or in person.

**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 March 8, April 27, May 23 and June 21, 2018 meetings. 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.

**Suzzi Snyder moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the March 8, April 27, May 23, and June 21, 2018 Board meetings as mailed, the financial report and authorize payment of District invoices and incurred expenses (below), as listed in the Accounts Payable Report and approve the step increase for Katie Pencke to Band C1 Step 4. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

June 2018 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	26045	through		and totaling	3,011.25
Payroll (direct deposit):				and totaling	32,679.04
Voucher (check) numbers	26046	through	26076	and totaling	25,953.84
July 2018					
Payroll tax EFT				totaling	10,240.86
Voucher EFT				totaling	55.01
Payroll (direct deposit)				and totaling	42,121.88
Voucher (check) numbers	26077	through	26136	and totaling	179,940.28
Payroll check numbers (direct deposit):	26137	through	26140	and totaling	45,357.85
August 2018					
Voucher (check) numbers	26141	through	26143	and totaling	2,928.57

**VIII. Action Items.**

**A. Authorize Education & Outreach Technician Position.**

The Education & Outreach program has grown beyond what one person can do effectively, particularly when District events are six days a week. Additionally, there is more demand for planner assistance by livestock owners. Livestock Team members are spending considerable time helping with administrative tasks associated with conducting landowner training and workshop events. This time would be better spent working with landowners one-on-one to develop and implement farm plans. Similarly, those tasks reduce the time Aneka can spend on education activities. It was concluded that sharing a technician would be the most economical

and effective solution to increase the productivity of their programs. Existing grant funds will cover the position. There was discussion regarding programs that the Education & Outreach Team are involved in.

**Alan Chapman moved to authorize the hire of an Education and Outreach Technician Position through the end of the 2019 Fiscal Year. Continuation of the position will be subject to the continued availability of funding and achievement of efficiencies in outreach for the supporting programs. Heather Christianson seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**B. Alex Hall, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).**

Alex reported on activities with the various cost-share programs that NRCS administers.

**C. Set Board meeting Day and Time.**

There was discussion about what week of the month, day of the week and time of day would work best for all Board members.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to set the third Thursday of the month at 1:00 pm as the Board meeting day and time for 2018 and 2019. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**D. Approval of Conservation Plans.**

Standard Conservation Farm Plan Approval –

Katie Pencke completed an inventory and farm plan for Karl Prisk (Cougar Creek Farm). It fulfilled the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommended Board approval.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the Standard Conservation Farm Plan for Karl Prisk (Cougar Creek Farm). Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) –

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. A District resource specialist (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 four CREP maintenance contracts submitted for Board approval.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contracts provided by Wayne Chaudiere for: Russell & Kelly Gollen; Nick & Sherie Harris, Dalbir Johal; and Sandra Matheson. Heather Christianson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**E. Approve Contracts.**

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) –

WSCC makes allocations to Conservation Districts (CDs) to accomplish the legislatively identified activities. Such distributions are accomplished through Addendums to the CD Master Grant Agreement. CDs develop scopes of work that are incorporated into the Addendums.

The WSCC has made an allocation to the District for the Implementation program. The Scope of Work included in the packet is recommended by staff for approval and submission to WSCC.

Aneka spoke to the proposed scope of work for the Implementation grant and answered questions.

Theresa asked about water quality testing in Deming. Aneka said that Whatcom County does the sampling. Alan Chapman spoke to the types of water quality testing that are currently taking place in Whatcom County and that the bulk of the impacts are below Everson, so therefore the sampling is done there. George stated that he will investigate if any water quality testing is being done in the Deming area.

**Heather Christianson moved to approve the Scope of Work for the Implementation grant. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**F. Approve Agreements.**

Cluster Engineer Agreement –

Skagit, Whatcom, Whidbey Island and San Juan Islands CDs share an engineer. The Conservation Commission, through a grant to the Skagit Conservation District, funds most of his salary. There was a problem a few years ago over the level of service that some Districts received from the cluster engineer. It was resolved through an agreement. A copy of the agreement was provided to the Board to review. No issues have arisen to suggest any need to modify the agreement at this time. Staff recommended that the agreement be approved.

**Suzzi Snyder moved to approve and sign the Cluster Engineer Agreement between San Juan Islands, Skagit, Whatcom and Whidbey Island CDs. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Inter-local Agreement with Palouse Conservation District –

George gave some background about the inter-local agreement. The Whatcom Conservation District administers the Center for Technical Development (CTD) grant that works with other conservation districts. Palouse CD is the latest District to work under this project and is seeking an inter-local agreement to do CTD work.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve and sign the Inter-local Agreement with the Palouse Conservation District. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**G. Approve Cultural Resources Policy.**

George explained that the policy was brought to the June meeting and the Board wanted input from the Tribes before it approved the changes. George reported that staff did reach out to the Cultural Resources leads for the local tribes seeking input. There was no response from them.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the Whatcom Conservation District's updated Cultural Resources Policy. Heather Christianson seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**H. Board Retreat.**

November 2, 2018 has been selected for the Board retreat. The retreat will be from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm, with the staff coming in the afternoon. Larry, Theresa and George will work on where the retreat will be held and inform the Board when a place is found.

**I. Approve Protocol for distributing Commission Financial Assistance.**

George explained that the WSCC has an on-line database (CPDS) to track planning and proposed cost-share projects. This is what they use to distribute their available cost-share funds. George reviewed the proposed protocol to maximize the Whatcom Conservation District's eligibility of those available funds.

**Suzzi Snyder moved to approve the proposed cost-share protocol for Washington State Conservation Commission Financial Assistance. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**IX. Other Business.**

**A. Alison Halpern, WSCC.**

Alison was hired by the Washington State Conservation Commission in July 2018 to be the new Puget Sound Regional Manager. She gave her background. She had worked 13 years for the state Noxious Weed Control Board. Alison grew up in Boston and did her schooling in Syracuse, New York.

**B. Supervisor Reports.**

The Board members gave updates on their activities and meetings attended since the last Board meeting.

Larry and Theresa met to work on the policies and procedures, employee manual and the Board retreat.

**C. George Boggs, Executive Director.**

Firewise –

George reported that the District submitted a funding proposal to Whatcom County for the Firewise program.

Minutes –

There was discussion regarding posting draft minutes to the Districts' website. Alan was in favor. Theresa cautioned against the draft that may be too or not inclusive enough. It was decided to add the topic to the discussion during the Board retreat.

**X. Record of Board Actions.**

**18-49 Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the agenda as presented. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**18-50 Election of Officers**

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**and approval at the next Board meeting. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

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- 18-54 Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the Standard Conservation Farm Plan for Karl Prisk (Cougar Creek Farm). Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 18-55 Theresa Sygitowicz moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contracts provided by Wayne Chaudiere for: Russell & Kelly Gollen; Nick & Sherie Harris, Dalbir Johal; and Sandra Matheson. Heather Christianson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- 18-56 Heather Christianson moved to approve the Scope of Work for the Implementation grant. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 18-57 Suzzi Snyder moved to approve and sign the Cluster Engineer Agreement between San Juan Islands, Skagit, Whatcom and Whidbey Island CDs. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 18-58 Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve and sign the Inter-local Agreement with the Palouse Conservation District. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 18-59 Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the Whatcom Conservation District's updated Cultural Resources Policy. Heather Christianson seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**18-60 Suzzi Snyder moved to approve the proposed cost-share protocol for Washington State Conservation Commission Financial Assistance. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**XI. Adjournment.**

**There being no further business before the meeting, Theresa Sygitowicz moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Dated: September 25, 2018

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant