

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2007**

I. Time and Place of Meeting.

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisor of the Whatcom Conservation District was held at the Ag Service Center, 6975 Hannegan Rd, Lynden, Washington on December 11, 2007, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jerry Van Dellen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dick Yoder
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sabina Gouran	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joyce Jimerson
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ed Stone		

Also in attendance were:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	George Boggs, District Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alex Hall, NRCS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant		Robert Barker, Associate Supervisor

III. Meeting Called to Order.

Jerry Van Dellen as Chairman of the meeting called it to order at 7:03 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Dick Yoder moved that the minutes of the November 13, 2007 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Financial Report.

The financial report was mailed to the Board with their draft minutes from the November meeting.

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant, asked if there were any questions regarding the Financial Report. There were no questions.

Dick Yoder moved to approve the Financial Report. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

Accounts Payable –

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.

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

Nov 2007 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>15510</u>	through	<u>15526</u>	and totaling	<u>11,617.98</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>15527</u>	through	<u>15540</u>	and totaling	<u>20,592.78</u>
December 2007					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>15541</u>	through	<u>15581</u>	and totaling	<u>123,856.08</u>

Payroll check numbers: 15582 through 15595 and totaling 20,586.56
moved by Dick Yoder. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Action Items.

A. Approval of Contracts.

CREP Contracts –

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is the administrative lead on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) joint program. The FSA County Committee approves all plans. The current policy is that once FSA approves the Federal Contract and CREP plan the contract is then brought to the Board meeting for its approval. The Board approved the standard-language contract.

Sabina Gouran moved to ratify the CREP contract for Whatcom Land Trust Fenton Project (06-04-CR01:07-32). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. Supervisor Election Resolution.

Resolution RS 07-2 was approved that sets the date and time that the polls will be open. Two positions are up this year. Jerry's elected position and Joyce's appointed position. Jerry said that he will not be able to serve another term at this time.

Sabina Gouran moved to set the Whatcom Supervisor Election for March 11, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Employee Matters.

Pay scale Adjustment –

On Dec 13, 2006, the Board reviewed the employee pay scale in light of the 2006 salary survey that was conducted for conservation districts of similar size, Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham. They concluded that an adjustment was appropriate. The Board granted a partial increase (10%) at that time. There was concern about making a full adjustment because of some uncertainty about anticipated revenue sources. That uncertainty has been removed. On December 4th, Whatcom County Council approved a contract for \$110,000 for the next calendar year. George recommended that the current employee pay scale be adjusted upward by 10%.

A draft showing a 10% increase to the pay scale sent to the Board for reviewed. There was discussion regarding the fairness of a blanket percentage increase to the pay scale. It was pointed out that a percentage increase would give a larger increase in dollars to higher bands. The Board felt that an increase was appropriate, but where not sure how to apply it. After much discussion it was decided to get further information. The Board requested a draft showing a 5% increase to the pay scale. They also requested that the salary survey be available for their review.

There was discussion regarding compensation for an engineer. The Board was unsure if the previously approved addition of an Engineer classification to Band D1 – Manager was adequate to maintain an engineer. It will probably be discussed further if the need arises.

The matter will be discussed at the January Board meeting following review of the additional information requested.

Employee Step Increases –

George explained that all employees are performing their duties well. He explained that some employees have reached the top rung for the pay scale and therefore are not eligible for a step increase. The Board approved the employee step increases for Dawn Bekenyi, Beth Chisholm, Frank Corey, Andrea Hood and Sonya Schaller. All other employees have reached the top of the pay scale for their band classification.

Dick Yoder moved to approve the employee step increases for Dawn Bekenyi, Beth Chisholm, Frank Corey, Andrea Hood and Sonya Schaller effective January 1, 2008. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Drainage Manual Technical Assistance –

Funds have become available for Frank Corey to do additional activities under the Whatcom County Riparian Restoration Contract. This frees up some funds under the Drainage Improvement District Education grant to do the drainage manual. George would like to hire John Gillies part-time to work on the drainage manual. John is very qualified from a technical standpoint and it will fit in with the newly formed North County Watershed Improvement District (WID). The Board approved hiring John Gillies as a part-time employee for 4-6 months to write the drainage manual.

Sabina Gouran moved to hire John Gillies as a part-time employee for 4-6 months to write the drainage manual. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VII. Other Business.

A. Plant Sale.

The Whatcom Conservation District was approached by the Community Food Co-op to hold our plant sale at their Cordata Parkway site of their new store. The Food Co-op will provide volunteers and advertising for our plant sale. Staff has met with Jeff Voltz, Community Food Co-op General Manager, at the site. With the added exposure staff wishes to include other complementary agencies to have educational booths at the event. The Board was in favor of the idea. Sabina volunteered to help at the Plant Sale. The date has been set for March 22, 2008.

B. Supervisor Reports.

Jerry Van Dellen attended the Washington Association of Conservation District's (WACD) annual meeting in Vancouver, WA. Jerry reported on the breakout sessions and resolution committees. There was discussion regarding the process that the resolutions go through and that they are tools to direct the activities of the lobbyist and WACD Executive Director. Jerry recommended that other Board members attend the WACD Annual meeting in the future.

C. George Boggs.

State Route 9 Project –

George reported that the contract with the Washington Department of Transportation (WDOT) has been signed and executed. Three of the four landowner agreements have been signed. Chris Clark and Bill Bensen have spent a lot of time on the project. George discussed the other phases to be done to help other landowners with drainage issues due the WDOT's work on State Route 9.

Whatcom County CPAL Low-Impact Livestock Contract –

The Whatcom County/WCD CPAL Inter-local Agreement was signed. There have been several meetings with Whatcom County Staff regarding implementation of the contract. George met with representatives from Whatcom County last week. The teams will develop a work plan, and common messages to be distributed and training by February 1, 2007.

Puget Sound Partnership –

The Puget Sound Conservation Districts are working on a presentation to make for the Puget Sound Partnership at the end of June for a work plan of all Puget Sound Districts for funding. George is on the WACD steering committee to get the work plan together. Ron Shulz was hired by the WA Conservation Commission to work on the Puget Sound program. The group is likely to ask the Puget Sound Conservation Districts to look at their annual and long range plans to see what they want to do if they had the funding. A survey will be sent out to get information from the

Districts. The WACD steering committee is seeking Conservation District supervisors to act as a point of contact and serve on the committee.

Drainage Improvement District –

The North Lynden Watershed Improvement District (WID) was approved. George mentioned that our DID Education grant will dovetail nicely with the new WID.

Verizon –

There was some discussion as to elements to a possible settlement. Since the full Board was not present, no decisions were reached at this time as to damages.

Salmon Recovery Lead Agency for Grant Review –

George heard that there is the potential that the Whatcom Conservation District to contract with WDFW directly or indirectly with the WRIA 1 Salmon Recovery Lead entity to provide office space and contract administration. This could be a good fit for the District particularly if NRCS sought a reduction in the office space do to a reduction in its Staffing. The building lease is up in August.

He suggested that with a partial extension of that lease and perhaps a Lead Entity sub contract, the Board should consider making some improvements to the building, such as paint and new carpets. A budget would be provided in the future if and when this becomes a more substantial prospect.

D. Alex Hall, NRCS.

EQIP –

The initial allocation of EQIP funds for the NW team is \$1.2 million. There are \$1.7 million in requests for Whatcom County alone. There will probably be some competition to get funding. Whatcom County will have significant funds coming. NRCS staff hopes to have the EQIP contracts written and signed by the end of February. Mid May is the deadline for getting them done.

Planning -

Joy Hawley, Chris Clark, Chuck Timblin, Sonya Schaller and Alex have all completed the necessary steps to become basic certified planners.

Farm Bill –

The federal government is under continuing resolutions that will keep EQIP going. CREP will be suspended on December 31, 2007 until a new farm bill is signed.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

07-105 Dick Yoder moved that the minutes of the November 13, 2007 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

07-106 Dick Yoder moved to approve the Financial Report. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

07-107

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07-109 Sabina Gouran moved to set the Whatcom Supervisor Election for March 11, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

07-110 Dick Yoder moved to approve the employee step increases for Dawn Bekenyi, Beth Chisholm, Frank Corey, Andrea Hood and Sonya Schaller effective January 1, 2008. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

07-111 Sabina Gouran moved to hire John Gillies as a part-time employee for 4-6 months to write the drainage manual. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Sabina Gouran moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Dated: January 31, 2008

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____