

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2016**

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 February 11, 2016, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

Larry Davis, Chair	Dick Yoder, Vice-Chair
Dan Heeringa, Treasurer	Larry Helm

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director	Alex Hall, NRCS staff
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant	

III. Meeting Called to Order.

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

IV. Public Comment (written or in person).

There were no public comments, written or in person.

V. 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 January 2016 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 January 14, 2016 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. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

Jan 2016 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>23341</u>	through	<u>23358</u>	and totaling	<u>12,243.39</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>22359</u>	through	<u>23376</u>	and totaling	<u>32,510.64</u>
February 2016					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>23377</u>	through	<u>23402</u>	and totaling	<u>47,578.44</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>23403</u>	through	<u>23418</u>	and totaling	<u>32,252.41</u>

VI. Action Items.

A. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Dairy Nutrient Management Plan (DNMP) Certification –

There was one Dairy Nutrient Management Plan submitted for Board certification. Chris Clark reviewed the plan for Hidden Acres Dairy and recommended that the Board certify it. It met the applicable requirements for certification and the producer certified that he was managing accordingly.

Larry Helm moved to certify the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Hidden Acres Dairy (Corby Groen). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Dairy Nutrient Management Plan (DNMP) Approval –

There was one Dairy Nutrient Management Plan submitted for Board approval from David Haggith of N3. Staff recommended approval as it contained the necessary elements prescribed by the Conservation Commission and the operator has signed it indicating that it accurately reflects his operation and agrees to its implementation.

Dan Heeringa moved to approve the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Garrison Road Dairy LLC (Jay & Larry VanMiddendorp). Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Conservation Farm Plan Approval –

Chuck Timblin completed an inventory and farm plan for one moderate intensity farm. The plan fulfills the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommended Board approval.

Larry Helm moved to approve the Conservation Farm Plan for Satyrday Farms (David & Joanne Hisdal). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Small Acreage Livestock Farm Plan Approval and Whatcom County PIC Cost-share –

Corina Cheever completed an inventory and farm plan for Gerritt VanWeerdhuizen. It fulfills the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommended Board approval.

Larry Helm moved to approve the standard checklist farm plan for Gerritt VanWeerdhuizen. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. Approval of Contracts.

USDA Conservation Innovations Grant (CIG) –

George gave a background on the evolution of the Applied Risk Management (ARM) program from the completed EPA grant setting up the process to extending the program nation-wide with a CIG grant. The grant contract anticipates working with two universities, South Dakota University and Virginia Tech.

The Board asked if Nichole Embertson could come and give an update on the program every six months or so.

Larry Helm moved to authorize the District Chair to subcontract with South Dakota State University in the amount of \$63,444 and Virginia Tech in the amount of \$199,400 to accomplish the activities anticipated of those institutions in the CIG. The form of the subcontracts is to meet the requirements of the District's CIG agreement with USDA and Washington State Law. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Whatcom Hills Waldorf School.

Aneka was contacted regarding doing a service project at the Whatcom Hills Waldorf School by an 8th grade student's parent. The students are required to give back to their community and asked if we would have any opportunity for the students to volunteer. They contacted WCD in hopes of creating a partnership to help with the education, and potential service projects. Aneka met with staff from the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) and the school to create a work plan and proposed project to include student learning activities at the school and a

work party building habitat, inviting pollinators, and improving water quality. Aneka presented the Board with a budget for the project.

Larry Helm moved to approve the proposed budget of \$880 to fund the Whatcom Hills Waldorf School Native Plant Education Partnership project out of the District's education fund. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

D. WCD Totes.

In 2013 and 2015, WCD purchased reusable tote bags in response to the City of Bellingham's ban on single use plastic bags. The Enviro-Tote bags continue to be very popular at our plant sale. They have also been used for promotional giveaways for special visitors, WCD tours, and to teachers. The canvas bags are made in the USA, durable, and attractive. This year (2016), they again have enough left over material to supply us with approximately 675 medium grocery bags.

Larry Helm moved to approve the purchase of 675 totes for \$2,483.25 + shipping from Enviro-Tote, Inc. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

E. Building Improvements.

George gave an outline of the modifications needed for the FSA storage and server room to turn it into a lab.

Larry Helm moved to authorize staff to contract for needed facility improvements for approximately \$10,000 and in addition purchase cabinets. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VII. Other Business.

A. Alex Hall, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –

NRCS Staff have screened all 2016 applications and ranked all the eligible EQIP applications. The number went from 80+ applications to 57 eligible applications. Alex broke down the types of applications. The ranking deadline is February 19, 2016.

National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) –

There will be another NWQI signup. A March 1, 2016 meeting is scheduled with NRCS and partner staff to give a report so far and discuss the future direction of the program.

There is a new tool that NRCS staff are being asked to offer participants in the NWQI program to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatments that are implemented in the contracts.

Task Order –

Alex reported that a Task Order for Chris Clark, Bill Bonsen and Frank Corey's assistance on EQIP projects has been submitted to run through the end of September 2016.

Office –

Alex reported that NRCS and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) will not be moving out of the building in February as was previously thought. He is unsure about when they will be able to move.

B. Supervisor Reports.

Dan Heeringa –

Dan attended the Nutrient Management Seminar in Lynden. George explained that the Conservation District received funding from the Washington State Department of Agriculture to host three, all-day nutrient management seminars, in Whatcom, Snohomish and King counties.

Larry Helm –

Larry attended the Whatcom County Council meeting two weeks ago. There were 350-400 people in attendance to provide comments on the Comprehensive Plan.

Larry attended the Cattlemen’s Legislative Days. While in Olympia, he attended the Natural Resources Committee. Elk was a big issue.

The Ag Advisory Committee met. They had a rare quorum at the meeting. Wes Kentch was named as the new committee chair.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Farm Planning – Corina Cheever developed a report that shows numbers, referrals and farm types for the non-dairy workload for 2015. Larry Helm asked about the general cost for a farm plan. George figured that a simple checklist style plan would take about 16 hours. A moderate intensity farm could take about 40 hours. Dairy plans are much more complex and detailed. The hours estimated would be for a plan, not implementation of that farm plan.

28 dairies want a farm plan update. George expressed that we could use another full-time planner for both dairies and non-dairy planning to keep up with the current level of requests. He discussed potential funding sources to hire more planners.

Aneka and a couple of grad students are going to work on a customer satisfaction survey.

The tribes and farmers are going through negotiations and met last week. We hear that both sides like the ARM program.

Employee Matters –

George distributed Snohomish’s Personnel Manual to staff and asked for input. He noted that it incorporates by reference the State’s personnel system. He advised against this due to its high level of process. Our employees are all at-will employment while the state needs to respect union contracts. Also, it would be good if the Board could delay review. Staff, including George, are really busy addressing time sensitive matters. The Board agreed.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

16-11 Larry Helm moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the January 14, 2016 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. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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16-12 Larry Helm moved to certify the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Hidden Acres Dairy (Corby Groen). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

16-13 Dan Heeringa moved to approve the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Garrison Road Dairy LLC (Jay & Larry VanMiddendorp). Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

- 16-14 Larry Helm moved to approve the Conservation Farm Plan for Satyrday Farms (David & Joanne Hisdal). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 16-15 Larry Helm moved to approve the standard checklist farm plan for Gerritt VanWeedhuizen. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 16-16 Larry Helm moved to authorize the District Chair to subcontract with South Dakota State University in the amount of \$63,444 and Virginia Tech in the amount of \$199,400 to accomplish the activities anticipated of those institutions in the CIG. The form of the subcontracts is to meet the requirements of the District's CIG agreement with USDA and Washington State Law. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 16-17 Larry Helm moved to approve the proposed budget of \$880 to fund the Whatcom Hills Waldorf School Native Plant Education Partnership project out of the District's education fund. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 16-18 Larry Helm moved to approve the purchase of 675 totes for \$2,483.25 + shipping from Enviro-Tote, Inc. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 16-19 Larry Helm moved to authorize staff to contract for needed facility improvements for approximately \$10,000 and in addition purchase cabinets. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Helm moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Dated: May 2, 2016

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant