

WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
April 14, 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 April 14, 2016, 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

Dick Yoder, Vice-Chair
Larry Helm

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant
Fred Likkel, Whatcom Family Farmers
Theresa Sygitowicz, WCD supervisor elect

Sarah Tanuvasa, NRCS staff
Chuck Timblin, Resource Specialist
Roderic Perry, Landowner
Larry O'Brine, Land Manager

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).

Fred Likkel, Whatcom Family Farmers, expressed his appreciation of the work that Frank Corey has done with the Watershed Improvement Districts and encouraged the Board to allow Frank Corey to continue to work with the WIDs. He asked that the WIDs be included in the District's Long Range Planning process.

V. Action Items.

Non-Dairy Plans –

Larry O'Brine, cattle ranch operator, came to the Board meeting to appeal certain elements to his farm plan relating to animal access to fields. He felt that the pasture management requirements to be unduly burdensome and unreasonable. There was discussion between him, Chuck Timblin, who developed the specifications for the practice, and the Board. It was the considered opinion of the two Board members who raised beef that the requirements were appropriate for the soils, topography and climate. The Board affirmed Chuck's recommendations. The Board then thanked Mr. O'Brine for coming before it and encouraged him to work with a consultant or the County's code enforcement officer to perhaps develop an alternative more agreeable to him.

VI. 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 February 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 approved a step increase for Aneka Sweeney. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting.

Joe Heller moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the February Board meeting 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 Aneka Sweeney to Band C1 Step 6. 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:

Feb 2016 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>23419</u>	through	<u>23442</u>	and totaling	<u>8,929.24</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>23443</u>	through	<u>23458</u>	and totaling	<u>32,069.65</u>
March 2016					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>23459</u>	through	<u>23479</u>	and totaling	<u>76,917.38</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>23480</u>	through	<u>23495</u>	and totaling	<u>33,031.27</u>
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>23496</u>	through	<u>23525</u>	and totaling	<u>16,635.52</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>23526</u>	through	<u>23543</u>	and totaling	<u>37,080.06</u>
April 2016					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>23544</u>	through	<u>23585</u>	and totaling	<u>53,463.091</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>23586</u>	through	<u>23602</u>	and totaling	<u>34,581.56</u>
Voucher (check) number	<u>23603</u>			and totaling	<u>679.00</u>

VII. Action Items.

A. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Non-Dairy Farm Plan Approval –

Chuck Timblin completed inventory and moderate intensity farm plans for Ferndale Berry Farm (Jaswinder Singh) and Parm & Simran Brar. Both plans fulfilled the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommended Board approval.

Larry Helm moved to approve the Critical Areas Ordinance Conservation Farm Plans for Ferndale Berry Farm (Jaswinder Singh) and Parm & Simran Brar. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Corina Cheever completed an inventory and Whatcom County standard farm plan for John F. Courtney. It fulfilled the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommended Board approval.

Larry Helm moved to approve the Whatcom County Standard Farm Plan for John F. Courtney. Dick Yoder 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 3 CREP maintenance contracts submitted for Board approval. Following discussion on each the following motions were made:

Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Wayne Chaudiere for: Lowell Carlson. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Wayne Chaudiere for: Ruben De La Garza. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Larry Helm moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Wayne Chaudiere for: Hank Roorda. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Non-Dairy Farm Plan –

Larry Helm wanted it made clear in the minutes that the Board supported Chuck Timblin's recommendation in his farm plan for Mr. Larry O'Brine. There was discussion on what course of action to take in Mr. O'Brine's appeal of his farm plan.

Larry Helm moved to write a letter to Mr. O'Brine clearly stating that the Board supports the staff recommended farm plan and that the Board urges Mr. O'Brine to reconsider and follow the farm plan as presented, authorizing the Board Chair to sign the letter. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. Purchasing Policy.

An independent contractor to EPA completed a limited scope review of Whatcom Conservation District's administrative and financial management systems for managing the US EPA funds for the Birch Bay grant. The review recommended that the Board revise its current Policy for Purchasing Goods and Services to include conducting a cost-price analysis for procurements when using federal funds.

Larry Helm moved to approve Resolution 2016-02 – revised Policy for Purchasing Goods and Services to include conducting a cost-price analysis for procurements using federal funds. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Municipal Research Services Center (MRSC).

In June 2015 the District joined the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) in order to access its Small Public Works, Consultant, and Vendor Rosters. This allows the District to bid projects through MRSC rather than having to do the process ourselves. It is time for the annual renewal. The annual fee is \$120.

Larry Helm moved to approve renewal of MRSC Model Small Public Works, Consultant and Vendor Rosters contract for the \$120 annual fee. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

D. Department of Enterprise Services.

As a governmental agency the Whatcom Conservation District can utilize the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) for purchasing. DES offers the Federal Surplus Property Program which allows the District to purchase state and federal surplus equipment and furniture. The State Plan of Operation for the Federal Surplus Personal Property Program requires participating agencies to update their information every three years. It is time to renew our information. There is no fee for this program.

Larry Helm moved to approve renewal of the Whatcom Conservation District's participation in the Federal Surplus Personal Property Program as described in the application. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

E. Cluster Engineer.

A draft Inter-Local Agreement (ILA) between San Juan Islands, Skagit, Whatcom and Whidbey Island Conservation Districts for sharing the Cluster Engineer was sent to the Board for review. The Board agreed with the suggested changes that George put forth.

Joe Heller moved to proceed with the ILA for the Cluster Engineer with suggested amendments as outlined and designate Larry Helm to act as Whatcom Conservation District Board representative if there are problems. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Sarah Tanuvasa, NRCS District Conservationist, came into the meeting. There were introductions.

F. Whatcom County PIC Amendment.

In December 2014 Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District entered into an agreement through the Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC) program for the Whatcom Conservation District to implement an outreach and cost-share program for landowners/operators with livestock PIC focus areas. The County is willing to contribute an additional \$45,000 to support the Whatcom Conservation District's expanded outreach efforts.

Joe Heller move to approve and sign Amendment #1 to the WC PIC Livestock BMP Outreach & Cost-share agreement increasing compensation for outreach efforts by \$45,000. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

G. Washington State Department of Ag (WSDA) Inter-Local Agreement.

There was discussion about an Inter-Local Agreement with the Washington State Department of Ag, which would provide funding for approximately a ½ time resource planner. It was decided to table the decision until it became clear where additional funding for the position could be found.

H. Building Improvements.

With the federal agencies departing and staff moving into other areas of the building, it is time to paint and replace worn flooring. George asked for Board approval to seek the lowest qualified bidders for painting and flooring to make building improvements.

Larry Helm moved to authorize George to seek and utilize the lowest qualified bidders for painting and flooring improvements to the building. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

I. Employee Matters.

Chuck Timblin requested to go to part-time status and draw down his bank of sick leave. George asked the Board to authorize this change and authorize the hiring of a small farm planner to assist with the workload and be mentored by Chuck.

Larry Helm moved to authorize hiring a small farm planner. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Dick Yoder moved to authorize allowing Chuck Timblin to work part-time and utilize his banked sick leave. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VIII. Other Business.

A. Sarah Tanuvasa, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –

NRCS staff are working to obligate EQIP funds. Whatcom County had approximately 60 applications this funding cycle. Eight have been selected for funding.

Miscellaneous –

NRCS has announced another round for applications for Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) and Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

Sarah reported that interviews for the new Engineering Tech to be in the Lynden Field Office have been done and the person should start in June.

NRCS and the Farm Service Agency are moving to their new office just down the road in the first part of May.

Sarah also mentioned funding opportunities through EQIP Forestry to do forest management.

B. Supervisor Reports.

Larry Helm –

Larry reported about activities with the Whatcom County Ag Advisory Committee and the potential updates to the County's Critical Areas Ordinance.

Wayne Chaudiere gave a Firewise presentation to Fire District #4, which Larry attended. There was talk about fuel reductions.

Larry Davis –

Larry will attend the All Districts meeting in Ellensburg next week. Theresa said that she would try to make at least one day of the meeting.

The Tribal Training has been changed from July to August 15-19 at the Angels of the Winds Casino in Arlington (Stillaguamish Tribe). The training is geared towards federal employees.

Larry has been doing a lot of work for the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) as the Secretary/Treasurer since the Executive Director retired.

The Lummi Nation's Annual First Salmon ceremony is scheduled for May 19.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Plans of Work –

George gave a slide presentation regarding the District's current programs and funding. There are four major program areas; Livestock, Habitat Restoration, Education & Outreach and District Operations. George provided a spreadsheet detailing the sources of funding and how each were allocated to sustain staff activities. He reviewed the staffing levels needed to deliver various levels of service to the community.

There was discussion about the importance of profitable agriculture in Whatcom County. It was suggested to have a special meeting to work on the annual plan of work.

IX. Record of Board Actions.

- 16-20 Joe Heller moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the February Board meeting 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 Aneka Sweeney to Band C1 Step 6. 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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- 16-21 Larry Helm moved to approve the Critical Areas Ordinance Conservation Farm Plans for Ferndale Berry Farm (Jaswinder Singh) and Parm & Simran Brar. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 16-22 Larry Helm moved to approve the Whatcom County Standard Farm Plan for John F. Courtney. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 16-23 Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Wayne Chaudiere for: Lowell Carlson. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- 16-24 Joe Heller moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Wayne Chaudiere for: Ruben De La Garza. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- 16-25 Larry Helm moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract provided by Wayne Chaudiere for: Hank Roorda. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- 16-26 Larry Helm moved to write a letter to Mr. O’Brine clearly stating that the Board supports the staff recommended farm plan and that the Board urges Mr. O’Brine to reconsider and follow the farm plan as presented, authorizing the Board Chair to sign the letter. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 16-27 Larry Helm moved to approve Resolution 2016-02 – revised Policy for Purchasing Goods and Services to include conducting a cost-price analysis for procurements using federal funds. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 16-28 Larry Helm moved to approve renewal of MRSC Model Small Public Works, Consultant and Vendor Rosters contract for the \$120 annual fee. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 16-29 Larry Helm moved to approve renewal of the Whatcom Conservation District’s participation in the Federal Surplus Personal Property Program as described in the application. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 16-30 Joe Heller moved to proceed with the ILA for the Cluster Engineer with suggested amendments as outlined and designate Larry Helm to act as Whatcom Conservation District Board representative if there are problems. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 16-31 Joe Heller move to approve and sign Amendment #1 to the WC PIC Livestock BMP Outreach & Cost-share agreement increasing compensation for outreach efforts by \$45,000. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

16-32 Larry Helm moved to authorize George to seek and utilize the lowest qualified bidders for painting and flooring improvements to the building. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

16-33 Larry Helm moved to authorize hiring a small farm planner. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

16-34 Dick Yoder moved to authorize allowing Chuck Timblin to work part-time and utilize his banked sick leave. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

X. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Helm moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Dated: May 31, 2016

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____