

WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
June 8, 2017

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 June 8, 2017, at 6:30 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

Larry Helm, Chair
Joe Heller, Treasurer
Theresa Sygitowicz

Larry Davis, Vice-Chair
Heather Christianson

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant
Chris Clark, Engineer
Donna Starr, Landowner

Alex Hall, NRCS staff
Aneka Sweeney, Education Specialist
Jenny Coe, HIP Coordinator

III. Meeting Called to Order.

Larry Helm, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

IV. Public Comment (written or in person).

There was no public comment either in writing or in person.

V. Consent Agenda.

The Board adopted a consent agenda for approval of the financial report, accounts payable. The Board approved a step increase for Katie Pencke. The financial report was mailed to the Board. 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: the financial report, 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 3. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

May 2017 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>24826</u>	through	<u>24858</u>	and totaling	<u>28,429.40</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>24859</u>	through	<u>24879</u>	and totaling	<u>47,384.46</u>
June 2017					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>24880</u>	through	<u>24898</u>	and totaling	<u>45,457.48</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>24899</u>	through	<u>24919</u>	and totaling	<u>47,084.03</u>

VI. Organizational.

Election of Officers –

Chair –

Theresa Sygitowicz nominated Larry Helm as Chair. Joe Heller seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. The vote was unanimous.

Vice-Chair –

Joe Heller nominated Larry Davis as Vice-Chair. Larry Helm seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations for Vice-Chair. The vote was unanimous.

Secretary/Treasurer –

Larry Davis nominated Joe Heller as Secretary/Treasurer. Larry Helm seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations for Secretary/Treasurer. The vote was unanimous.

Monthly Board Meeting Day & Time –

The Board discussed what time to make the monthly Board meetings. Larry Helm expressed the desire to move the meetings to daytime.

Larry Helm moved to set the Board meeting on the second Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. to approximately 3:30. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Heather wanted to know if the time would impact public input. The matter will be revisited in a few months to see if there was any impact in the time change.

VII. Presentation.

Introduction/Presentation of Lake Whatcom Homeowners Incentive Program (HIP) Coordinator –
Aneka Sweeny introduced Jenny Coe as the new Lake Whatcom HIP Coordinator. Jenny gave a presentation on the District HIP program and her role. She shared a slide presentation and answered some questions from the Board.

VIII. Executive Session.

The Board adjourned into Executive Session at 7:15 p.m. to discuss the performance of an employee. The length of the Executive Session was scheduled for 30 minutes.

Chair Larry Helm closed the Executive Session at 7:45 p.m. and resumed the public meeting. The public was invited back into the meeting.

Theresa Sygitowicz moved to increase Chris Clark's compensation to \$93,000 plus benefits, per year. The motion died due to lack of a second.

Larry Helm expressed that the Board needed a committee to make a recommendation. The Board needs to be able to fund the recommendation and make a decision about the ramifications of how it impacts other employees. Larry Davis doesn't support a motion for a raise at this point due to lack of current funding.

Theresa Sygitowicz moved to form a committee to look at potential compensation increases and the full ramifications for those employees at the top tier of the current pay scale. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Theresa volunteered to be on the committee. Heather offered to serve on the committee as well.

Chris Clark requested that he be allowed to moonlight as a planner. George expressed that this is a conflict of interest. Larry Helm denied Chris' request to moonlight per the District' employee manual policy on no moonlighting.

IX. Action Items.

A. Approval of Conservation Plans.

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. 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 three CREP maintenance contracts submitted for Board approval.

Larry Helm moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contracts for: Jeremy and Summer Cushman, Bruce and Linda Bryan, and Dacosta Trust. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Contracts and Agreements.

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) Master Contract –

The Board members were mailed a copy of the master contract for grant funding through the Washington State Conservation Commission for review.

Larry Helm moved to approve and sign the Washington State Conservation Commission Master Contract #18-04 for FY18 and FY19. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Cluster Engineer Agreement –

The Board members were mailed for review a copy of the draft Inter-local Agreement between San Juan Islands, Skagit, Whatcom and Whidbey Island Conservation Districts for sharing the Cluster Engineer, effective July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. This agreement sets forth how the Districts are to use and share/manage the cluster engineer's services.

Joe Heller moved to approve and sign the Inter-local Agreement between San Juan Islands, Skagit, Whatcom and Whidbey Island Conservation Districts for sharing the Cluster Engineer, effective July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Lake Whatcom HIP Contract –

An Inter-local Agreement was entered into between Whatcom County and the WCD in November 2016. WCD hired a HIP Coordinator in Feb 2017 and successfully launched HIP in April 2017. The proposed amendment to the 2016 Inter-local Agreement with the County will extend the HIP partnership through Dec 31, 2018. WCD involvement will ensure that landowners will have a knowledgeable, experienced and honest Coordinator to represent their interests.

Joe Heller moved to approve Amendment No. 1 with the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District to extend the Lake Whatcom HIP partnership through December 31, 2018 providing an additional \$221,794 to the project budget and authorize the Board Chair to

sign on behalf of the District. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 yea, 2 nay).

Whatcom County Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC) Technical Assistance –
The Whatcom Conservation District (WCD) Board approved a partnership with Whatcom County Public Works to provide staff support for the Pollution Identification and Correction Program. The WCD will implement the non-dairy agriculture best management practices and data coordination components of the PIC program as described in Exhibit A. An Inter-local Agreement was entered into between Whatcom County (County) and the WCD in January 2017. The proposed 2017-2019 sub-recipient agreement will extend the PIC partnership through March 31, 2019.

There was discussion regarding the program. Due to this program, Drayton Harbor water quality has improved enough to upgrade the shellfish beds. Aneka Sweeney discussed the follow up survey that staff sends out to all that receive small farm planning services from the Conservation District. The majority valued the Conservation District's services and have adopted the information that they received from the District.

It was, again, pointed out that the PIC program is with Whatcom County and not the Department of Ecology. Whatcom County has a threshold that they will not contact anyone with a certain number of animals. Whatcom County has a policy that no code violations can come out of this planning contract.

Larry Davis moved to approve 2017-2019 Sub-recipient Agreement to Pollution Identification and Correction and authorize the Board Chair to sign on behalf of the District for \$353,366. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed. (one abstention)

C. Approval of Annual Plan of Work/Budget.

The draft Annual Plan of Work/Budget was sent to the Board for review.

Larry Davis moved to approve the draft annual plan. Larry Helm seconded the motion.

Theresa Sygitowicz moved to reorder the list, moving #4 Conserving Whatcom County Working Lands up to #2 and moving the others down. It was pointed out that the list is not in order of priority, but a list of top priorities.

Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the Annual Plan of Work as amended. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

D. Contingency Plan Should Legislature Fail to Adopt Budget.

Aneka Sweeney was able to get a grant to purchase a shed to house the Watershed Explorer model. The Board expressed thanks that this will offset storage unit rental costs.

George provided options for the Board to consider in the event of a state government shutdown due to the Legislature not passing a budget. The Board agreed to allow staff to use leave and work out of savings to cover one month.

Larry Helm moved to cover one month of staff expenses working out of savings. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.

If there is still no budget, the Board will have a special meeting on July 20, 2017 to review the next steps.

E. Rates and Charge.

The District has been considering the pursuit of a Rates and Charge to provide some reliable funding for some of the District program activities. There was discussion.

Larry Davis moved to authorize George Boggs to develop a Rates and Charge Program. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion Passed.

X. Other Business.

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

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –

Alex reported on the number of contracts and workload of the Lynden office.

Larry Helm asked about the Cultural Resources Review process. Alex said that it is the same as in the past. The projects have a full cultural resources review, including a site visit from NRCS's state archeologist.

Technical Service Provider (TSP) –

NRCS has initiated discussion to renew the TSP for Engineering Services.

B. Supervisor Reports.

Larry Davis –

Larry reported on his activities.

Washington Association of Conservation District (WACD) – He attended the WACD Tribal Conference. The keynote speaker was excellent.

The WACD finance committee has a recommendation for the next fiscal year. Larry is Chairing the planning committee for the WACD Annual Meeting in Kennewick.

State Envirothon – Larry Davis was an oral presentation judge at the state Envirothon competition in North Bend.

Joe Heller –

The 6th Grade Forestry Tour had good participation this year.

The Canyon Creek Project that Frank Corey has worked on looks good.

Joe was on the Schedule 22 review committee. It went well.

Larry Helm –

Larry Helm also attended the WACD Tribal Conference. It was a very good presentation.

Larry reported that three dairies left the county in the past few weeks.

Heather Christianson –

Heather thanked the Board for the warm welcome.

Heather attended the Dairy Farmer panel at the Whatcom Food Network that Nichole Embertson facilitated.

Theresa Sygitowicz –

Theresa asked about staff putting together a display for the NW Washington Fair. Aneka Sweeney is the contact for education and will work with her on that.

Theresa also assisted on the Schedule 22 review. It went smoothly and was short.

Theresa reported that the Nooksack Tribes Watershed Plan is out. She doubted that it would get any support from the Community Watershed Group, since there wasn't much community input to the draft.

The Mt. Baker Scholarship in her sister's name was awarded. Theresa reported that Mt. Baker High School students received \$104,000 in scholarships this year.

The Deming Log Show starts tomorrow. There will be a tour of the Westergreen property.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Department of Ecology – Mia Bellon, Department of Ecology, sent a letter in response to the Whatcom Conservation District's letter regarding the King County Waste Water Treatment Plant discharge. A draft letter to Mia citing the response and applauding her for the strong stance was provided for Board review.

NRCS Local Work Group (LWG) – The Local Work Group had their annual meeting to discuss the distribution of EQIP funds. George reviewed the 6 funding pools and distribution percentages.

Staff – George reported that during the staff meeting there was discussion about the new Driving Under the Influence of Electronics (DUIE) regulations. Staff talked about not using telephones while moving in the car. Cradles for phones to use as navigation devices were purchased for the cars to help staff remain "hands free".

Chuck Timblin is retiring on June 30, 2017. Staff is having a potluck on June 26.

George made a presentation to the Whatcom County Council regarding CPAL and buffers. Farm plans are better than requiring large buffers.

Theresa Sygitowicz –

Theresa attended the Puget Sound Conservation Districts Caucus meeting. The Whatcom Conservation District is hosting the July meeting. George will poll participants to see if they are interested in a tour.

XI. Record of Board Actions.

17-39 Larry Helm moved to approve the consent agenda: the financial report, 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 3. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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Chair –

17-40 Theresa Sygitowicz nominated Larry Helm as Chair. Joe Heller seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. The vote was unanimous.

Vice-Chair –

17-41 Joe Heller nominated Larry Davis as Vice-Chair. Larry Helm seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations for Vice-Chair. The vote was unanimous.

Secretary/Treasurer –

- 17-42 Larry Davis nominated Joe Heller as Secretary/Treasurer. Larry Helm seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations for Secretary/Treasurer. The vote was unanimous.
- 17-43 Larry Helm moved to set the Board meeting on the second Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. to approximately 3:30. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 17-44 Theresa Sygitowicz moved to form a committee to look at potential compensation increases and the full ramifications for those employees at the top tier of the current pay scale. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 17-45 Larry Helm moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contracts for: Jeremy and Summer Cushman, Bruce and Linda Bryan, and Dacosta Trust. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 17-46 Larry Helm moved to approve and sign the Washington State Conservation Commission Master Contract #18-04 for FY18 and FY19. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.
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- 17-48 Joe Heller moved to approve Amendment No. 1 with the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District to extend the Lake Whatcom HIP partnership through December 31, 2018 providing an additional \$221,794 to the project budget and authorize the Board Chair to sign on behalf of the District. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed. (3 yea, 2 nay).
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- 17-50 Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the Annual Plan of Work as amended. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 17-51 Larry Helm moved to cover one month of staff expenses working out of savings. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 17-52 Larry Davis moved to authorize George Boggs to develop a Rates and Charge Program. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion Passed.

XII. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Joe Heller moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 p.m. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Dated: October 26, 2017

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant