

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2013**

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 January 10, 2013, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

Terry Lenssen, Vice-Chair	Larry Davis, Treasurer
Larry Helm	

Also in attendance were:

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

III. Meeting Called to Order.

Terry Lenssen, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Larry Davis moved that the minutes of the December 13, 2012 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Financial Report.

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

Dawn Bekenyi presented the financial report. There were no questions.

Larry Helm moved to approve the Financial Report. Larry Davis 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:

Dec 2012 - balance				
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>20081</u>	through	<u>20117</u>	and totaling <u>40,182.25</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>20118</u>	through	<u>20130</u>	and totaling <u>27,606.40</u>
January 2013				
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>20131</u>	through	<u>20148</u>	and totaling <u>20,575.17</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>20149</u>	through	<u>20161</u>	and totaling <u>27,915.99</u>

Moved by Larry Helm. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Dawn reported that the District received a letter from the Washington State Conservation Commission explaining that the District will not be audited by the State Auditor's Office this year unless a federal single audit is required.

VI. Action Items.

A. Janitorial.

Dawn reported that the advertisement seeking janitorial bids was published in the Bellingham Herald and on Craigslist. The bid opening is scheduled for February 1, 2013 at 9:30 a.m. The Board will review bids and select a successful bidder at the February board meeting.

There was discussion regarding the date and availability of supervisors to attend the February board meeting.

Larry Helm moved to change the February board meeting to Wednesday, February 13, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. District Advertising.

Options for reusable grocery bags that promote the Whatcom Conservation District were discussed. Bids were reviewed by the Board. The most desirable were the "made in America" of recycled products bags. The Board would like staff to figure out a sliding scale for purchase of District bags at the plant sale.

Larry Helm moved to authorize purchase of 500 reusable grocery bags not to exceed the quote from Enviro-Tote. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Supervisor Election.

Dawn reported that no Nomination Petitions or Candidate Information forms for the Supervisor Election had been turned in as of the January board meeting.

VII. Other Business.

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

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) – Staff are busy reviewing the application list. There are 65 applications. The second round EQIP sign-up deadline is February 15, 2013.

There is interest in the Energy Audit program. Alex gave an update on EQIP Energy Audit program. The Board discussed the Local Work Group, what it is, how often it meets and how it works. There are 3 high tunnel project applications.

Alex shared the breakdown of applicants that signed up for EQIP. There is one crop farmer, 3 small dairies and 41 other land (includes large dairies) for a total of \$3.8 million. Staff has to rank the EQIP applications by January 25, 2013.

There is a new Shellfish Habitat Restoration Initiative that has received one sign up so far.

There will be a screening tool to prioritize projects and new geographic priority areas, which may impact ranking projects. The current EQIP applications are using current planting requirements to get ranking points. These may change, requiring more planting to get more points.

B. Supervisor Reports.

Larry Davis – Larry made a presentation regarding the Local Work Group to the western Washington tribes at the Washington Tribal Conservation Advisory Council meeting on January 9th in Fife. Nationally, 38 tribes have created conservation districts. Tribes with conservation districts receive approximately 50% more federal funds than those without conservation districts.

Larry reported that through the energy efficiency initiative, NRCS was nationally going to implement the "Power to the People" resolution recommendations presented by Whatcom Conservation District (and adopted by NACD in 2011), but decided not to implement it. Larry will continue to look into the issue.

WACD – Wendy Pare, Skagit Conservation District supervisor, completed her work with the WACD Plant Materials Center (PMC) staff to do a financial review.

Larry met with Senator Doug Ericksen, Larry Helm and George. The conservation message needs to be clear. Show before pictures and after pictures that explain why the practices are better. Larry Helm mentioned that it is positive to show how conservation districts leverage funds and get practices on the ground. Conservation Districts are very efficient, which is a strong point with funders.

Larry Helm – Larry went to the Bellingham Department of Ecology office and inquired about any new rules. Staff at the Ecology office did not know about the proposed rulemaking.

Larry Helm voiced his displeasure that there was no word during the WACD annual meeting regarding the Three Directors Talks (3DT). The Board discussed the Washington State Conservation Commission's special meeting regarding the Three Directors Talks. Larry wanted to know what the protocol is for ex-officio members voting. George explained that the Conservation Commission granted voting privileges to their ex-officio members in the 1990's, but that the representatives from the Departments of Ag and Ecology did not vote during the 3DT special meeting.

It is desirable to have a uniform response to the Department of Ecology's rulemaking. Larry Davis reviewed the four stages to the rule making process.

1. Intent – There is a public notice requirement if you plan to make, amend or modify a rule. Must post rule two to four months before the public hearing for the actual language.
2. Schedule a Public Hearing – There is a period for review and public comment before the formal hearing.
3. Hold the formal hearing – must be public.
4. Formally file the rule.

There is a set time frame to accomplish the four steps. If you cannot get it done in the time frame, you have to start over again.

George reviewed what was discussed at the Washington Conservation Commission's special meeting. Representatives of the Departments of Ecology or Agriculture stated that their agencies would not introduce manure management legislation during the next legislative session.

Terry Lenssen – Terry attended Nichole Embertson's ARM presentation at the grange.

Terry reported on the Dairy Federation meeting. There was discussion regarding the proposed manure legislation and the Sunnyside Nitrate Ground Water study. Independent reviews show that the nitrates in the water can be legacy number in dry areas. Historical farming practices from 30 years ago can impact water quality numbers today.

Whatcom County does not have a Ground Water Management Area (GWMA). George reviewed how a GWMA could be formed. Locals can ask for the creation of one or the Department of Ecology can do so on its own initiative. George suggested that he could review the statute regarding GWMAs to answer any board questions.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District – The Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District met for the first time in several years due to declining water quality samples in the last 5 years or 30 samples. Water quality samples are trending up and they are not sure why. They discounted any contributions from Canadian sources from the City of Victoria.

Rates and Charges – George collected some information on the Rates and Charges option and shared it with the Board.

NCDEA's 2012 National Conservation Professional – George was selected as the 2012 National Conservation Professional by the National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA). The award will be presented at the National Association of Conservation District's annual meeting in San Antonio, TX at the end of the month. The Board authorized George to attend.

Larry Helm moved to send George Boggs to the NACD Annual meeting in San Antonio, TX to get his award. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Lawsuits – The Board inquired about the status of the lawsuit against the Whatcom Conservation District by the Shuksan Golf Course. George reported that the technical and legal analysis was completed. A tentative trial date has been set for August 20, 2013 in Bellingham Superior Court.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

13-1 Larry Davis moved that the minutes of the December 13, 2012 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

13-2 Larry Helm moved to approve the Financial Report. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

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13-5 Larry Helm moved to authorize purchase of 500 reusable grocery bags not to exceed the quote from Enviro-Tote. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

13-6 Larry Helm moved to send George Boggs to the NACD Annual meeting in San Antonio, TX to get his award. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Davis moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Dated: March 8, 2013

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant