

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
Public Meeting Minutes  
December 12, 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 December 12, 2013, at 7:00 p.m.

**II. Attendance and Quorum.**

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

Joe Heller, Chair	Terry Lenssen, Vice-Chair
Larry Helm	Dick Yoder

Also in attendance were:

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

**III. Meeting Called to Order.**

Joe Heller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.**

**Larry Helm moved that the minutes of the November 14, 2013 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Dick Yoder 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, presented the financial report. There were no questions.

**Larry Helm moved to approve the Financial Report. Dick Yoder 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 2013 - balance				
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>21015</u>	through	<u>21025</u>	and totaling <u>2,541.48</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>21026</u>	through	<u>21039</u>	and totaling <u>28,617.05</u>
December 2013				
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>21040</u>	through	<u>21097</u>	and totaling <u>86,413.84</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>21098</u>	through	<u>21111</u>	and totaling <u>28,613.46</u>

**Moved by Larry Helm. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

## **VI. Action Items.**

### **A. Approval of Contracts.**

#### WSU Extension Energy Audit Agreement Extension –

George explained that the project is moving more slowly than anticipated. WSU Extension is asking for a one-year contract extension for the Energy Audit Agreement.

**Larry Helm moved to sign the contract amendment to extend the WSU Extension Energy Audit Agreement for one year until December 31, 2014. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

#### National Estuary Program (“NEP”) Multi-Themed Watershed Protection and Restoration Grant Program –

The Washington State Department of Commerce is soliciting applications for the National Estuary Program grants. Frank Corey has been working with the Northwest Washington Fairgrounds who would like to partner with the District in a proposal for a stormwater grant retrofit design application. The Whatcom Conservation District would be the applicant and project manager. Frank could use the assistance of a stormwater specialist to complete the application. He asked the Board to approve up to \$1,000.00 for this purpose.

**Larry Helm moved to authorize Frank Corey to cooperatively develop and submit a stormwater grant retrofit design application for the Northwest Washington Fairgrounds in Lynden to the Washington State Department of Commerce. This includes hiring expert assistance up to but not exceeding \$1,000.00. The application will be for the first phase, design only. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

There was discussion about whether the Fairgrounds should pay for the expert assistance. George Boggs urged the Board to pay this cost as it would facilitate a stormwater demonstration project in a very public venue. The project would elevate the posture of District to the public. It was decided that the Board would need to discuss the cost of project implementation and who pays for the construction with the Northwest Washington Fair Board when the time for implementation comes.

## **VII. Other Business.**

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

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) – The latest round of EQIP sign-up deadline is January 17, 2014. Alex reported that there are 38 deferred applications and a few new ones. There was discussion about what “deferred” applications were. NRCS staff met regionally to discuss how to handle old projects that required EQIP contract modifications. Alex explained the new process. There was discussion regarding the letters that would be received if a contract was not in compliance and the Board’s desire for NRCS to provide clear communication of expectations to producers at the time of signing up for an application or signing a contract.

NRCS Staff Retirements – Alex reported that Chuck Natushara will retire in January. NRCS will not fill his position. Wetland determinations will have to be done through the state soil scientist.

Paul Rogers, the District Conservationist for the Puget Sound Team is also retiring.

Small Fruit Growers Conference – Alex and Farm Service Agency staff provided outreach at a booth at the Small Fruit Growers Conference and Trade Show meeting in Lynden. Alex reported that the spotted winged fruit fly is becoming a big problem for blueberry and raspberry growers in Whatcom County, resulting in large crop losses. This is a big impact on the organic berry growers.

## **B. Supervisor Reports.**

Larry Helm –

Whatcom County Ag Advisory Committee – Larry reviewed activities of the Ag Advisory Committee and Washington Natural Resources Committee meetings that he attended.

There was discussion regarding the easements being placed on land whose development rights had been purchased with USDA funds. It was new policy that the land be subject to the establishment of riparian forest buffers consistent with the NOAA fisheries guidance. There was some speculation as to whether landowners would participate in the program in the future with those requirements.

Joe Heller –

Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) – Joe received a letter from WACD thanking the District for Dawn's help at the annual meeting. They requested to have her help again next year.

Terry Lenssen –

WACD – Terry attended the WACD annual meeting with Larry Helm, Larry Davis, George and Dawn. He talked with the Director from the Department of Ag, but was not able to talk with Maia D. Bellon, the Director for the Department of Ecology. The former head of Ecology's Water Quality Program has been elevated to a new position. Director Bellon has established a Special Advisor for Agriculture and is going to create an Ag Advisory Committee of industry representatives to work on water quality issues.

Sales Tax Exemption for Nutrient Management – Terry met with Representative Vincent Buys and some implement salesmen. There is some confusion amongst implement salesmen regarding which products might be exempt from the state sales tax. They are seeking a legislative bill that would provide clarification for sales tax exemption for nutrient management.

## **C. George Boggs, Executive Director.**

Nutrient Management – George spoke with Roylene Rides at the Door at the WACD Annual meeting about concerns regarding the proposed 590 practice standards resulting from direct talks between NRCS and ECY.

George and Chris Clark attended the Region 10 EPA AFO/CAFO meeting. NRCS staff, state agronomists and inspectors for the three states of Idaho, Oregon and Washington were present.

George reported that a Washington State Practice 590 seems unlikely to be adopted by the end of the month. The National Practice Standard would apply.

- Joe Harrison, WSU Extension, was scheduled to have a webinar about nutrient recovery equipment. There was discussion regarding phosphorus.
- Barb Carey, Department of Ecology, showed results from her groundwater study at DeHaan's Dairy. The test results were quite variable, but demonstrated that late or too much manure application would end up in the groundwater.
- Paul Stoker, Columbia Basin Ground Water Association, was at the R10 AFO/CAFO meeting. Their testing shows that it was not too much nutrient application, but too much water that resulted in the high nitrates in groundwater.

Employee Payroll Step Increase –

George conducted an employee review for Emily Hirsch. She is currently eligible for a step increase from Band C1 Step 3 to Band C1 Step 4. George recommended that the Board give Emily a step increase in pay.

Larry Helm moved to approve a step increase in payroll for Emily Hirsch to Band C1 Step 4. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**VIII. Record of Board Actions.**

**13-93** Larry Helm moved that the minutes of the November 14, 2013 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**13-94** Larry Helm moved to approve the Financial Report. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

**13-95**

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**Moved by Larry Helm. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**13-96** Larry Helm moved to sign the contract amendment to extend the WSU Extension Energy Audit Agreement for one year until December 31, 2014. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**13-97** Larry Helm moved to authorize Frank Corey to cooperatively develop and submit a stormwater grant retrofit design application for the Northwest Washington Fairgrounds in Lynden to the Washington State Department of Commerce. This includes hiring expert assistance up to but not exceeding \$1,000.00. The application will be for the first phase, design only. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**13-98** Larry Helm moved to approve a step increase in payroll for Emily Hirsch to Band C1 Step 4. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**IX. Adjournment.**

There being no further business before the meeting, Terry Lenssen moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Dated: February 24, 2014

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Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_