

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2014**

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 May 8, 2014, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

Joe Heller, Chair
Larry Davis, Treasurer
Dick Yoder

Terry Lenssen, Vice-Chair
Larry Helm

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant
Chris Elder, Whatcom County Planning

Alex Hall, NRCS staff
Dan Heeringa, Supervisor-elect

III. Meeting Called to Order.

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

IV. Public Comment.

Chris Elder, Whatcom County Planning, is the Purchase Development Rights (PDR) Outreach Coordinator. He asked about the difference between Conservation Program on Agricultural Lands (CPAL) and Conservation District farm planning. He wanted to know what Whatcom County's role was in the CPAL process. George explained that all Conservation District farm plans conform to CPAL. Under Whatcom County's policy, it is optional for landowners to file their plan with Whatcom County.

V. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Larry Helm moved that the minutes of the April 10, 2014 Board meeting and April 22, 2014 Special Meeting be approved as mailed. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Financial Report.

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

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant, presented the financial report. There were no questions.

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

April 2014 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>21397</u>	through	<u>21412</u>	and totaling	<u>21,296.15</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>21413</u>	through	<u>21428</u>	and totaling	<u>30,680.02</u>
May 2014					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>21429</u>	through	<u>21455</u>	and totaling	<u>36,900.67</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>21456</u>	through	<u>21468</u>	and totaling	<u>27,616.02</u>

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

VII. Action Items.

A. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Dairy Nutrient Management Plan (DNMP) Certification –

There was one Dairy Nutrient Management Plan submitted for Board certification. Chuck Timblin completed the certification checklist for JV Dairy (Jeremy Visser) and recommended that the Board certify the DNMP as fully implemented. It met all applicable requirements for certification and the producer certified that he was managing accordingly.

Larry Davis moved to certify the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for:

- **JV Dairy (Jeremy Visser).**

Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

George explained the certification process. Staff inventories the structures and vegetative practices called for in the plans prior to certification. George asked if the Board wanted to get more information than the checklist and staff recommendations for a certification. Larry Helm expressed the desire to go out with staff to a farm to understand the process. Larry Davis expressed that he would also like to attend a field tour of a farm during the planning process.

Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) Conservation Farm Plan Approval –

Chuck Timblin completed an inventory and farm plan for Lidder Enterprises (blueberry grower). It fulfilled the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommended Board approval.

Larry Davis moved to approve the Critical Areas Ordinance Conservation Farm Plan for:

- **Lidder Enterprises.**

Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. Approval of Contracts.

EPA – Birch Bay Project Cost-share –

George gave a presentation on the Birch Bay Pilot Project funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). He reviewed the activities undertaken through this grant including hiring a trusted advisor, using social marketing to connect with landowners, and providing technical and financial assistance to landowners. Whatcom County partnered on the project to partially fund a storm water treatment system. The Terrell Creek Dam was removed, allowing both control of the water level in Lake Terrell and spawning of fish in the creek, through funding from a separate grant. George reviewed adaptive management of the Birch Bay project. The District has worked with EPA to revise eligible cost-share practices and funding percentages up to 100% to encourage more participation and implementation by landowners in the watershed.

Frank Corey submitted a cost-share application for John Butler to complete septic tank repairs as part of the EPA Birch Bay project under the new cost-share policy of 100% up to \$10,000.

Larry Helm asked questions about the septic tank repair costs. He was concerned about costs increasing for the fixes and the District being potentially liable for the fix. It was pointed out that the agreement would be for the District to pay 100% of septic tank repairs up to the cap of \$7,812.

Larry Helm moved to approve the EPA Birch Bay Project cost-share application for John Butler for 100% up to \$7,812 for septic tank repairs. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Approval of Schedule 22 Review.

Larry Davis, Larry Helm and Dawn Bekenyi completed the Annual Questionnaire for Accountability Audit (Schedule 22) portion of the annual financial report and submitted a copy for review and approval to the whole Board.

Larry Helm moved to approve and sign the Annual Questionnaire for Accountability (Schedule 22) as completed by the committee. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VIII. Other Business.

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

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –
NRCS received seven more applications since the last Board meeting for a total of 43 applications for regular EQIP. These seven will not be ranked unless funds come back from the original ranking and distribution.

National Water Quality Initiative –
Alex reported that there are six sign-ups for this program. The targeted watersheds are Wisner Lake and Fishtrap Creek.

Local Work Group –
The Local Work Group was held on April 30, 2014 at the Tulalip Administration Building in Snohomish County in Snohomish County. Alex reported that the cost-share caps remain unchanged. The group did not want to increase caps on storage.

Ray Ledgerwood, Washington State Conservation Commission staff, facilitated the Local Work Group meeting this year.

Alex reviewed the changes to the ranking questions, funding pools, etc. for this year. The ranking sheet questions were changed from specific practices to concepts. 15% of the funding was put into a management pool. There are four funding pools this year. 5% funding was taken from 3 funding pools, not forestry, to create a management pool just for improved management practices. This is a way to get acres covered under pools with management practices.

There was discussion by the board regarding making cover crops mandatory to program funding. George cautioned that this idea of requiring a strict requirement to funding could be used to require large buffers, etc.

The Management Practice pool provides funding for cover crops, nutrient management records, and grazing management practices and would include GPS costs for nutrient management, etc. The Local Work Group packet will go to NRCS's state office for approval consideration.

WWU Presentation & Field Tour – Alex reported that he was part of a class presentation for Western Washington University students. 30-40 students came to the office to discuss conservation practices and went on a field tour.

NRCS Staffing – NRCS is not filling the wetland scientist position vacated by Chuck Natsuhara's retirement. A person will be flown out from Idaho to do any wetland determinations.

B. Supervisors Report.

Larry Davis –

Meetings – Larry attended three Washington Association of Conservation Districts Officers and Directors (WACD O&D) teleconference meetings.

Larry is working with the Washington Conservation Society on by-laws changes.

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) – As the Conservation Districts representative to the WSCC Board, Larry is tasked to contact all Supervisor candidates for the positions appointed by the WSCC. Larry completed all of his phone calls to interview the appointed supervisor candidates for the west-side of the state, except for Joe Heller. As of the meeting, Joe had not been contacted by a Commission member.

Larry Helm –

Water Planning Forums – Larry is helping to coordinate water planning forums around the county through the Rome Grange. George will moderate the meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 13, 2014. Roger Brown, Birch Bay Sewer and Water District is scheduled to speak. There are two more water planning meetings scheduled.

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) Budget Meeting in Ellensburg – George, Joe and Larry attended the budget planning meeting in Ellensburg. Larry shared the budget forecast and budget process as presented at the meeting. He expressed the need for the District to pursue a Rates and Charge for more stable funding. Joe suggested that Washington State may be moving toward an income tax in addition to sales tax for funding.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Water Quality Buffer Tour – George reported that Whatcom Conservation District was asked by NRCS to host a tour of buffers for agency heads; Undersecretary of Agriculture, Regional Conservationist and State Conservationist for NRCS, the NRCS Deputy Chief Science and Tech, Regional Administrators for EPA Region 10 and, NOAA and the Swinomish Tribe Chair were in attendance. He reviewed the four tour stops to be made and the hedgerow and various buffer widths to be reviewed. This tour is a good opportunity to discuss buffer widths in conjunction with planning and cost-share programs.

Staffing – George reported that he will advertise the education outreach position.

Annual Plan of Work for FY15 – George passed out a draft Annual Plan of Work for FY15 (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015) for Board review. A special public meeting was scheduled for May 20, 2014 at 10:00 am to review and approve the Annual Plan of Work.

Zervas Architects – George met with Andrew Krzysiek from Zervas Group Architects to begin the inventory of the building floor plan, furniture and agency needs. George will meet with USDA Rural Development regarding funding opportunities.

Supervisor Election Policy – The Conservation Commission is seeking Conservation Districts input on the Supervisor Election process. An election review by the WSCC was a budget proviso. There are 9 or more recommendations that were drafted and submitted for Conservation District comments. The recommendations range from using the current election process and system to all Conservation District Supervisors being elected officials on the general ballot. Larry Helm

stated that he had spoken with Whatcom County's Treasurer a few years ago, she stated that the minimum for a single election in Whatcom County would be \$40,000.

Larry Davis moved that the Whatcom Conservation District recommends that the Washington State Conservation Commission keep the current election process as is. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Record of Board Actions.

14-33 Larry Helm moved that the minutes of the April 10, 2014 Board meeting and April 22, 2014 Special Meeting be approved as mailed. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

14-34 Larry Davis moved to approve the Financial Report. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

14-35

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

14-36 Larry Davis moved to certify the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for:

- **JV Dairy (Jeremy Visser).**

Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

14-37 Larry Davis moved to approve the Critical Areas Ordinance Conservation Farm Plan for:

- **Lidder Enterprises.**

Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

14-38 Larry Helm moved to approve the EPA Birch Bay Project cost-share application for John Butler for 100% up to \$7,812 for septic tank repairs. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

14-39 Larry Helm moved to approve and sign the Annual Questionnaire for Accountability (Schedule 22) as completed by the committee. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

14-40 Larry Davis moved that the Whatcom Conservation District recommends that the Washington State Conservation Commission keep the current election process as is. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

X. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Helm moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Dated: June 30, 2014

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____