

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**Public Meeting Minutes**  
**June 12, 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 June 12, 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 Helm
Dan Heeringa	

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 7:05 p.m.

**IV. Public Comment (written or in person).**

There were no public comments.

**V. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.**

**Larry Helm moved that the minutes of the May 8, 2014 Board meeting and May 20, 2014 Special Meeting be approved as mailed. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**VI. Financial Report.**

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

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

**Larry Helm moved to approve the Financial Report. Dan Heeringa 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:

May 2014 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>21469</u>	through	<u>21504</u>	and totaling	<u>36,221.00</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>21505</u>	through	<u>21519</u>	and totaling	<u>28,853.01</u>

June 2014			
Voucher (check) numbers	21520	through	21543
		and totaling	48,106.01
Payroll check numbers:	21544	through	21556
		and totaling	27,888.98

**Moved by Larry Helm. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**VII. Action Items.**

**A. Election of Board Officers.**

The district election of Dan Heeringa has been certified by the Washington State Conservation Commission at their May Board meeting.

**Larry Helm moved to wait on election of officers until all Board members were present. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Election of officers will occur at the next Board meeting.

**VIII. Executive Session.**

7:15 pm. Joe Heller, Chair, announced that the public meeting was breaking so that the Whatcom Conservation District Board could go into Executive Session for 15 minutes to discuss pending litigation.

7:25 pm. Joe Heller adjourned the Executive Session and resumed the public meeting. No action was taken during the executive session.

**IX. Action Items.**

**A. Proposed Settlement Agreement on Complaint for Damages Due to Communications Line Trespass.**

**Larry Helm moved to approve and sign the proposed financial settlement agreement with Frontier Communications regarding the complaint for damages due to communication line trespass put in by Verizon in the amount of \$35,685.00, which includes proposed costs for parking lot repairs. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**B. Employee Matters.**

Payroll Step Increase –

George explained that one employee is currently eligible for a step increase effective July 1. George stated that the step increase is appropriate for the employee.

**Larry Helm moved to approve the payroll step increase for Nichole Embertson from Band D1 Step 4 to D1 Step 5, effective July 1, 2014. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**C. Historical Photos.**

Andrew Phay informed the Board that there are photos and slides in our back storage room that go back to the 1940s. Before these historical photos deteriorate to the point that they are unusable, we would like to send them off to a company to get them digitally scanned. He provided an estimation of the number of slides and photos and the cost to get them digitally scanned.

**Larry Helm moved to have the historical photos and slides professionally digitally scanned for archiving for an estimated \$770. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**D. Whatcom Cost-share Policy for WSCC Cost-share.**

On March 21, 2013, the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) adopted Conservation District Cost Share Policy. The policy directs each conservation district to submit an approved Board resolution to the Conservation Commission stating the rate of reimbursement for Conservation Commission funds for all NRCS practices. It is to be kept on file with the WSCC and reviewed and updated annually.

**Larry Helm moved to approve Resolution 14-01 Whatcom Conservation District WSCC Cost-share Policy as approved in 2013. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

## **X. Other Business.**

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

#### Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –

Alex reported that staff are in the middle of EQIP contracting and need to complete contracts by June 20, 2014. There are limited funds for the first cut of applications. Regular EQIP will fund two projects, with another 2 each under the Water Quality Initiative and High Tunnels. Alex explained how funds are redistributed after the initial contract. George asked Alex to review projects that are going to be funded.

National Water Quality Initiative – Alex met with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) regarding constructed waterways. There was a suggestion to take a map of waterways to see if the streams that are WDFW jurisdictional get a determination at the area level to facilitate potential projects.

Larry Helm suggested talking up the program as a way of saving farmland. Using reasonable buffers and hedgerows and managed zones allows farmers to use farmland and not have large “no touch” zones. George reported that the District hosted a Buffer Tour for agency representatives. He showed a map of Whatcom County with NOAA buffer tables overlaid, which could take as much as 10% of land out of production. It is important to show the effectiveness of smaller buffers to regulators.

NRCS Staffing – Alex reported that the wetland specialist from Moscow, ID is coming to review some projects next week.

### **B. Supervisor Reports.**

#### Larry Helm –

Larry is helping to coordinate some water forums around the county. There have been about 80 people at each session. There is one at the Whatcom County Council Chambers in June and the final one is on July 10, 2014, at Silver Reef Casino.

Larry attended the Lummi Nation First Salmon Celebration.

Larry also attended the May 29, 2014 meeting with Representative Buys and Senator Ericksen in Lynden. The three water associations north of Lynden have water quality issues and are looking for alternatives.

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

New USDA Farm Programs – The Puget Sound area was not chosen as a Critical Conservation Area. Instead the Columbia River system which included Idaho and Washington was designated. Nevertheless, there is an opportunity for Puget Sound to apply for selection for a smaller pot of funding through the USDA Resource Conservation Partners Program (RCPP). Approximately \$4 million a year in national funding could be available for 5 years. Partners in the Puget Sound Natural Resource Alliance (WCD participates) met to develop a pre-proposal for funding for a Purchase of Development Rights program, salmon recovery and water quality conservation practices. Whatcom County could benefit from the proposal.

Snohomish CD and the Tulalip Tribe may submit a separate proposal for farmers who would like managed buffers. They are interested in doing a bio-mass program, where they harvest buffers for energy generation. They are proposing a constructed wetland project of a gravel mine in Monroe, WA.

Innovation Pre-applications – Nichole is the lead for the Edge of Field Monitoring project. She is looking for a farmer to participate in the program.

Buffer Tour – George reported that Nichole received a call from NRCS seeking to fund the ARM program with as much as \$50,000, if the Commission would match half.

Building Remodel – George showed the Board the three proposed design plans. George discussed projected costs for the building remodel. He discussed doing the remodel in phases to help with costs. He will continue to look into potential grants for meeting spaces, etc.

Education Outreach Position – The committee has reviewed 12 or so applications for the Education Outreach Position and will set up interviews for the June 26 and 27, 2014.

Credit Card Increase for Phay – Dawn explained that Andrew does a lot of purchasing of equipment and requested an increase to his District credit card limit to \$1,500, which is the same limit as Nichole Embertson.

**Larry Helm moved to approve the District Credit Card Limit increase to \$1,500 for Andrew Phay. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**D. Joe Heller.**

Joe recommended that the Board recognize Terry Lenssen's time on the Board with an honorarium and award.

**Larry Helm moved to award \$100 and present an award to Terry Lenssen for honorarium for his years of service to the Board. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**XI. Record of Board Actions.**

**14-42 Larry Helm moved that the minutes of the May 8, 2014 Board meeting and May 20, 2014 Special Meeting be approved as mailed. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**14-43 Larry Helm moved to approve the Financial Report. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.**

**14-44**

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**Moved by Larry Helm. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

- 14-45 Larry Helm moved to wait on election of officers until all Board members were present. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 14-46 Larry Helm moved to approve and sign the proposed financial settlement agreement with Frontier Communications regarding the complaint for damages due to communication line trespass put in by Verizon in the amount of \$35,685.00, which includes proposed costs for parking lot repairs. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 14-47 Larry Helm moved to approve the payroll step increase for Nichole Embertson from Band D1 Step 4 to D1 Step 5, effective July 1, 2014. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 14-48 Larry Helm moved to have the historical photos and slides professionally digitally scanned for archiving for an estimated \$770. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 14-49 Larry Helm moved to approve Resolution 14-01 Whatcom Conservation District WSCC Cost-share Policy as approved in 2013. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 14-50 Larry Helm moved to approve the District Credit Card Limit increase to \$1,500 for Andrew Phay. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 14-51 Larry Helm moved to award \$100 and present an award to Terry Lenssen for honorarium for his years of service to the Board. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

## **XII. Adjournment.**

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Helm moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Dated: August 26, 2014

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

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Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant