

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2015**

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 April 9, 2015, 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, Sec./Treasurer

Larry Helm, Vice-Chair
Dan Heeringa

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director
Shana Joy, WSCC Regional Mgr.

Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant

III. Meeting Called to Order.

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

IV. Public Comment (written or in person).

The Board was sent a written comment from Carol Follett, copying the Board on comments that she submitted to the Washington State Conservation Commission.

V. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

There was discussion regarding if the minutes for the March meeting provided enough information. Several motions were provided but died due to lack of a second. The Board decided to hold approving the March minutes until all Board members could be present.

Larry Davis moved to hold over approval of the March 12, 2015 Board meeting minutes to the next meeting. It was suggested that Larry Helm provide written language of suggested comments to the minutes for Board review. Dan Heerina seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Financial Report.

Due to workload issues, including a large influx of receipts from the plant sale, staff was not able to provide a financial report with the March meeting minutes.

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:

March 2015 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>22348</u>	through	<u>22405</u>	and totaling	<u>62,486.24</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>24406</u>	through	<u>22428</u>	and totaling	<u>36,139.74</u>

April 2015			
Voucher (check) numbers	22429	through	22448 and totaling 41,289.47
Payroll check numbers:	22449	through	22466 and totaling 33,109.70
Moved by Larry Davis. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.			

VII. Action Items.

A. Approval of Contracts, Plans or Cost-share Applications.

There were no contracts, plans or cost-share applications submitted for approval this month.

Larry Helm voiced concerns over the cost-share application approved at the March Board meeting. It was pointed out that the Board is the first approval, with Whatcom County Public Works providing the final approval for all PIC Cost-share applications.

Larry Helm reiterated that he wants staff to provide all farm plans and cost-share applications at least one week prior to the Board meeting. Larry Davis was concerned that there may be instances when the Board would need to act upon a plan or cost-share that comes up within that week prior to the Board meeting.

Larry Helm moved that all farm plans and cost-share be submitted by mail or email to the Board one week ahead of the Board meeting, unless there is a justified emergency, then the landowner can provide further information to the Board at the meeting. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VIII. Other Business.

A. Supervisor Reports.

Larry Davis –

Washington Association of Conservation District (WACD) Legislative Days – Larry attended WACD Legislative Days. Kristine Lytton and Luanne Van Werven expressed that they would like to attend District tours.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Local Work Group – The next meeting will be in April at Padilla Bay. Ray Ledgerwood is providing a draft of the last meetings minutes.

Dan Heeringa –

Dan’s wife had a baby girl since the last meeting.

Water Quality Issues and Farming –

Dan reported that the Lummi Nation has hired the same attorney that was successful in the lawsuit in Eastern Washington against the 5-6 producers over water quality issues. George provided some details on the lawsuit and his perusal of the 100 page case file.

Larry Helm expressed his displeasure that at the last Cattlemen’s meeting the Department of Ecology said that they were not going to fine anyone. Then a few days later two operations in Whatcom county have direct discharges and been sent a Notice of Violation. George provided some background that the producers were given notice and did not work with anyone to correct the issues. They were provided with one year to try and fix the issue. These producers have not worked with the Conservation District. The Department of Ecology was told to go forward with a notice of violation. Actual pollution was identified and opportunity was provided to fix the problem but was done prior to a notice a violation being sent. The Governor has directed Maia Bellon to be firmer with enforcement.

Larry Helm –

Whatcom Land Trust –

Larry reported that he actively worked to make sure that two grant applications were not funded, one being the Floodplains By Design application from Whatcom Land Trust. Larry stated that the application mentioned the Whatcom Conservation District and he was not in favor of this. George provided feedback and information on the grant application. The Whatcom Conservation District has been a past partner with the Whatcom Land Trust and the Conservation District was only mentioned once in the application. Larry objected that the application mention the Conservation District and did not come before the Board for review and approval. George reported that the Director of the Whatcom Land Trust called him and asked why the Conservation District was opposing their application. Larry Helm said that he talked with the Department of Ecology to not fund the application. George said that the impression was given that the Conservation District Board was adverse to the application, not just Larry Helm.

Larry Helm made a motion disallowing anyone from mentioning the Whatcom Conservation District in any grant applications, etc. without District Board approval. Dan had seconded the motion for discussion, but withdrew his second. The motion died due to lack of second.

Larry Helm suggested that the Conservation District write a letter to the Whatcom Land Trust stating that we don't appreciate being mentioned in a grant application or anything else without seeing the draft first. Larry then suggested that the Conservation District review what the agency does on a case by case basis.

Larry Helm suggested that he should make a statement at the beginning on any meeting that he attends that he is not representing the Whatcom Conservation District unless directed by the Board to be their representative.

Larry Helm withdrew his motion and requested that an agenda item be added for the next meeting; approval of support for grant applications.

Rates and Charges –

Larry Helm proposed that the Conservation District staff stop the Rates and Charge work. He stated that the City of Bellingham and County were going to add new taxes. He suggested that the District not work on a Rates and Charge until further notice. This matter was also deferred until the next meeting.

Job Descriptions –

George sent a copy of his job description to the Board for review. Larry Helm wants to see "interpret policy for the Board" removed from the Executive Director's job description. It was suggested that the Board schedule a review of job descriptions for staff.

Supervisor Election –

The Election is still in dispute. Larry Helm contacted Mark Clark two times regarding the election. Larry Helm has been responding to a lot of questions from people regarding the Supervisor election. A copy of the letter that Joy Monjure wrote to the Washington State Conservation Commission issuing a formal appeal of the supervisor election was shared with the Board. There was discussion regarding the letter.

B. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Floodplains By Design –

Jim Kramer, Department of Ecology, requested that Monte Marti, Snohomish Conservation District Manager, and George Boggs participate in the Floodplains By Design meeting. The Department of Ecology will be reviewing their grant application criteria for the Floodplains by Design program. Ecology is interested in looking more closely at the impact of these projects on agriculture and the overarching plan for the proposed project areas. There could be potential changes in the grant application criteria in order to better understand how the projects impact agriculture in the area. George asked the Board if they would like him to participate in the

process. George will get input from Ag producers prior to the meeting. Dan Heeringa, Joe Heller, and Larry Davis supported George's involvement in providing input to Ecology. Larry Helm did not want any involvement in the program. He expressed that Ecology not having a direct representative from ag groups in this meeting is a deficiency in the process. Having been given majority Board approval, George will participate in the process.

Annual Plan of Work and Long Range Plan of Work –

George sent out copies of the Annual and Long Range Plans of Work to the Board for review and comment. George will also send copies to stakeholders for their comments. The deadline for requested comments will be the May meeting, so that they can be incorporated into the plans and approved at the June meeting.

Education Outreach Events –

George passed out a list of educational events from our website that Nichole Embertson has generated for the Board.

Schedule 22 Review –

Dawn Bekenyi requested two Supervisors to assist with the annual Schedule 22 review. Larry Davis and Larry Helm agreed to participate and meeting time to be scheduled.

Public Records Request –

George received a public records request that he shared with the Board. He provided a first installment of the requested records that were housed on the District network. He requested that the Board members review the request to determine if they had any such documents that needed to be disclosed. If not, he requested that they sign and date the form stating that they did not have any documents.

Informational Slides –

George shared some information slides that he received regarding soil health, precipitation and impacts on growing crops, soil and erosion issues.

C. Shana Joy, Washington State Conservation Commission.

Shana did not have much input. She wanted to remind the Board about the Annual and Long Range Plans of Works, but sees that the Board is working on that now.

IX. Record of Board Actions.

15-27 Larry Davis moved to hold over approval of the March 12, 2015 Board meeting minutes to the next meeting. It was suggested that Larry Helm provide written language of suggested comments to the minutes for Board review. Dan Heerina seconded the motion. The motion passed.

15-28

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15-29 Larry Helm moved that all farm plans and cost-share be submitted by mail or email to the Board one week ahead of the Board meeting, unless there is a justified emergency, then

the landowner can provide further information to the Board at the meeting. Dan Heeringa seconded the motion. The motion passed.

X. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Helm moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Dated: May 20, 2015

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____