

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
December 10, 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 December 10, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

Larry Davis, Chair
Dan Heeringa, Treasurer
Larry Helm

Dick Yoder, Vice-Chair
Joe Heller

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant
Aneka Sweeney, Ed Outreach Specialist
Katie Pencke

Alex Hall, NRCS staff
Corina Cheever, Resource Specialist
Landon Van Dyk, farmer

III. Meeting Called to Order.

Larry Davis, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

IV. Public Comment (written or in person).

Landon Van Dyk came in to ask the Board about approving certification of his Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Carousel Creamery. Staff certified that all structural and vegetative practices have been implemented except for a relay/cover crop in one field. The Board asked Landon why that had not been completed. It has been their practice to plant relay crops when a field was side-dressed. The crop in this particular field grew so quickly that it was not side-dressed. So, it wasn't planted to a rely crop. It was an oversight not to plant a cover crop after the corn was harvested. It was now too late to cure.

Larry Helm moved to certify the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Carousel Creamery (Landon Van Dyk). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Consent Agenda.

The Board adopted a consent agenda for approval of the previous meeting minutes, financial report and accounts payable. The financial report was mailed to the Board with their draft minutes from the November meeting. Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant, presented the financial report. 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.

Larry Helm moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the November Board meeting as mailed, the financial report and authorize payment of District invoices and incurred expenses (below), as listed in the Accounts Payable Report. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

Nov 2015 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>23176</u>	through	<u>23213</u>	and totaling	<u>36,502.87</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>23214</u>	through	<u>23231</u>	and totaling	<u>32,308.06</u>
Dec 2015					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>23232</u>	through	<u>23255</u>	and totaling	<u>26,325.21</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>23256</u>	through	<u>23271</u>	and totaling	<u>32,231.00</u>

VI. Program Update.

A. Whatcom County Pollution Identification & Correction (PIC) – 1 year later.

Aneka Sweeney and Corina Cheever gave a presentation on the District's role in Whatcom County's PIC program. They explained that the District provides outreach, technical assistance and cost-share for non-dairy livestock operations through several contracts with Whatcom County under the PIC program. Aneka explained Whatcom County's water quality testing and the focus areas. "Hot spots" of high fecal coliform counts in the 90 monitoring sites created focus areas to find water quality issues. Aneka also shared copies of the four form letters that Whatcom County sent to landowners when a livestock management issue was detected.

Corina Cheever pointed out the four focus areas that Whatcom County has identified. Corina reported the statistics for numbers of residents in those areas, those that were referred to the District, and the status of those that the District is working with to improve water quality. In Drayton Harbor watershed 35 people have called to seek technical assistance. 23 have received an assessment Standard Farm Conservation Plan Checklist and 12 have received farm plans approved by the District Board which include cost-share requests.

A graph showing water quality results and trends was passed out. The trend appears that water quality is improving in the focus area. There was discussion regarding what can impact water quality counts.

VII. Action Items.

A. Approval of Contracts.

Whatcom County Shellfish Strategic Initiative Transition Team (SITT) Agreement –

Whatcom County offered an agreement for George to participate in the Puget Sound Partnership Shellfish Strategic Initiative Transition Team (SITT).

Larry Helm moved to approve agreement with Whatcom County to reimburse the District for the expense of George Boggs participating on the Shellfish Strategic Initiative Transition Team for approximately \$15,000. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Expansion of Tools for the BC Application Risk Management Pilot Project –

The BC Ministry of Agriculture would like to pilot the District's Application Risk Management System and Manure Spreading Advisory for dairy and swine operations in the Fraser Valley. Nichole worked with a Ministry representative to develop a scope of work. Dawn and George reviewed it as to form. The proposed Letter of Agreement (LOA) is in the amount of \$7,000,000. Staff recommended approval.

Larry Helm moved to approve the letter of agreement with the BC Ministry of Agriculture to establish a pilot project that would adapt the District's Application Risk Management (ARM) system and Manure Spreading Advisory to the lower Fraser River Valley for \$7,000 USD. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. Employee Medical.

The District is a member of the state's Health Care Authority through the Public Employees Benefit Board. Employee medical insurance premiums increased on average of 1.5% for 2016.

Joe Heller moved to affirm the current policy of District payment of 100% of employee and dependents medical/dental premiums for full-time employees and 100% premiums for employee only for part-time employees and approved the 1.5% increase. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. 2016 Plant Sale.

The WCD plant sale is our biggest outreach event of the year. The sale promotes the District on a large scale in not only the rural environment but also reaches our urban populations. Every year the sale provides thousands of native plants to the community for habitat, landscaping, and conservation practices. Emily Hirsch provided a plant sale projected budget for Board review and approval.

Joe Heller moved to approve 2016 Plant Sale Projected Budget. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VIII. Other Business.

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

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –

There are about 80 applications. NRCS staff are working to get the applicants eligible for the 2016 signup prior to the January 15, 2016 deadline. The applicants must have a DUNS number and be in various systems including SAM and ProTracts. The final allocation for the team has not been released yet.

NRCS staff are also working on end of the year matters like expiring contracts and late practices.

National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) –

There will be an allocation for NWQI, but no announcement about the amount or the deadline has been made.

Staffing –

Alex updated the Board about the status of hiring a new District Conservationist for the Mt. Vernon field office.

Local Work Group –

The group decided that since they have not completed the planning or contracting cycle from 2015 that no changes would be made until the next Local Work Group meeting.

B. Supervisor Reports.

Dan Heeringa –

Dan reported that the Department of Ecology should have a new draft NPDES coming out in January or February that should include revisions and comments on the first draft.

Dick Yoder –

Dick attended the Washington State Cattlemen's convention at Suncadia and gave some highlights. Dick stepped down from the Cattlemen's State Board.

Larry Helm –

Larry attended the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) annual meeting. He provided some highlights and status of resolution outcomes from the meeting.

Larry also attended the Farm Bureau Convention in Yakima.

There was discussion regarding flooding of the Nooksack River and the fact that there has not been any sediment management on the river since 1995.

Larry Davis –

Larry was elected as the Secretary/Treasurer for the WACD.

The WACD By-laws were updated. The changes impact the Executive Committee and Officers interaction.

Larry gave a Supervisor Leadership Presentation at WACD.

Larry presented Dick Yoder with his 10 years of service pin and certificate of appreciation from WACD.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Washington Department of Ag (WSDA) –

Chris Clark, Chuck Timblin and George met with the WSDA Director. There was discussion about water quality and all of the pollution sources, not just dairies.

Lummi Nation –

George passed out a letter from Jeremy Friedman, Lummi Natural Resources. They would like to meet with farmers and other stakeholders to develop an agreement for the maintenance of minimum instream flows, water quality and habitat in the new year. The Lummi's have asked the Whatcom Conservation district to provide its technical expertise.

Public Records Request –

George reported that a public records request has been received and the steps taken to provide the requested information.

D. Other.

The Board asked Katie Pencke about her background and interest in the Whatcom Conservation District. Katie is currently working at King Conservation District with the Ag Drainage Ditches, helping to streamline the permitting process. Katie has also worked with Seattle Tilth on a small farm incubator program. She is relocating to Whatcom County and would be interested in work with the District

IX. Record of Board Actions.

15-126 Larry Helm moved to certify the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Carousel Creamery (Landon Van Dyk). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

15-127 Larry Helm moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the November Board meeting as mailed, the financial report and authorize payment of District invoices and incurred expenses (below), as listed in the Accounts Payable Report. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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15-128 Larry Helm moved to approve agreement with Whatcom County to reimburse the District for the expense of George Boggs participating on the Shellfish Strategic Initiative Transition Team for approximately \$15,000. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

15-129 Larry Helm moved to approve the letter of agreement with the BC Ministry of Agriculture to establish a pilot project that would adapt the District's Application Risk Management (ARM) system and Manure Spreading Advisory to the lower Fraser River Valley for \$7,000 USD. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

15-130 Joe Heller moved to affirm the current policy of District payment of 100% of employee and dependents medical/dental premiums for full-time employees and 100% premiums for employee only for part-time employees and approved the 1.5% increase. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

15-131 Joe Heller moved to approve 2016 Plant Sale Projected Budget. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

X. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Helm moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Dated: January 27, 2016

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant