

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
Public Meeting Minutes  
July 13, 2017**

**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 July 13, 2017, at 1:00 p.m.

**II. Attendance and Quorum.**

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

Larry Helm, Chair	Larry Davis, Vice-Chair
Joe Heller, Treasurer	Heather Christianson
Theresa Sygitowicz	

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director	Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant
Shana Joy, WSCC	Sarah Richards, WACD NW Area Director

**III. Meeting Called to Order.**

Larry Helm, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

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

There was no public comment either in writing or in person.

**V. Consent Agenda.**

The Board adopted a consent agenda for approval of the financial report, accounts payable. The Board approved a step increase for Scarlett Graham and Aneka Sweeney. The financial report was mailed to the Board. 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 Davis moved to approve the consent agenda: the financial report, authorize payment of District invoices and incurred expenses (below), as listed in the Accounts Payable Report, and approve the step increase for Scarlett Graham to Band C1 Step and Aneka Sweeney to Band C2 Step 7. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

June 2017 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	24920	through	24937	and totaling	42,494.84
Payroll check numbers:	24938	through	24962	and totaling	62,888.49
July 2017					
Voucher (check) numbers	24963	through	24982	and totaling	44,225.36
Payroll check numbers:	24983	through	25001	and totaling	29,127.18

## **VI. ZAPs and Edge of Field Project Presentation.**

Scarlett Graham and Nichole Embertson gave a presentation on the ZAPs water quality monitoring station and Edge of Field projects. There are three Edge of Field projects to be installed this fall. The projects are funded through NRCS.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve and have the District Chair sign the Assignment of Payment form and agreement for the three Edge of Field projects. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Theresa asked about having signage for show participants in projects. Nichole said that there is nothing like that in place right now. She suggested that she could provide certificates to interest producers and possibly do signage for Discovery Farm project.

## **VII. Action Items.**

### **A. Approval of Conservation Plans.**

#### Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) Conservation Farm Plan Approval –

A farm plan was completed for Baldev and Aman Sangha. This plan will ensure that their farming activities comply with Whatcom County's Conservation Program on Agricultural Land (C-PAL). It fulfilled the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommended Board approval.

**Larry Helm moved to approve the Critical Areas Ordinance Conservation Farm Plan for Baldev and Aman Sangha. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

### **B. FY 2018 Commission Legislative Appropriations.**

George reported that the state Legislature passed the operating budget, but there is no new capital budget for the biennium. There are some capital budget re-appropriations. The Conservation Commission is working on what it has for re-appropriations.

The Board scheduled a special meeting for July 24, 2017, at 1:00 p.m., if necessary. The Washington State Conservation Commission's meeting is scheduled for July 19 and 20 in Stevens County.

### **C. TSP Task Order.**

The Whatcom Conservation District will partner with the NRCS on a Task Order to provide Engineering and Riparian Habitat work.

**Larry Helm moved to approve and sign the TSP Task Order/WSCC Conservation Commission grant for Engineering and Riparian Habitat work. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

### **D. Employee Pay Scale – Report from Work Group.**

Theresa provided an update on the work that she had done. She asked Shana Joy, Washington State Conservation Commission, to discuss the comparison of Engineers and Executive Director pay scales. Theresa suggested that she needed time to do more gathering. The Board agreed that George should be included in the committee and help with information gathering and discussion of pay scales. There are two tasks to address. 1. The adequacy of the District's pay scale, including comparison with other Conservation District's around Puget Sound. 2. Next step is to place staff appropriately on the individual pay scale. It should be relative to the person and their performance, subject to the availability of funds.

### **E. Rates and Charges.**

George passed out a draft of the Rates and Charges. There are two options for stable funding, either an assessment or a Rate and Charge. Rates and Charges is more general in the benefit. Assessments are for a direct benefit.

George reviewed the rates up to \$5 per parcel and \$0.10/acre and information on breakdown of landowner base. Conservation District programs in the city are limited to date. George reviewed the potential revenue base.

Snohomish Conservation District hired a consultant to assist them with securing their Rates and Charges for approximately \$28,000. George reviewed the process. 1. Hire a Consultant. 2. Have public hearing. 3. Take to the County Council for approval.

Shana Joy reported that an initiative to pass a statewide per parcel "tax" would be discussed at the All District's meeting in August, as well as other potential funding options.

**F. Firewise/Fuel Reduction.**

Frank Corey, Wayne Chaudiere and Larry Helm met with Natural Resources and others to do Firewise and fuel reduction. The group hopes to develop a scope of work identifying projects. Staff will give a presentation to the Whatcom County Council on Firewise.

**VIII. Other Business.**

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

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –

Alex reported on the number of contracts and workload of the Lynden office.

NRCS has a state policy that producers with livestock must have a CNMP in order to apply for EQIP funding. There are only three projects that do not deal directly with livestock.

Alex reported that in the past five years, there has been an increasing trend for Joy Hawley and Alex to produce contracts. They are dependent on the TSPs to get the projects installed. NRCS staff does not have time to do the installations.

There was discussion regarding the process for Cultural Resources Reviews and the west-side NRCS archeologist.

**B. Supervisor Reports.**

Larry Helm –

Larry Helm has put up a lot of hay.

Larry Davis –

Larry Davis reported on the Executive Director search for the Washington Association of Conservation District (WACD). There were four applications to date. The deadline for applications was later that day. The selection committee will rank the applicants and select up to six applicants to interview. They hope to have someone hired no later than September.

Heather Christianson –

Heather has gotten an extension on her position at work until the end of August. Western Washington University is looking for other positions into which to move her.

Theresa Sygitowicz –

Theresa will try to attend the Conservation Commission meeting at the end of July. Theresa attended the Washington Association of District Employees training. It was very educational.

Theresa would like to have the Whatcom Conservation District have a seat on the WRIA 1 Board or the Whatcom County Planning Unit. There has been no new caucus members in 5 years.

87 people attended the Well Owners meeting at the Rome Grange.

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

George reported that the electric car power station used \$25.56 worth of electricity last month.

The Whatcom Conservation District is hosting the Puget Sound Conservation Districts caucus meeting at Bellewood Acres on July 31, 2017. Larry Helm and Theresa said that they would attend.

The draft letter in response to the letter from Maia Bellon was reviewed and approved for the Chair's signature.

There was discussion on how to provide the Board information for their monthly meeting.

George testified for the Whatcom County Council regarding the Critical Area Ordinance. While farm plans are good, it is not good to require one everywhere. Larry Helm suggested the Board member call the Whatcom County Council members informing them that the Conservation District does not support giant buffers or farm plans for everyone. Farm plans need to be site specific.

Whatcom County Public Works hired a former employee of the Okanogan Conservation District.

**D. Shana Joy, Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC).**

Shana reported that the All Districts meeting is scheduled for August 23 and 24 in Ellensburg. There will be five topics to be discussed at the meeting. The WSCC is providing a stipend of \$500 to get Conservation Districts to attend.

**IX. Record of Board Actions.**

**17-53 Larry Davis moved to approve the consent agenda: the financial report, authorize payment of District invoices and incurred expenses (below), as listed in the Accounts Payable Report, and approve the step increase for Scarlett Graham to Band C1 Step and Aneka Sweeney to Band C2 Step 7. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting. Larry Helm seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

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**17-54 Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve and have the District Chair sign the Assignment of Payment form and agreement for the three Edge of Field projects. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**17-55 Larry Helm moved to approve the Critical Areas Ordinance Conservation Farm Plan for Baldev and Aman Sangha. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**17-56 Larry Helm moved to approve and sign the TSP Task Order/WSCC Conservation Commission grant for Engineering and Riparian Habitat work. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**X. Adjournment.**

**There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Helm moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Joe Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Dated: November 20, 2017

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

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Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant