

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
Public Meeting Minutes  
November 15, 2018**

**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 November 15, 2018, at 1:00 p.m.

**II. Attendance and Quorum.**

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

Larry Davis, Chair  
Suzzi Snyder, Treasurer  
Theresa Sygitowicz

Heather Christianson, Vice-Chair  
Alan Chapman

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director  
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant  
Aneka Sweeney, Ed Specialist  
Corina Cheever, Planner

Alex Hall, NRCS staff  
Hank Kastner, Tenmile Clean Water Program  
G David Bock, Common Threads NW  
Chris Elder, Whatcom County PDS

**III. Meeting Called to Order.**

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

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

Hank Kastner informed the Board that he attended Orca Days event that the Whatcom Conservation District, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) and Whatcom Land Trust hosted.

David Bock voiced his concerns as a hobby beekeeper regarding pesticide and herbicide applications during blossom time and the impacts on bees. He was hoping that farmers could be educated to take into consideration bee activity during their application times.

**V. Election Resolution.**

George provided background on the Conservation District election process. Conservation Districts are required by statute to hold their election in the first quarter of the calendar year. George reviewed the proposed timeframe of dates with a March election date. Dawn went into more detail on the specific dates and the amount of time needed for advertising for candidates and printing ballots. Andrew Phay demonstrated the new on-line mail-in ballot request system. The on-line request system will allow voters to fill out the information and see a confirmation page of their information prior to submittal. There will be no email confirmation this year, so a voter does not need to provide their email or phone number. Text will caution voters to make sure that their information is correct, or run the risk of not receiving their ballot in the mail. The Board suggested that the confirmation page should also mention that if a voter does not receive their ballot by date certain, they should contact the District office. Ballots will be mailed out in bulk during the first part of March. The Board also recommended that an outside secured drop box be installed for dropping off ballots after office hours. There was discussion that ballots must meet the postmark deadline to be counted. Reminder to voters to make sure that the ballots are postmarked.

**Larry Davis moved to adopt the election resolution as follows:**

- **The poll site election will be held at the District office, 6975 Hannegan Road, Lynden, WA**

- The election will be on Tuesday, March 26, 2019
- Polls will be open from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
- Board selected Dawn Bekenyi as Election Supervisor
- Additionally, the District will have a mail-in election with ballot distribution by request only. Voters can request ballots in-person or by using the Whatcom Conservation District's ballot request form on our election page ([www.whatcomcd.org/board-elections](http://www.whatcomcd.org/board-elections)). Return mail-in ballots by mail, in-person or at the drop box located at the front of the building at the WCD Office. Ballots will be mailed out after the Absentee Ballot (mail-in) Request Deadline and not available for pick up.
- Candidate filing deadline is January 11, 2019 at 4:00 pm
- The last day to request an absentee (mail-in) ballot is February 8, 2019 at 4:00 pm
- The District chose to publish all further election notices on-line only on the District's website.

Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

## VI. 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 October 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.

**Suzzi Snyder moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the October 18, 2018 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. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

October 2018 - balance					
Payroll (direct deposit & tax EFTs)				totaling	54,345.08
Voucher (check) numbers	26295	through	26302	totaling	11,376.00
Employee Retirement check numbers	26303	through	26307	totaling	2,117.01
November 2018					
Payroll (direct deposit & tax EFT)				totaling	40,462.87
Employee Retirement check numbers:	26308	through	26311	totaling	1,963.91
Voucher (check) numbers	26312	through	26363	totaling	96,323.75

## VII. Presentations.

### A. Overview of PDR Program and RCPP Funding.

Chris Elder, Whatcom County Public Works, is the technical staff for Whatcom County's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) programs. He shared his background in farming. Chris gave an overview of each program, how they work, and the number of participants in Whatcom County. He answered questions from the Board and explained how the Whatcom Conservation District is involved with the farm planning aspect of the programs. The purpose of the programs is to keep farmland in farming in Whatcom County.

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

Alex reported on activities with the various cost-share programs that NRCS administers.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –

Alex reported that the NRCS received 10 new applications for high tunnels as a result of the Whatcom Conservation District's funding workshop.

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) –

Alex reported that there is not much change of the backlog of CNMPs that are needed for producers to receive EQIP and other funding. One CNMP has been approved. Another one needs some additional information to meet the basic requirements of the plan. NRCS is looking to Technical Service Providers (TSPs) to get the plans completed. They hope ~~of~~ to have a number of plans done before the February funding deadline.

NRCS was able to get funds obligated, funded and completed in the same year.

RCPP - Habitat –

Alex reported that Frank Corey has four or five fish passage/habitat projects ongoing under the Habitat RCPP project.

**VIII. Action Items.**

**A. Approval of Conservation Plans.**

NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) Approval –

Katie Pencke completed an ACEP farm plan for Broadleaf Farm (Dusty Williams). It fulfills the requisite elements for that type of plan. Staff recommends Board approval.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the ACEP farm plan for Broadleaf Farms. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**B. Approval Contracts.**

City of Lynden Services in Support of Stormwater & Water Conservation Education –

The City of Lynden presented an Inter-local Agreement to continue the program to improve landowner awareness and stewardship to improve water quality. In addition to previous contracts, activities include support for the City of Lynden with their grant to design Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater system improvements for the NW Washington Fairgrounds in Lynden and expanding the City of Lynden's water conservation program, including facilitating regional conservation meetings of the Whatcom Water Alliance and including educational outreach on conservation within the public schools.

**Alan Chapman moved to approve the Agreement with City of Lynden and authorize the Board Chair to sign on behalf of the Whatcom Conservation District for the provision of professional services necessary to implement the Stormwater and Water Conservation Community Education and Outreach program for 2019 for \$51,374.58. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

WC Pollution Identification & Correction (PIC) Outreach and Cost-share Program –

Staff recommend that the Board approve the 2019 interlocal agreement between Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District & Whatcom Conservation District for the Pollution Identification and Correction Outreach and Cost-share Program. This proposed 2019 interlocal agreement will extend the PIC Outreach and Cost-share partnership though December 31, 2019.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to approve the 2019 Interlocal Agreement for Pollution Identification and Correction Outreach and Cost-share Program for \$55,000 and authorize the Board Chair to sign on behalf of the Whatcom Conservation District. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Terrell Creek Landowner Stewardship Program –

The Birch Bay Watershed and Aquatic Resources Management District's (BBWARM) Advisory Committee desires to continue the successful partnership by financially contributing to the Terrell Creek Landowner Stewardship Initiative to help landowners maintain actions to improve and protect water quality in the BBWARM District by extending an interlocal agreement with the District for another year.

Staff recommends the Board continue the District's partnership with BBWARM and signing the Contract for Services with Whatcom County for the on-going outreach and education efforts in the Birch Bay/Terrell Creek area. Funding will support existing educational staff.

**Alan Chapman moved to approve the Contract for Services with Whatcom County for the Terrell Creek Landowner Stewardship Program for \$19,938 to support existing District staff in fulfilling the scope of work attached. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**C. Accept Donation of Poultry Processing Equipment.**

District staff was approached by the Whatcom Pastured Poultry Group (WPPG) as a potential to donate their poultry processing equipment. The WPPG was a volunteer run non-profit organization in Whatcom County that had been running a poultry equipment lending program. The group recently dissolved their non-profit with the support of the other members, but would love to have the poultry equipment program continue to be available in Whatcom County. The WGGP is interested in donating the equipment and some limited funds to the Whatcom Conservation District in order to continue the program. Staff discussed the timeframe that the equipment is used, historical rental fees, cleaning and repairs of the equipment. Corina Cheever will be going to King Conservation District to see how they use similar equipment and how their program works. Theresa voiced concerns over any potential infections from the poultry. Liability waivers and cleaning requirements for those that rent the equipment were discussed. King and Pierce CDs both have processing equipment that they rent out. Staff will discuss their programs with them to see how they address those concerns.

**Alan Chapman moved to accept the donated poultry equipment and funds from the Whatcom Pastured Poultry Group and set up a poultry processing rental program. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**D. NACD Dues.**

There was discussion regarding the value of membership in the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). Larry Davis is on two national committees, the Policy Book Task Force and the Tribal Outreach and Partnership Resource Policy Group.

**Larry Davis moved to approve paying NACD Dues of \$400 for 2019. Alan Chapman seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**E. Whatcom Conservation District Election Policies.**

There was discussion regarding the proposed Election Policies.

Policy Resolution 2018-62 –

Theresa spoke to the proposed policy. It is to define who would address complaints during the election. An Appointed Board member would work in conjunction with the Executive Director to address election questions and concerns.

Theresa suggested that the primary contact after the Election Supervisor would be a Board member, and next would be the Executive Director. Heather prefers a partnership, not hierarchy. There was further discussion about what the concern is that this policy is trying to address.

There was caution against passing any policy that the agency would not be able to meet. This could lead to an unfavorable or detrimental determination during an audit or other review.

It was decided to redraft the policy for the next Board meeting.

Policy Resolution 2018-63 –

This policy will address the role of District staff and supervisors. George suggested that in the absence of a specific District policy, that all staff and supervisors have to adhere to state law and Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) policy and WACD. It was pointed out that this concern is addressed under the current WSCC Election policy. The concern about setting a District policy that reflected the current Commission policy is that when updates occur to the state policy the District's policy could differ or be in conflict with the state policy and direction. It is best to refer to the WSCC Election policy.

It was decided to redraft the policy for the next Board meeting.

Policy Resolution 2018-61 –

The same as Resolution 2018-63. This resolution will be brought back to the next Board meeting.

Policy Resolution 2018-65 –

The proposal would require signature verification. Alan Chapman suggested to change the language to have it not appear obligatory to do a signature verification. It would be possible to do, but it is not a productive use of funds.

There was discussion about only being imposed if the funding is available and with Board approval.

There was discussion about not authorizing the verification until it appeared to be necessary, because of concentrated voting. Discussed why signature would need to be verified. If there was a close election, ask for signature verification. Dawn pointed out that at that point there would be no ability to remove those with questionable signatures, as all ballots would have been opened and separated from their secrecy envelope. Therefore, we could not verify after the fact for a close race.

It was suggested that there be signature verification for the 2019 election. If there are no problems, then we can go forward. It would provide a good public perception. It was also suggested that a historical analysis of addresses for ballot requests be made to see if there is an issue. No decision was made at this time on how to proceed, since this is a first reading of the policy.

Policy Resolution 2018-60 –

It was decided to delete this proposed policy.

Policy Resolution 2018-64 –

This policy was also suggested to be deleted, since we have to do it anyway. A resolution is unnecessary.

The Board directed staff to look into getting a secure outside ballot drop box, for use after hours.

**F. Talking Points Decision Packages.**

A handout of talking points for the Washington State Conservation Commission's funding request was passed out. It was suggested to try to get in touch with local legislators prior to the WACD Legislative Days event, since it is not the best time to see them during session. The Board asked that staff could provide a talking paper on the impacts that the state funds have on Whatcom County programs. What the District does with those funds in Whatcom County.

**G. WACD Resolutions.**

The Board reviewed the 18 resolutions that will be discussed at the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) Annual Meeting. They discussed how to vote on each resolution, whether or not they were in favor.

**IX. Other Business.**

**A. Supervisor Reports.**

Alan, Suzzi, Heather and Larry provided written reports before the Board meeting.

**B. George Boggs, Executive Director.**

WACD –

Rich Appel will be receiving an award at the WACD Annual meeting.

Committees –

There are several committees that are seeking or have Whatcom Conservation District Board representation. There was a review of the committees and the Board member representative.

WSCC Election Committee – Larry Davis

Puget Sound Conservation District Caucus – Theresa Sygitowicz

Whatcom Ag Advisory Committee – Larry Davis (Theresa is seeking a vacant seat)

Whatcom County Surface Mining Committee – Theresa Sygitowicz

Salmon Staff Team and CRT – Alan Chapman

**X. Record of Board Actions.**

**18-73 Larry Davis moved to adopt the election resolution as follows:**

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- The District chose to publish all further election notices on-line only on the District’s website.

Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**18-74 Suzzi Snyder moved to approve the consent agenda: minutes of the October 18, 2018 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. Theresa Sygitowicz seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

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- 18-79 Alan Chapman moved to accept the donated poultry equipment and funds from the Whatcom Pastured Poultry Group and set up a poultry processing rental program. Suzzi Snyder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 18-80 Larry Davis moved to approve paying NACD Dues of \$400 for 2019. Alan Chapman seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

## **XI. Adjournment.**

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Davis adjourned the meeting at 5:17 p.m.

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Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant