

WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2006

I. Time and Place of Meeting.

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisor of the Whatcom Conservation District was held at the Ag Service Center, 6975 Hannegan Rd, Lynden, Washington on February 9, 2006, at 12:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	Jerry Van Dellen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cornelius Timmermans
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rod Visser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joyce Jimerson
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dick Yoder		

Also in attendance were:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	George Boggs, District Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Gillies, NRCS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant		Robert Barker, Associate Supervisor
	Bas Scholten, Associate Supervisor		

III. Meeting Called to Order.

Cornie Timmermans acting as Chairman of the meeting called it to order at 12:08 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Joyce Jimerson moved that the minutes of the January 12, 2004 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Financial Report.

The financial report was passed out and discussed. Accounts payable, accounts receivable, Year to Date balances in District accounts and the spreadsheet showing the breakdown of funds and available discretionary funds as of Feb 9, 2006 were reviewed. Dawn developed a new consolidated grant status spreadsheet which shows total grant budget, funds expended, and expenditures for the month, the balance left in the grant, the percent of time spent and percent of funds expended.

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant, asked if there were any questions regarding the Financial Report. There were no questions.

Rod Visser moved to approve the Financial Report. Joyce Jimerson 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:

Jan 2006 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>13832</u>	through	<u>13848</u>	and totaling	<u>11,113.27</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>13849</u>	through	<u>13861</u>	and totaling	<u>18,010.63</u>
February 2006					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>13862</u>	through	<u>13875</u>	and totaling	<u>13,420.71</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>13876</u>	through	<u>13888</u>	and totaling	<u>18,255.99</u>

moved by Dick Yoder. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Action Items.

A. CREP Maintenance Cap Adjustment.

George reviewed the Maintenance Overrun Approval Sheet. There are seven categories of maintenance. Some CREP projects are in more than one category. The form shows new caps which include all costs attributed to all categories. Following Board approval the memo showing new caps was forwarded to the WA Conservation Commission for approval.

Rod Visser moved to approve the Maintenance Overrun Approval sheet recommending to the Conservation Commission new maintenance caps for the identified CREP projects. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The CREP committee was going to meet and discuss the future of the CREP program. There are new issues that CREP projects have brought up like sloughing banks and beaver control. How should these issues be addressed under a new CREP program? There was discussion regarding fish bearing streams and how trees shade the stream. Maybe the north or south side of the stream should be considered when planting. Dick Yoder suggested that the efforts up stream are not effective, if the cool water, etc just flows into the Nooksack River. We need to look at the Nooksack River as well as all the up stream work. Dick feels that it would be an improvement to dredge deepening and narrowing the Nooksack River. Gravel dredging helped in the past. This would help keep the water cool and help with flooding. This would make the up stream efforts more effective.

VII. Other Business.

A. Supervisor Reports.

Supervisor Election and Appointment –

Rod Visser and Cornie Timmerman's terms are coming to an end. The Whatcom Conservation District election is scheduled for March 7, 2006 here at the District office. There was some discussion as to whether there had been any interest shown in the two positions. Dawn reported that two individuals had asked for applications, one for the appointed and the other for the elected position. Cornie expressed his desire to see a dairyman on the Board. It was suggested that the Supervisors could take some applications and pass them out to any interested individuals.

B. Manager's Report.

District Audit –

George reported to the Board that the Washington State Auditor's office had completed their audit of the District. No findings or management letters are expected based upon the exit interview. We are waiting for their report.

Livestock –

George explained that we hope to get some TSP funds for Chris to do engineering on some of the EQIP projects.

Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) –

The Department of Ag was noticing potential CAO violations and sending them to the County. George, Chris, and Chuck met with representatives from Whatcom County, the Department of Ecology and the Department of Ag to discuss how the CAO program could be implemented. There was a good discussion as to what the respective authorities each of the agencies had and the resources to provide assistance. Also, how new materials and workshops were being developed to help landowners. It seems that an effective, measured program will result.

District Planning Retreat –

George discussed having a planning retreat with the Board and staff in April. A place, day and time will be scheduled to include the new Supervisors.

WACD Legislative Day in Olympia –

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) has scheduled their legislative day for February 15 and 16. This is an opportunity for Districts to meet with their legislatures and discuss issues of concern. George was asked by WACD to come make comment on the Public Disclosure Bill.

The Board discussed public disclosure and farm plans. Bob wondered if the assumption was that public funds paid for the plan therefore it should be public information. John Gillies stated that the federal government is not allowed to disclose any information in their files. Employees can even be held financially responsible if they were to do so without consent from the landowner. The consensus of the Board is that confidentiality of farm plans and work products should be consistent with the federal program.

Dick Yoder moved that the District write a letter to Representative Kelli Linville and send George Boggs to Olympia to testify regarding public disclosure and the District's desire to have the same confidentiality as afforded by NRCS to its cooperators. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Stable Funding –

George reviewed the basic research relative to a Resource Conservation assessment under RCW 89.08.400. There was discussion regarding the funding challenges. State and federal funding levels are going down. It is a long-term problem. The District needs to find a source of stable funding to augment our grant sources. Most grants need matching funds. Local funding is the best match source, since it can be used for both state and federal grants. Local funding could be either an assessment or county funding. There was discussion regarding the pros and cons of each type of stable funding source. George will continue to pursue the issue and discuss stable funding for the District with Whatcom County Council representatives. The Board agreed that it was a good idea to talk with County Council members regarding how to get stable funding for the District.

John Gillies pointed out that one pro of an assessment would be that the District could direct the programs that this funding source would fund. Usually the granting agency sets up the program or parameters of a grant or program. John also suggested that you could make the argument that a District county-wide assessment would benefit the incorporated areas as well as the rural areas.

C. John Gillies, NRCS Report.

NRCS Workload –

John reported that NRCS has had to change their approach to customer service. Due to limited staffing they are unable to help anyone who is not under a program with them. This is very limiting to the assistance that they can provide.

USGS Report –

The USGS report on groundwater/surface water in Whatcom County that Steve Cox wrote has been published. The study showed that ground water is not an issue. It is not the source of high

fecal bacteria counts in the small streams or Nooksack River during the summer at low flows. Sediments also didn't seem to be the problem. Fecal counts come from run-off. However after 65 days the fecal in sediments was 99.8% decreased. This would imply that the sediments are probably not from the winter.

T-sum 200 –

John said that we reached t-sum 200 early this year on February 1st. Last year it was closer to February 10 before reaching t-sum 200. John said that the lagoons were not too full considering all of the rain that we received. Manure can be applied taking into account the field conditions.

D. Methane Digester SRF Loan.

There has been no interest shown in the Whatcom Dairy Manure Methane State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan. Due to the amount of time passing since the loan was approved and the lack of interest the District decided to cancel the loan. The District has the option of reapplying for another loan should the interest arise in the future.

Rod Visser moved that the Whatcom Conservation District write a letter to the Department of Ecology canceling the Whatcom Dairy Manure Methane State Revolving Fund Loan (L0500003) releasing the funds. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The Board was interested in having Chris Clark give a report on manure methane digesters and how they work. There was a brief discussion regarding carbon credits and how they worked with a manure digester.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

06-6 Joyce Jimerson moved that the minutes of the January 12, 2004 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

06-7 Rod Visser moved to approve the Financial Report. Joyce Jimerson seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

06-8

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06-9 Rod Visser moved to approve the Maintenance Overrun Approval sheet recommending to the Conservation Commission new maintenance caps for the identified CREP projects. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

06-10 Dick Yoder moved that the District write a letter to Representative Kelli Linville and send George Boggs to Olympia to testify regarding public disclosure and the District's desire to have the same confidentiality as afforded by NRCS to its cooperators. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

06-11 Rod Visser moved that the Whatcom Conservation District write a letter to the Department of Ecology canceling the Whatcom Dairy Manure Methane State Revolving Fund Loan (L0500003) releasing the funds. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Rod Visser moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:25 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Dated: April 3, 2006

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____