

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2010**

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 September 8, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

Joe Heller	Terry Lenssen
Larry Davis	Dick Yoder

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director	Andrew Phay, IT Tech
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant	

III. Meeting Called to Order.

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

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Dick Yoder moved that the minutes of the August 11, 2010 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Financial Report.

The financial report was mailed to the Board with their draft minutes from the August meeting.

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

Dick Yoder moved to approve the Financial Report. Larry Davis 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:

Aug 2010 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>17986</u>	through	<u>18001</u>	and totaling	<u>9,920.18</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>18002</u>	through	<u>18016</u>	and totaling	<u>30,523.92</u>
September 2010					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>18017</u>	through	<u>18030</u>	and totaling	<u>30,062.35</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>18031</u>	through	<u>18042</u>	and totaling	<u>26,159.53</u>

Moved by Dick Yoder. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Action Items.

A. Large Format Printer.

At the August meeting the Board requested more information from Andrew Phay regarding the large format printer/plotter. Andrew explained that the current plotter was purchased 10 years ago. The plotter does not have enough memory to print maps or posters with the detail that is now available from aerial photos and mapping programs. It is very slow printing. He explained that it can take an hour or more to discover that the job cannot print. Then he has to take time to revise the project and try to print it again. Some jobs may not print at all. The current plotter is not supported by and the new operating system software. While it is possible to work around this, it is a very inefficient use of time.

Benefits of the proposed large format printer include better print resolution, ability to print on different paper types such as canvas and vinyl as well as photo paper, and it is much faster. Andrew explained that printing a poster for a field tour took him a day and half with error on the current plotter and it would have taken 2 hours with a new printer. Andrew informed the Board that a similar map would cost \$90 from Kinkos or Applied Digital. The large format printer would pay for itself with 70 print jobs. There will be an increased need to print large maps or posters for presentation with the new EPA grants. George stated that while he was reluctant to support any large purchases, this one would begin conserving district resources immediately. Andrew added that the estimate included printer ink.

Dick Yoder moved to authorize the purchase of a Large Format Printer not to exceed \$7,000. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

There was discussion about whether or not the District could charge a nominal fee for doing print jobs with partners. The Board directed George to look into whether or not current state law and/or rules prohibit the Board from charging a "fee" to at least recover the cost for such print jobs.

B. Approval of Contracts.

CREP Contracts –

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) is the administrative lead on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) joint program. The FSA County Committee approves all CREP plans. The current policy is that once FSA approves the Federal Contract and CREP plan, the contract is then brought to the Board for its approval. The Board approved the State Conservation Commission prescribed standard-language maintenance contract.

There was one CREP maintenance contract submitted for Board approval.

Terry Lenssen moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract for Roger & Arlene Bouchard (10-04-CS:10-03). Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Moderate Farm Plan Approval –

There was one moderate farm plan written and submitted for Board approval.

Larry Davis moved to approve the moderate farm plan for Juan Vicente Blueberry Farm. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

CREP PIP Loan (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program – Practice Incentive Payment) –

There was one amendment to an existing CREP PIP Loan. Julie Kramme is completing another practice. The paperwork will be amended to include all the completed practices.

Larry Davis moved to approve Amendment #1 to Julie Kramme's CREP PIP Loan in the amount of \$10,552.80. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Action Items.

Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) Dues –

The WACD dues are based on a spreadsheet showing annual receipts for various eligible grants and miscellaneous revenues. The WACD then puts each District into a tier and dues are based on those tiers. This year Whatcom is in Tier 2 and the dues have increased by \$400, from \$3,800 to \$4,200. There was Board discussion regarding the dues structure. Districts cannot vote at the annual convention unless dues are paid in full. George discussed the anticipated annual convention costs this year. They may increase substantially due to the venue and meal costs. The Board decided to postpone a decision until a later meeting.

National Association of Conservation District (NACD) Dues –

The National Association is also seeking dues. There was discussion regarding what the association does. The NACD helps lobby for NRCS and farm programs that benefit many of our cooperators. NACD asks that Districts pay 1% of their annual budget. Based on the WACD spreadsheet calculations that 1% would be \$525.31. The Board decided not to pay at this time. Dick expressed that conservation districts should be exempt from any dues, especially since agencies already take 10% off of the top of any grant funds allocated from the State.

WACD Northwest Area Meeting –

Whatcom Conservation District is the host this year. It will be held on October 13, 2010 at the Bellwether Hotel. Dawn was able to get a competitive rate, which ends up being the same registration fee as last year. There was discussion regarding attendance and resolutions. The Board asked about the status of resolutions that have been passed by the Association in the past. Dick would like the WACD to report back status of adopted resolutions.

The Board discussed resolutions to be proposed at the NW Area meeting. There are four resolutions to bring before the group.

Dick Yoder moved to:

- 1) Resubmit the 2008 resolutions brought from Whatcom Conservation District and adopted by the membership (the Capricorn CREP and Power to the People);**
- 2) Create a resolution directing WACD to suspend WACD dues until a long rang plan showing where the accumulated savings are to be dedicated and demonstrating the need for the additional funds is approved by the Association;**
- 3) Create a resolution directing the WACD Executive Director, President and Officers to limit lobbying to matters identified by resolutions approved by the whole Association at the preceding convention unless an emergency is determined and passed by vote of a super majority of Officers and Directors; and**
- 4) Create a resolution seeking the ability for Conservation Districts to charge a fee for services. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

VII. Other Business.

A. Supervisor Report.

Larry Davis –

Larry reviewed the Fruit Tree Planting Association. He will continue to review and draft a starting point analysis for Board discussion regarding whether a joint project is feasible. Joe asked about putting fruit trees in CREP buffers for bees. George explained that this is not permitted under the program. A biological opinion would be needed to do that.

Joe Heller –

Joe expressed that the upcoming elections will have an impact on local and national issues. He advised all to vote.

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

Alex was unable to attend the meeting, but sent a brief report to be shared with the Board.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) – NRCS Lynden Field Office has obligated one additional CSP contract for 2010 bringing the total to three.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) –

The ranking cutoff for the 2011 EQIP program has passed. The Lynden Field Office will be working on approximately 40 applications in 2011.

They have 88 practices remaining to complete this year or modify into the next year. They are making good progress on cleaning up the books by the end of the calendar year.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) –

Most of the WHIP practices that were scheduled for this year will be installed in the coming weeks. All practices are fish passage or fish habitat related.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Janitorial Service –

The current janitorial service quit as of the end of the month. We have looked into obtaining a new janitorial company through the Washington State General Administration (GA). The janitorial contract administrative fee is \$410. GA will do the bid process and determine the lowest bidder based up a point system weighted by three criteria. The lowest bidder will be selected and the District will be informed of the winning bid amount. They can then choose to accept or decline within reason. The Board discussed the rank weighing criteria and determined that Price should be 50%, References 25% and Quality Assurance 25% for filling out the bid request for proposals. George informed the Board that the process will take approximately six weeks at the earliest and an interim janitorial service will be needed.

Dick Yoder moved that the District use the Washington State General Administration janitorial contract approving the \$410 administrative fee to find a new janitorial service. He further authorized the Executive Director to hire an interim janitorial service based upon the lowest quote received. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Local Work Group –

Ray Ledgerwood is looking for a District interested in doing a Resource Concern Inventory. The project would be paid for through NRCS Technical Service Provider (TSP) funds. Kittitas County has done one. George recommended that if the TSP funds become available that the District hires Emily Hirsch to complete the Resource Concern Inventory.

Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Crop Inventory Project –

The District received a small \$1,500 grant through the WS Conservation Commission to do a Crop Inventory Project for WSDA. The funds have been exhausted and the inventory map information has been provided to WSDA. George reported that the crop inventory was done in the Swift Creek area and input digitally for future reference.

Swift Creek –

George reviewed the status of the Swift Creek problem. Whatcom County is concerned about liability and seems to be paralyzed. EPA continues to work on the problem. Flooding could be a problem again this year. Pictures show gravel and sediment buildup during past flooding which is causing more flooding issues as well as the magnesium impacting soil productivity.

Birch Bay Project –

Two requests for qualifications have been sent out through the EPA Birch Bay Project, one is for the watershed steward and the other is for a social marketing consultant. The Birch Bay Advisory Committee is being formed. George asked the Board for someone to be on the review committee for hiring the Watershed Steward. Larry volunteered.

Dairy Nutrient Management Act –

George informed the Board that he received a call from Dean Hellie, Stevens Conservation District, regarding the Washington Department of Ecology. Ecology is still going forward with their grazing manual. George and Nichole Embertson have attended two meetings regarding the issue. The Department of Ag (WSDA) is asking for the authority to issue a penalty if a producer doesn't follow provisions of his/her plan if this presents a significant potential for a discharge. Ecology expressed a desire to approve any rules made to implement the proposed statutory changes. It is questionable that there will be agreement between the WACD and Ecology regarding the use of NRCS practices and planning process or continuing the Memorandum of Understanding.

Aminopyralid –

There was a meeting at WSU Extension in Mt Vernon regarding Aminopyralid. It was attended by individuals from WA Department of Ag, Department of Ecology, Department of Health, NRCS, WSU Extension and Chris and Nichole. Samples have been taken and processed. The tentative results suggest that the problem is more than Aminopyralid residues.

Presentation –

George is giving a presentation on September 23, 2010 at the Building Industry Association (BIA) building regarding Natural Resources Marketing.

Board meetings –

The October Board meeting would normally be held on October 13, 2010. However, since we will be hosting the NW Area meeting the October Board meeting will be cancelled. There is a conflict for the November Board meeting. It was rescheduled to November 9, 2010.

Terry Lenssen moved to cancel the October Board meeting and change the November Board meeting to November 9, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

10-73 Dick Yoder moved that the minutes of the August 11, 2010 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

10-74 Dick Yoder moved to approve the Financial Report. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

10-75

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- 10-78 Larry Davis moved to approve the moderate farm plan for Juan Vicente Blueberry Farm. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.
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- 10-82 Terry Lenssen moved to cancel the October Board meeting and change the November Board meeting to November 9, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Terry Lenssen moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 p.m. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Dated: December 2, 2010

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant