

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Board of Supervisor Regular Meeting**

9:00 AM
June 3, 2020

Conference Room
6975 Hannegan Rd

MEETING SUMMARY

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Christianson called the meeting to order at 9:12 AM.

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT

Board Members

- X Heather Christianson, Chair
- X Suzzi Snyder, Vice-Chair
- X Larry Davis, Secretary/Treasurer

- X Alan Chapman

- X Valeri Wade

Administrative Staff & Others in Attendance

- X George Boggs, Executive Director
- X Dawn Bekenyi, District Clerk/Auditor
- Aneka Sweeney, Education Coordinator
- X Nichole Embertson, Science Coordinator
- X Alex Hall, NRCS
- X Jean Fike, WSCC

Roll call of attendees.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

OPEN SESSION (In person or written)

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED BY DAVIS AND SECONDED BY SNYDAR TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS. MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

1. Request approval of Meeting Summaries for April 27, 2020 meetings of the Board.
2. Request approval of Financial Reports for April 2020.

REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA

OTHER ITEMS

1. Approve CIG Grant Agreement.

Nichole and the research team was awarded funding from NRCS of a CIG grant for a Sub irrigation project. There was a change in proposed match as noted in the application/contract due to a change in Conservation District staffing. Nichole spoke with NRCS and a 10% difference in the contract proposal is okay to make this variance without needing a new contract. The project is \$1 dollar for \$1 match. Nichole is seeking Board approval to sign the agreement.

Minutes approved as submitted at the June 22, 2020 Board meeting.

The project timeline and delays caused by COVID 19 were discussed. Nichole explained that NRCS is aware of the delays and probable extension request to all the projects.

Nichole outlined the project proposal. The project goal is to hold water in the soils through subsurface tiles, etc. Control the water flow, see how this will affect the irrigation needs.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAPMAN AND SECONDED BY WADE TO APPROVE AND AUTHORIZE GEORGE BOGGS TO SIGN THE CIG CONTRACT WITH NRCS FOR THE IRRIGATION PROJECT. SECONDED BY DAVIS. MOTION PASSED. (5-0).

2. FY2020 Budget Performance (Q1-Q3).

Not available at this meeting due to technical difficulties experienced by staff. It will be presented at the June 22 meeting.

3. Draft FY21 Annual Plan of Work.

George reviewed the Annual Plan of Work, included new and continuing programs. There are some changes due to the limited interaction with landowners due to current restrictions. He presented the draft plan and asked for Board provide comments to incorporate for approval at the next Board meeting. The Board will provide any comments to George by June 10 to incorporate into draft plan for June 22 Board meeting. Details on how to track the comments and proposed changes were discussed.

4. Alex Hall, NRCS presentation.

Alex gave a presentation. He discussed NRCS workload. There has been limited impact due to COVID 19 closures of office, since most of the contracting work was completed prior to the closures. NRCS has a reopening plan, but not set for Lynden Field Office yet. Local office is still physically closed.

Alex reported on a couple of staff additions in the area.

5. FY 2021 Budget Introduction.

George gave a presentation on the FY 2021 budget. Budget proposed a new roof, which is leaking. George addressed the current and proposed Conservation Commission budget for the fiscal year. Cost-share technical assistance is a key to balancing budget.

George discussed the potential variables due to funding opportunities and potential shortfalls passed through by our funding agencies. The draft budget shows current budget funding proposed and current staffing levels.

6. 2020 WACD NW Area Meeting – Our Turn to Host.

We are in line to host the next NW Area meeting. WACD annual conference will be virtual this year. It is up to the local areas to have virtual or in person meetings.

There was discussion regarding the pros and cons of having a virtual or physical meeting. It was decided to send out a survey to the area Conservation Districts to see if they have a preference for how to meet; all virtual meeting, only in person meeting, or a combination of in person with a virtual option, and what they wish the meeting outcomes to be.

Minutes approved as submitted at the June 22, 2020 Board meeting.

The Board is also seeking proposed resolutions and information from partners in advance of the October meeting to provide to the Area Conservation Districts.

7. Annual Financial Report – Calendar Year.

Dawn shared with Board the financial report that was filed with the WSAO. They concurred with the information presented.

8. Executive Director’s Report.

Staff are doing well. George published some return to work protocols. There is still a big question about when the Conservation District office will be open to the public again and staff will return to the office.

At this time, the Conservation District is able to provide the poultry processing and manure spreading equipment safely. Protocols are in place to utilize those tools. Whatcom County is agreeable with our protocols for the Lake Whatcom HIP program, so activities with that program are proceeding along.

Staff are productive. There are some challenges with staff that have children and their commitments because of that.

Larry Davis –

Larry posted his report. Larry sent out requests for presentations about the Whatcom Conservation District. Sumas City Council has scheduled a presentation about for their July meeting. Larry contacted 54 groups and another 53 individuals about presenting about the Conservation District.

Ag Advisory Committee – Larry’s tenure on the Ag Advisory Committee ends in January 2021. He is willing to stay on until his term as WCD Board Supervisor ends in May 2021. However, the Ag Advisory Committee will need to have a new representative after Larry’s Supervisor term ends.

Aneka Sweeney –

Aneka asked Larry to provide his rate/charge survey communication to the other Supervisors to share. The CD has received 10 more responses to the survey. There are only 90 responses at this point.

Alan Chapman –

Alan posted his report. He is interested in goals and finding the ways to fulfill the goals. Not how to keep programs going.

There was discussion regarding state funding concerns and potential budget shortfalls.

The WAC modification for the election process is included in his report.

Suzzi asked Aneka to pin the survey to the top of the District’s Facebook page.

Alan – What our Conservation District would like to get from the WACD –

Alan asked for Board input on what we would like the association to do for us. A draft strategic plan was done by Tom Salzer and provided to the WACD board members.

Minutes approved as submitted at the June 22, 2020 Board meeting.

WCD Board asked for it to be sent out to the members for review. Alan asked for comments on the proposed strategic plan be provided to him.

Jean Fike, WSCC update –

Jean reported on the budget cut requirements for FY21 to the Washington State Conservation Commission from the state and any potential impacts to Conservation Districts.

She also provided highlights from the WSCC meeting.

- 6 months of operating budget allocations were proposed for Conservation Districts.
- Elections certified and appointments were made.
- Budget surveys were reviewed.
- Elections issue still proceeding. More information to come.

INTRODUCTION ITEMS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS AND BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

None.

Record of Board Actions.

20-17 IT WAS MOVED BY DAVIS AND SECONDED BY SNYDAR TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS. MOTION CARRIED (5-0).

1. Request approval of Meeting Summaries for April 27, 2020 meetings of the Board.
2. Request approval of Financial Reports for April 2020.

20-18 IT WAS MOVED BY CHAPMAN AND SECONDED BY WADE TO APPROVE AND AUTHORIZE GEORGE BOGGS TO SIGN THE CIG CONTRACT WITH NRCS FOR THE IRRIGATION PROJECT. SECONDED BY DAVIS. MOTION PASSED. (5-0).

Adjournment.

**IT WAS MOVED BY CHAPMAN. SECONDED BY DAVIS:
to adjourn the meeting at 11:22 am.
MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

There being no further business before the meeting, adjourned the meeting at 11:22 a.m.

Dawn Bekenyi, District Auditor