

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

9:00 AM
March 22, 2021

District Office – virtual meeting
6975 Hannegan Rd

MEETING SUMMARY

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Christianson called the meeting to order at 9:00 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
- X Frank Corey, Riparian Habitat Coordinator
- X Aneka Sweeney, Outreach Ed
- X Jean Fike, WSCC
- X Mike Bozzo

Roll call of attendees.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

OPEN SESSION (In person or written)

1. Complaint - Election.

George informed the board that even given the outreach efforts that were made, we had a complaint about not receiving a ballot. Bill Eller stated that if there was a disability that prevented the person from getting a ballot, we can provide one after the deadline. The gentleman asked for a ballot citing a disability. Dawn hand delivered a ballot for him to vote.

Alan provided information on Zoom election meeting. George reviewed concerns about how to conduct an election and getting the ballots out without making them easy to gather ballots.

2. Request for Anti-fracking Support.

Valeri Wade received a letter requesting support for banning fracking. The Washington state legislature banned fracking for natural gas and oil. There could be other reasons for fracking that are not addressed by the Washington State Legislature's ban.

George explained that this matter was not put as a business item for action at this meeting. A special meeting would need to be had to address if the matter is timely.

Larry is comfortable with the ban that Washington state has put on it. No further action needed.

There was discussion regarding if and/or how a Supervisor could provide input outside of the Conservation District on matters. George stated that as an individual you can

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state your views, but to represent yourself as a Supervisor of the Conservation District on a policy matter that has not been adopted by the Conservation District board would not be a good idea. As long as you state that the views are yours alone, not the Conservation District's you can provide input on the issue.

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 Summary for February 22, 2021 meetings of the Board.
2. Certification of Farm Plan for Heritage Dairy LLC.
3. Certification Farm Plan for Riverside Dairy LLC

George provided progress on the financials. We have set up the invoicing and bank reconciliation. We have one final issue to iron out. We should be able to generate reports after that.

REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA

OTHER ITEMS

1. Puget Sound Caucus Letters of Support.

Frank Corey explained that we received a letter from Pierce Conservation District to their congressional representative. They are seeking support from all the other Conservation Districts in the Puget Sound Caucus. Alan was concerned about signing a letter that has not been written yet. George suggested that the Board provide some items that would be acceptable to approve for the Chair's signature upon completion of the letters of support.

Valeri is supporting of anything that will provide us with additional funding. The Board can address the deliverables when a contract comes forward.

Alan is supportive of what Pierce County would like, but not necessarily for Whatcom county.

Wade moved to provide Whatcom Conservation District support of Pierce Conservation District's letter to legislators. Seconded by Davis. Motion carried. (4-0-1) (Alan abstained.)

2. Annual Plan of Work.

Frank provided input on the Annual Plan of Work. It is very similar to last year's Plan of Work with some additional Outreach Efforts.

Aneka provided further information on the draft plan. Our work with Wildfire Risk Reduction and the Domestic Water Use program has been expanded. Additional funding has been obtained to address both of those programs.

Budget is loose. Based upon what grants we have and what we expect to receive.

Staff expressed that the Annual Plan of Work format is not the best. It is provided by the Washington State Conservation Commission as a template to use. Jean mentioned that

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they just need the information, not the actual template. Frank recommends that all District's provide the same format to make it easier for the Conservation Commission. It is not priority by the Conservation Commission to update this template anytime soon.

Valeri would like to have marine waste issues addressed. Aneka reported on how the Whatcom County's PIC program is addressing this issue.

Landowners to participation in the riparian efforts were discussed. CREP program works by word of mouth. It is helpful to have local landowners advocating for the program and riparian improvement. The Conservation District send out direct mailers, etc. It is better to have a person provide that information to them. Voice positive participation in programs encourages further participation.

Supervisors were encouraged to provide input on the Annual Plan of Work to Aneka and Frank. Feedback is needed by April 9 for April Board meeting. Aneka requested notes or comments on document or bullet points for consideration.

3. Board Policies.

The Board has reviewed Spokane policies as a model for District policies. It has been a while since it was reviewed and addressed.

Larry Davis stated that the Whatcom Conservation District Employee Manual is at least 20 years old. It should be revised and updated.

Heather would like to focus on the Board policies in the draft model from Spokane rather than the Employee manual. The Board should address the Board policies manual first.

Valeri has been on the board for a couple of years. It would be helpful to have a refresher from the Commission for new Supervisors. She would like to know how to make a motion. It takes a while to understand the Board and agency issues. Get the Board to work together.

Valeri found it very helpful to talk with the George about things. He provided a lot of insight and information.

Executive Director and Supervisor Reports.

4. Jean Fike, WSCC.

Not sure what Phase 3 means to Conservation Districts. WSCC will provide input as word comes out.

Budget updates were shared. There are federal funds available. Need to see how the federal funds will be accessible to local Districts. Jean will review with George.

There may be room to increase the budget ask with new federal relief funds.

5. Executive Director Work Plan.

Phase 3 - George is moving his office into the District office on Monday. George reviewed that we are shifted to working at home. We will stay that way at this time. He is looking to the Team Leaders on staffing and working from home options. Make use of capacity to work at home and be productive.

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Bank of America signatures –

There was discussion about updating the bank signature cards. In July the Board will need to assign officers and get new bank card signatures.

Syndar moved to authorize George, Larry and Heather to be signatories to Bank of America account pending upcoming changes in July. Seconded by Chapman. Motion carried.

George reviewed his leave and work load through the end of June.

George has been in connection with Atuhl from the PUD who is working on a Water Efficiencies study. John Culp said that he could be available to work with him.

6. Board Reports.

Larry Davis - Larry provided a Board report.

Larry will provide a presentation on March 30, 2021 to the rotary group.

Alan Chapman - Alan provided an update from WACD. Alternate meetings and actions during meetings.

An Elections committee has been formed. DEI committee is forming. Not met yet. The issue with both Elections and DEI is how to get something that works statewide for all Conservation Districts.

Budget update.

Alan is participating in WID meetings and the ongoing process in water issues.

7. Executive Director Search.

The search committee left the search open for another month. No strong candidates at this point. The committee is wondering if their message was too dry in seeking candidates. The search committee would like to find a visionary. This is a good place to work. The committee is seeking help to promote the position to get more candidates that provide enthusiasm and inspiration to the position.

Committee is scheduled to meet on April 8 to review candidates received at that point. They would like to have some candidates at the April meeting for the Board to review.

Larry mentioned that the applications received are not what the Conservation District committee is looking for so far.

King is searching for their Executive Director. Pierce CD is hiring a firm to hire one for them in September. Pierce is spending \$50,000 to a firm to hire someone for them.

It is not an ideal time to be hiring people. The Search Committee wants to know what amount of funds would like to spend to hire someone. \$500 or \$1,000. A dollar limit that the Board would like to spend was discussed. Aneka mentioned that Indeed is an option that they have used. But there are a bunch of unqualified people that have applied. \$500 is helpful. A cap of \$1,000 would help them to look at different options.

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Chapman moved to allocate up to \$1,000 to be used to advertise for candidates for the District Manager/Executive Director. Seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

8. Board Reports

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

Alex provided a written report.

INTRODUCTION ITEMS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS AND BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

None.

Record of Board Actions.

21-08 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 Summary for February 22, 2021 meetings of the Board.
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21-09 Wade moved to provide Whatcom Conservation District support of Pierce Conservation District's letter to legislators. Seconded by Davis. Motion carried. (4-0-1) (Alan abstained.)

21-10 Syndar moved to authorize George, Larry and Heather to be signatories to Bank of America account pending upcoming changes in July. Seconded by Chapman. Motion carried.

21-11 Chapman moved to allocate up to \$1,000 to be used to advertise for candidates for the District Manager/Executive Director. Seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

Adjournment.

**IT WAS MOVED BY CHAPMAN. SECONDED BY WADE:
to adjourn the meeting at 10:48 am.
MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

There being no further business before the meeting, adjourned the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Dawn Bekenyi, District Auditor