

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

9:00 AM  
February 22, 2021

District Office – virtual meeting  
6975 Hannegan Rd

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Christianson called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM.

**BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT**

*Board Members*

*Administrative Staff & Others in Attendance*

- X Heather Christianson, Chair
- Suzzi Snyder, Vice-Chair
- X Larry Davis, Secretary/Treasurer
  
- X Alan Chapman
- X Valeri Wade

- X George Boggs, Executive Director
- X Dawn Bekenyi, District Clerk/Auditor
- X Frank Corey, Riparian Habitat Coordinator
  
- X Alex Hall, NRCS

Roll call of attendees.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

**OPEN SESSION (In person or written)**

1. Request from WRIA 1 Watershed Management Board, Becky Peterson. Whatcom County sent the Board a request to selection their Board representative for the WRIA 1 committee. Alan Chapman has participated in the past in a different capacity. Alan agreed to be the Whatcom Conservation District’s Board representative on this committee.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**IT WAS MOVED BY CHAPMAN AND SECONDED BY WADE TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS. MOTION CARRIED (4-0).**

1. Request approval of Meeting Summary for December 28, 2020 and January 25, 2021 meetings of the Board.
2. Certification of Farm Plan for Valley Brothers LLC.
3. Approve Farm Plan for Valley Brothers LLC
4. O’Connor Step Increase approval.
5. Approve RCPP Partner Agreement with NSEA for 2021 fish passage projects in the amount of \$30,000.

George gave an update on the accounting software upgrade. There have been some challenges, which required a change to a desktop version of Quick Books. George informed the Board of some of the issues that he encountered. Larry and Alan will meet with George to discuss financial reports that they would like to see from the new software.

**REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA**

Minutes approved as presented at the March 22, 2021 Board meeting.

**OTHER ITEMS****1. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Alex Hall.**

Alex gave a report on workload at the local NRCS office. There are 15 applications for EQIP this sign up. The deadline for ranking is this Friday. Funding selection is early March. There may be a second sign up later if funds are remaining to allocate.

**2. Native Plant Sale Update.**

Frank gave an update on the Plant Sale. All sales are on-line only this year. Orders are good so far. NSEA and Whatcom County are providing their crews to assist us to packing orders. The District will hire NSEA crew to load orders on the weekend. Plant Sale order pick up will be at NSEA's office, which will facilitate the pickup process.

**3. Plant Sale Letter of Agreement between NSEA and WCD.**

The Board reviewed and approved the Plant Sale Letter of Agreement between NSEA and WCD for George's signature.

**It was moved by Davis to authorize Executive Director to sign the Plant Sale Letter of Agreement between NSEA and WCD. Chapman seconded. The motion passed.**

**4. WCD City of Bellingham Wildfire Risk Reduction ILA.**

This is a small contract to work with lands adjacent areas impacted by wildfire risk.

**It was moved by Davis to approve and authorize chair to sign an Inter Local Agreement between the City of Bellingham and WCD for support of Lake Whatcom Wildfire Risk Reduction project in the amount of \$8,000. Wade seconded. The motion passed.**

**5. Election Update.**

Dawn advised the Board that the Whatcom County Elections Office declined to count Supervisor Election ballots for the conservation district this year due to COVID. Dawn reviewed a proposed process of voter verification and ballot opening and counting. The Board discussed Supervisor election counting process.

It was decided by the Board to start election ballot counting process on Thursday, March 25.

Election Observers. The Board does not want in-person observers, due to COVID restrictions. Board requested that a "meeting" be set up to stream the entire election ballot processing, including voter verification for those that wish to observe the process. Notification will be posted on the Conservation District website with link to a meeting for observation of the entire process and a form to request that notification via email be sent with a 15-minute notice when the ballot opening and count begins.

**6. Executive Director Search.**

Heather discussed the Executive Director search process. The District has received some candidate applications. The Selection Committee will review and select candidates to be brought before the Board. Committee will also review references.

There was discussion regarding the Committee, candidates and what could be discussed in Executive Session or has to be in a Public Meeting. Executive Session

Minutes approved as presented at the March 22, 2021 Board meeting.

allowed for discussion of candidate's qualifications. Any action on candidates would need to be in open session.

The Committee is reviewing the rubric on Wednesday for candidate selection. Board members not on the Committee cannot provide comments on rubric since that would be a public meeting. Committee can share rubric, application materials and list of candidates with Board. But cannot seek feedback from those not on the committee.

A Special meeting for the hiring process could be set up. Larry Davis reviewed his concerns about a hiring process in a public meeting prior to the candidate selection for interview.

## **Executive Director and Supervisor Reports.**

### **7. Executive Director's Work Plan.**

George discussed how many work days and leave that he has available until June 30. He also reviewed his priority of workload with that remaining time. He reviewed status on activities that need to be completed that have been delegated, such as the Long Range Plan and FY2022 Budget.

### **8. Shellfish Initiative.**

Alan Chapman discussed the Puget Sound Partnership funds a lot of projects for Shellfish Initiative in Whatcom County. The Conservation District has received a little funding through this process.

Alan would like the District to look into where it can assist in achieving the best objective in the Shellfish process and potentially obtain more funding. The District should be aware and offer suggested ways to improve the process.

### **9. Board Reports.**

Alan – WACD had two committees forming. Election committee and Diveristy Equality and Inclusion (DEI) committee. WACD is seeking input for committee participation.

Conservation Districts will meet with legislators via virtual meetings this year. It was suggested to keep meetings short and to the point. About 15 minutes long. Discuss the budget request of Conservation Commission and seek support for Engineering funding for Dairy industry in Whatcom County.

Alan reported on his attendance of NACD annual meeting.

Larry – Larry gave an update on his activities and his time with NACD on several committees.

Valeri – Valeri asked about why George came to work for the Conservation District. George gave his background in farming and law. He explained how he came to the District.

There was discussion of what qualifications someone needs to be District Manager. George expressed that the Conservation District has good staff that will keep the District going. We do a lot with limited resources.

Minutes approved as presented at the March 22, 2021 Board meeting.

**INTRODUCTION ITEMS**

None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS AND BOARD MEMBER UPDATES**

None.

**Record of Board Actions.**

**21-05 IT WAS MOVED BY CHAPMAN AND SECONDED BY WADE TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS. MOTION CARRIED (4-0).**

1. Request approval of Meeting Summary for December 28, 2020 and January 25, 2021 meetings of the Board.
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5. Approve RCPP Partner Agreement with NSEA for 2021 fish passage projects in the amount of \$30,000.

**21-06 It was moved by Davis to authorize Executive Director to sign the Plant Sale Letter of Agreement between NSEA and WCD. Chapman seconded. The motion passed.**

**21-07 It was moved by Davis to approve and authorize chair to sign an Inter Local Agreement between the City of Bellingham and WCD for support of Lake Whatcom Wildfire Risk Reduction project in the amount of \$8,000. Wade seconded. The motion passed.**

**Adjournment.**

**IT WAS MOVED BY DAVIS. SECONDED BY WADE:  
to adjourn the meeting at 11:16 am.  
MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**There being no further business before the meeting, adjourned the meeting at 11:16 a.m.**

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Dawn Bekenyi, District Auditor