



Walla Walla County Conservation District
September 2025 Board Meeting

Date: September 8, 2025

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: In person

Presiding Officer: Jim Kent, Chair

Supervisors Present: Don Schwerin, Matt Williams, Rhonda Gothberg

Supervisors absent: Jesse McCaw

Other Agencies: Bryce Krueger, NRCS; Lindsey Williams, WWCC; Ceana Pacheco, WWCC; Tami Stubbs, SCC; Allisa Carlson, SCC

Also present: Annie Byerley, Jenny Freer, Grace Cooper, Joanna Cowles-Cleveland, Jake Mantela, Alison Crowley

Members of the Public: None

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Jim Kent.

Kent invited the public to comment. There were none.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the July 14th board meeting minutes. **Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve the July 14 board minutes as presented, no discussion, motion passed.**

Minutes: The Board reviewed the July 24th special board meeting minutes. **Motion by Matt Williams and second by Don Schwerin to approve the July 24 special board minutes as presented, no discussion, motion passed.**

Minutes: The Board reviewed the July 28th special board meeting minutes. **Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve the July 28 special board minutes as presented, no discussion, motion passed.**

Financial Reports: The board reviewed the July Financial Reports. **Motion by Matt Williams and second by Don Schwerin to pay the bills, motion passed.**

Financial Reports: The board reviewed the August Financial Reports. **Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to pay the bills, motion passed.**

As of this date September 8th 2025 the Board reviewed the July financial reports with no further discussion: Checks 15229 to 15245 and 11 EFTs, revenues \$369,914.17 and expenses \$105,653.50; total of bank accounts \$475,723.12.

(Total Matches Springbrook)

As of this date September 8th 2025 the Board reviewed the August financial reports with no further discussion: Checks 15246 to 15250 and 9 EFTs, revenues \$54,096.37 and expenses \$99,267.93; total of bank accounts \$430,551.56.

(Total Matches Springbrook)

New Business:

- 1. Request to Approve VSP Operating Budget:** Freer shared that the operating budget that was sent to Walla Walla County needs to be amended and approved. A display was made indicating that \$130k needs to be moved from Cost Share/DIP to Salaries and Benefits.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve the 2025-2027 VSP operating budget, as presented: motion passed.

- 2. Resolution to set the Annual Meeting and Election Date:** Byerley shared a list of available dates at Walla Walla Community Colleges Water and Environmental Center and asked the board to select a date for our Annual Meeting and Election date so we can get speakers confirmed. Also to note, Jesse McCaw is up for reelection.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Rhonda Gothberg to approve the date of January 21, 2026 at the Water and Environmental Center at Walla Walla Community College, as presented: motion passed.

- 3. Request to Approve New Applications:**

- a. Heritage Gardens TA funds: Cowles-Cleveland** shared that a request for 10k in technical assistance would benefit the current list of customers wanting to participate in the Heritage Garden program.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Rhonda Gothberg to approve applying for funds through the SCC's irrigation and efficiencies program, as presented: motion passed.

- b. South Fork Russell Creek burn: Mantela** shared that the WWCCD would like to pursue funds to mulch/hydroseed roughly 40 acres up Russell Creek prior to the fall rains. Project estimate is 60k to 150k.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve applying for funds for the South Fork Russell Creek Burn, as presented: motion passed.

- c. Riparian Plant Propagation: Mantela** shared that WWCCD would like to pursue funds to partner with the WA State Penitentiary to grow out woody stems for future riparian projects. Project estimate 30k-50k.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Don Schwerin to approve applying for funds for Riparian Plant Propagation, as presented: motion passed.

- d. Caldwell Creek Maintenance Site #2: Mantela** requested to apply for funds for maintenance on a previous riparian project. This would include removal of an old fence, install high-tensile power fence, weed control, and plant drought resistant trees and shrubs.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Rhonda Gothberg to approve applying for funds for Caldwell Creek maintenance on Site #2, as presented: motion passed.

- e. Dry Creek Maintenance-RGP for prior VSP project- Cooper** shared that a previous VSP project needs some maintenance and is making a request to apply for funds through the Riparian Grant Program to replant, weed, and water. Request is for \$24,400.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Rhonda Gothberg to approve applying for funds through RGP for a prior VSP project, as presented: motion passed.

- f. Dry Creek irrigation through VSP capital funding round 2- Cooper** is requesting to apply for funds through VSP's Capital funding for VFD upgrades, pump station replacement, and Flow meters for one landowner with three different sites. This would be a cost share program through VSP.

Motion by Rhonda Gothberg and second by Don Schwerin to approve applying for the Dry Creek project through round 2 of VSP Capital funds, as presented: motion passed.

- g. Cottonwood Creek Engineering Funds- Cowles-Cleveland** shared that Cottonwood Creek needs help securing an engineer for a failed berm to be replaced. These funds would be requested through the engineering cluster funds from the South East Area engineering.

Motion by Rhonda Gothberg and second by Matt Williams to approve applying for funds for engineering on Cottonwood Creek, as presented: motion passed.

- h. Education and Outreach grants- Crowley** shared that there are three grant opportunities for education and outreach. Wildhorse foundation request is for \$15,490, Montana Dakota Utilities request for \$8,600, and Cascade Natural Gas for \$2,500.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve applying for outreach and education through the three grants (Wildhorse, Cascade Natural Gas, & MDU), as presented: motion passed.

4. Request to Approve Awarded Projects:

- a. **Touchet River Mile 42- Office of Columbia River (through the Department of Ecology).** \$260,000 was awarded for Touchet River Mile 42 for construction funds.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve the award from OCR for Touchet River Mile 42, as presented: motion passed.

- b. **Heritage Garden- Office of Columbia River (through the Department of Ecology).** This award is for TA to work on Heritage Gardens with local landowners.

Motion by Rhonda Gothberg and second by Matt Williams to approve the awarding of funds from OCR for Heritage Garden Technical Assistance, as presented: motion passed.

- c. **Stiller Pond- Office of Columbia River (through the Department of Ecology).** \$7,000 was awarded for technical assistance and the paying of landowner electrical bill and water sample testing to recharge the shallow aquifer.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve the award from OCR for Stiller Pond, as presented: motion passed.

- d. **Two Irrigation Efficiencies projects through the SCC-** One pivot is \$280,500 and the second pivot is \$85,850. These two projects are cost share projects where the landowner pays 15% and the above numbers are our portion.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Rhonda Gothberg to approve the award from SCC for the two pivots, as presented: motion passed.

- e. **SCC awarded projects for RGP, SFF, and CTD-** Freer shared that RGP was awarded \$709,750 for riparian and maintenance projects. Sustainable Farms and Fields were awarded \$14,788 for Dew Drop Drill maintenance and outreach. Underwood Conservation District awarded \$1,450 through their CTD program so Joanna Cowles-Cleveland could teach at the Riparian seminar in Pullman WA.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Rhonda Gothberg to approve the three awards funded through the SCC, as presented: motion passed.

- f. **Wheat Week (from Franklin Conservation District)-** \$8k was awarded for Wheat Week in WWPS.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Don Schwerin to approve the award from Franklin CD for Wheat Week, as presented: motion passed.

- g. Bureau of Reclamation- Gardena Farms Irrigation-** \$313,182 was awarded from Bureau of Reclamation.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve the award from BOR for Gardena Farms Irrigation, as presented: motion passed.

- h. VSP Supplemental Capital Funds plus projects-** \$40k was awarded for VSP to culminate projects from the capital funds. Two projects were approved for funding for fish screens and meters in the amount of \$16,256.25.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Rhonda Gothberg to approve the award from VSP's Capital funds, as presented: motion passed.

- 5. Request to Remove Renee M. Hadley "from" and add Annie Byerley "to" the Banner Bank Certificate of Deposit Account-** Freer explained that with the change of District Managers a motion needs to be approved to remove Renee's name from the account and add Annie's name to the account. Jenny Freer, Annie Byerley, and Jim Kent will all need to go to Banner Bank and signed the authorized signatory form.

Motion by Matt Williams and second by Rhonda Gothberg to approve the removal of Renee M. Hadley and add Annie Byerley to the Banner Bank account, as presented: motion passed.

- 6. Request to Cancel Check #15194, Issue a stop payment, and reissue check-** Freer shared that check #15194 written to AMP Insights in May has never been received and needs to be reissued.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Matt Williams to approve the cancelation and stop payment along with reissuing the AMP Insights from May, as presented: motion passed.

- 7. Discussion on October board meeting date due to falling on a Holiday-** Byerley shared that the October board meeting falls on a Holiday and asked the board if they would prefer to keep or move the date. After discussion the board asked to have a Special Meeting on Wednesday October 15th.

8. Partner Updates:

- a. NRCS: Krueger** shared that NRCS has finished CRP contracts and funding has been expended. CSP payments will be late October and early November.
- b. SCC: Carlson** shared that supplemental budget requests that are being made now; Forest Health ask is \$2.5 mil, Technical assistance funding request is \$2.25 mil, and IT and Data upgrades request is for \$3.2 mil. Tami Stubbs is the new South East Regional Manager.
- c. NRCS: Krueger** shared that there is a hiring freeze at this moment but our local office has three staff members. New sign-ups for programs will begin late fall.

- d. **WWCC: Williams** shared that the workforce is over enrolled and Pacheco is settling in to the new role.

Program Updates:

- A.) **District Operations: Byerley** shared a copy of the district operations report which summarizes the above grant applications along with upcoming trainings and partner meetings.
- B.) **Review of RCW 89.210 and 89.220: Freer** reminded the board of the annual review of RCW 89.210 and 89.220 and provided a copy of the RCWs to the board for their review.

The board would like to recognize Renee Hadley for her service that excelled the district:

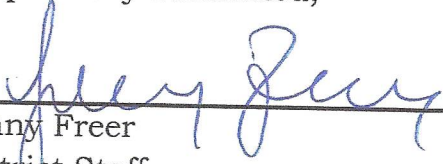
Over the past 9.5 years, Renee Hadley, our District Manager, has been an invaluable member of the Walla Walla County Conservation District team, bringing passion, expertise, and dedication to every project she touched. Her leadership and collaborative spirit have strengthened community partnerships, advanced conservation initiatives, and left a lasting impact on local natural resource stewardship. Renee's contributions have helped the district grow in both reach and effectiveness, and her commitment to the mission of conservation has been an inspiration to colleagues and partners alike. We are deeply grateful for her hard work and wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

Motion by Matt Williams and Second by Rhonda Gothberg to adopt the recognition in WWCCD's newsletter for Renee Hadleys service, as presented: motion passed.

Misc. Discussion and Public Comments:

Meeting adjourned without a formal motion at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Jenny Freer
District Staff


Board member

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

WWCCD September 8, 2025 Board Meeting

Motions:

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| To approve the July 14 th meeting minutes as written | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed |
| To approve the July 24 th Special meeting minutes as written | Motion: Williams
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve the July 28 th Special meeting minutes as written | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed |
| To review the July Financial Reports and approve paying the bills, as presented | Motion: Williams
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To review the August Financial Reports and approve paying the bills, as presented | Motion: Williams
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve the VSP operating budget, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed |
| Resolution to set the election date and annual meeting for January 21, 2026 at the Water and environmental Center, as presented | Motion: Williams
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funds through OCR for Heritage Gardens, as presented | Motion: Williams
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed |
| To approve seeking and applying for funds for South Fork Russell Creek Burn, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed |
| To approve seeking and applying for funds for Riparian Plant Propagation, as presented | Motion: Williams
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funds through SCC-RGP for Caldwell Creek Maintenance site #2, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funds through SCC-RGP for previous VSP project, as presented | Motion: Williams
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funding through VSP capital for Dry Creek Irrigation, as presented | Motion: Gothberg
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for engineering funds through SE Area for Cottonwood Creek, as presented | Motion: Gothberg
Second: Williams
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for three outreach and education grants, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed |

WWCCD September 8, 2025 Board Meeting

To approve the award from OCR for Touchet River Mile 42 Construction, as presented

Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed

To approve the award from OCR for Heritage Garden, as presented

Motion: Gothberg
Second: Williams
Motion passed

To approve the award from OCR for Stiller Pond, as presented

Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed

To approve the award from SCC-Irrigation Efficiencies for Cottonwood pivot/wiper and Braden wiper, as presented

Motion: Williams
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed

To approve SCC awards for RGP, SFF, CTD, as presented

Motion: Williams
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed

To approve the award of Wheat Week through Franklin CD, as presented

Motion: Williams
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed

To approve the award from Bureau of Reclamation for Gardena Farms, as presented

Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed

To approve the award from VSP capital funds for amendment #1 and Riley Project, as presented

Motion: Williams
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed

To approve removal and adding of district managers to Banner Bank account, as presented

Motion: Williams
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed

To approve a stop order payment on check #15194 that was lost and reissue, as presented

Motion: Schwerin
Second: Williams
Motion passed

To approve recognition of Renee Hadleys service as district manager, as presented

Motion: Williams
Second: Gothberg
Motion passed