

# Walla Walla County Conservation

## District Special Meeting

Date: August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017      Time: 7:30 a.m.      Place: District Conference Room

**Presiding Officer:** Ed Chvatal

**Supervisors Present:** Jim Kent, Pat McConnell (via phone), Todd Kimball and Jeff Schulke

**Supervisors Absent:** Associate Mike Hagerman

**Also present:** Renee Hadley (via phone), Joanna Cowles, and Audrey Ahmann.

***The meeting was called to order at 7:30 by Chairman Ed Chvatal.***

### **Topic: Budget situation due to state capital budget impasse:**

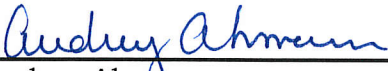
1. **Effect of budget impasse:** Ahmann explained handouts showing the CREP deficit and other projects now on hold, notably the McCaw and other projects that are either partially or fully funded by the non-shellfish grants.
2. **Current standoff:** McConnell has been in touch with Rep. Terry Nealy who was not optimistic about the Legislature reaching a solution. Sen. Walsh didn't return calls in time for this meeting. Hadley added she has also heard pessimism as regards possible legislative action before the January special session.
3. **Effect on WWCCD:** Hadley explained that based on grant sources still available, the district may need to reduce hours starting in November. Ahmann reminded the board that because CREP is primarily a federal FSA/NRCS program, while the state funds to administer our program are reduced, the federal program continues, so the reduced funds don't necessarily translate into a reduced workload.
4. **Suggestions, direction:**
  - a. The board discussed furloughs, possibly beginning in November. The board agreed that the 450 stipend should NOT be reduced during a furlough; Ahmann will confirm this can be done by motion as opposed to amending the personnel manual.
  - b. The board wants to maintain staff, but also directed Hadley and Ahmann to work on budgeting options without depleting the district's cash reserves.
  - c. Other funding sources: Hadley is still hoping for a CRP task order. This is being held up due to uncertainty over the Federal Farm Bill and whether a new one will allow reenrollments.
  - d. Direction: The board would like Hadley and Ahmann to develop a clear strategy going forward, one that allows us to meet our deliverables and keep our staff intact, making sure we don't reduce hours to the point that deliverables aren't met or dip into reserves. They would like Hadley to consider alternatives to reduction in hours to avoid disheartening staff. The board also asked for specific information on any employee's personal plans that affect the budget.

**Misc. Discussion and Public Comments:**

There were no public comments.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 without a formal motion.**

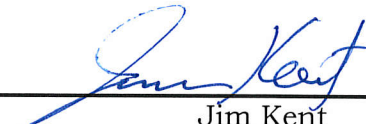
Respectfully submitted



Audrey Ahmann  
Assistant Manager, Finance



Ed Chvatal,  
Chairman



Jim Kent  
Member

Next meeting: September 11, 2017