



Walla Walla County VSP Work Group

March 2021 Meeting Minutes

Date: March 2nd, 2021 Time: 1:00 p.m. Via: Zoom, call-in only

Board Members Present:

Robert Riley, Ag. Community

Judith Johnson, Kooskooski Commons

Brian Burns, Tri-State Steelheaders

David Hair^e, CTUIR

Brian Maiden, Ag. Community

Absent: Jonathan Hellberg-Wilson

Also present: Renee Hadley, Audrey Ahmann of WWCCD; Donald Sims, Tamara Carolfi, and Lauren Prentice, WW County Planning, Todd Kimball, County Commissioner

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Vice-Chair David Hair^e.

Minutes: The February 2021 minutes were presented and reviewed. Burns requested a correction to clarify that the planned bridge replacement referenced is a city project, not Tri-State Steelheaders project. Burns moved and Johnson seconded to approve the minutes as amended, motion passed.

Action items/Discussion:

- 1. Vacancies on the Work Group:** The group agreed to leave the chair position vacant until the openings on the Work Group are filled. Hadley mentioned the next meeting will be in the fall. In the meantime, members receive the quarterly reports. Members agreed to continue to seek members.
- 2. Reporting/Adaptive Management** Hadley reviewed information to be uploaded into the 5 year report template. She explained the 5-Year report details how the county met or did not meet the goals of the 3 watersheds in the county. The group discussed meters, which were used as the metric in determining whether the county met the goal of avoiding a decline in the aquifer due to ag. use. Kimball suggested clarifying that not all meters were checked, relying instead on a random sample. Hadley reported staff checked 52 of 544 meters and 45 of 383 screens. Staff expected a decline in meters (the mechanical issues with them are well-known) but did not expect the decline in screens. Some screens had mechanical failures, others maintenance issues or damage by extreme flooding. The group agreed the best adaptive management would replace reliance on numbers of meters with outreach and education on increasing irrigation efficiency and participation in the Walla Walla 2050 Plan. After further discussion, Maiden moved and Johnson seconded to approve submitting the 5-Year report with the changes discussed, motion passed. Hadley told members she would send out the text of the information (with edits as discussed) that would be uploaded to the report template.

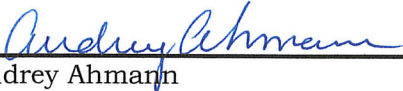
Public Comment: Don Sims informed the group that County Planning has hired new staffer Tamara Carolfi. Todd Kimball mentioned that the county will be updating the Comprehensive Plan. In response to a question regarding CRP acres, Hadley reported that staff are assisting NRCS with

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field reviews and not all acres are eligible for reenrollment. The 5-Year report will include mention that conservation cover on CRP acres may decline. Johnson asked members to participate in the 2050 planning process. Burns reported that Tri-State Steelheaders are moving ahead with fish passage work on Mill Creek. Prentice stated the county is busy with permitting. Hadley added that some irrigation efficiency projects are in the works along with the National Water Quality Initiative work on Mill Creek; the district is close to finalizing a Floodplains by Design grant.

With no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 without a formal motion.

Respectfully submitted



Audrey Ahman
WWCCD

/S/: *David H. Haire*

David Haire
Vice- Chairman

Next meeting: Fall 2021, date and time TBD