

# Walla Walla County Conservation District

## Jan 10, 2022 Board Meeting

Date: Jan. 10, 2022

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Place: District Conference Room and via phone link

**Presiding Officer:** Annie Byerley

**Supervisors Present:** Jim Kent, Alyson Buckley, Jeff Schulke

**Supervisor Absent:** none

**Other Agencies:** Allisa Carlson, SCC; Lindsey Williams, WWCC

**Also present:** Renee Hadley, Audrey Ahmann; Cat Garza and Joanna Cowles Cleveland via phone.

**Members of the Public:** Mary Collins (at 4:50)

***The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Annie Byerley***

**Minutes:** The Board reviewed the December meeting minutes. **Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the December minutes as presented, motion passed.**

**Financial Reports:** The board reviewed the January Financial Report. **Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the January financial report and pay the bills, motion passed.** January report included checks 14277 to 14303, total all accounts: \$325,191.12

**As of this date Jan. 10th 2022 the Board by a majority vote does approve for payment checks included in the January financial report and further described as follows: Checks 14276 to 14303, total all accounts \$325,191.12**

### **New Business:**

- 1. Partner Updates:** Hadley said there was no update from NRCS and that WDFW will present at our Annual meeting. Lindsey Williams said new staff hired at WWCC are teaching in the Bachelors of Applied Science in Agriculture program, and mentioned that Annie Byerley will be a guest speaker for the Political Ecology of Water course. **Allisa Carlson** of SCC said the selection of an Executive Director will be announced after the January Commission meeting. The special session of the legislature has started; there are several bills to watch, including 1652 which enact election changes developed by the Elections Committee. Other bills include funding for the Governor's Sustainable Farms and Fields initiative, Equity Engagement, and a Riparian Plant Inventory program. Ecology revised their stock water policy and will hold off any changes until they have more input from ranchers and other stakeholders. The board

discussed HB 1838 which appears to make buffers mandatory on most waterways and subject to regulatory enforcement.

2. **2022 Annual Meeting:** Hadley reminded the board of the upcoming annual meeting at the airport on January 27<sup>th</sup>. A remote option has been planned in case public meetings are restricted. Derek Sandison, head of Wa. Dept. of Agriculture, will attend via ZOOM to speak of trends affecting agriculture and then be available for questions.
3. **Review of Office Lease:** Cowles Cleveland reported that we did not do as much work for NRCS as in the past but we have responded to all requests; Ray Tracy will be doing an on-site cultural resource review during a project installation in Asotin.
4. **Staff Performance Reviews:** Hadley requested board volunteers to conduct staff performance reviews via Zoom; Schulke and Buckley volunteered.
5. **Grant Application approvals:**
  - A. Hadley described two grant applications for board consideration. Floodplains by Design Phase 2 will build on the current FbD program and covers 2 miles on Mill Creek below Blue Creek. After discussion, **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve submitting the grant proposal for Floodplains by Design Phase 2 as described, motion passed.**
  - B. The second grant application is to obtain funds to install the Touchet River at River Mile 42 Phase 1 project. The design for the project is almost complete. This design includes additional areas but the costs are so high the project needs to be broken down into phases. **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve resolution 2022-01 submitting the grant proposal for Touchet River Mile 42 project as described, motion passed.**

**Public Comments:** Mary Collins, SE Area Director called in. She spoke of the open SE Area Director position. Collins mentioned as an area director, she enjoys hearing what other districts are doing and likes the role. She also said Tom Salzer and Ryan Baye do a good job of organizing which makes it easier. Hadley explained the procedure for a mid-term appointment.

#### **Program Updates:**

**Cowles Cleveland** reported staff inspected the Touchet planting and found only minimal beaver damage. SCC wants official status reviews for all the CREP contracts in the 5-year maintenance window. On re-enrollments, FSA has chosen to cost share simple weed control and/or mowing, but reseeding and more extensive work to bring a project back into compliance will not be cost-shared unless the project was damaged by a natural event outside the cooperator's control, like flooding. The SCC will follow suit. **Hadley** said the NWQI program (Alison Crowley) is going well and may be completed early. She reported that Traynor will be attending the Pacific NW Direct Seed conference along with Cat Garza. Traynor is helping with GIS and was asked to

present information on VSP monitoring. Hadley also added she is working with 4 engineering firms and is pleased with recent progress.

### Joint Agency Meetings

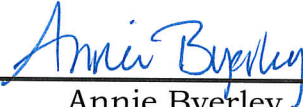
- 1. Snake River Salmon Recovery Board:** The group met in December. The Regional Technical Team discussed freshwater mussels which will need to be protected when installing projects. Asotin staff has monitored and evaluated beaver dam analogs and PALS (post-assisted log structures) and found these provided the hoped-for benefits.
- 2. Others:** Byerley reported the Nature Conservancy has added new seats and some are ag. producers. She is on their conservation subcommittee and the Pollinator Task Force. WSDA used to fund an apiarist and they are hoping the position will become active again. Monarch Butterfly numbers are up.

At 5:12, as per RCW 42.30.110 )1) (g) the board of supervisors went into executive session to review the performance of an employee(s) and RCW 42.30.110 (1) (h) and announced a planned return to open session at 5:42.

The board returned to open session at 5:42. **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve the COLA increase and pay increases as presented beginning in February 2022, motion passed.**

With no further business on the agenda, the meeting adjourned without a formal motion.

Respectfully submitted,

		
Audrey Ahmann	Annie Byerley	Jim Kent
Assistant Manager, Finance	Chair	Secretary

Next meeting: February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at **4:00 p.m.**

### Motions:

To approve the December minutes as written,

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Buckley  
Motion passed

To approve the January financial report,

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Buckley  
Motion passed

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To approve submitting the grant proposal for Floodplains by Design Phase 2 as described,

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Buckley  
Motion passed

To approve Resolution 2022-01 submitting the grant proposal for Touchet River Mile 42 project as described.

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Buckley  
Motion passed

To approve the COLA increase and pay increases as presented beginning in February 2022

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Buckley  
Motion passed