

# Walla Walla County Conservation District

## July 2022 Board Meeting

Date: July 11th, 2022

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: In person and via conference call

**Presiding Officer:** Jesse McCaw

**Supervisors Present:** Jim Kent, Jeff Schulke, Jesse McCaw

**Supervisor Absent:** Alyson Buckley

**Other Agencies:** Bryce Krueger, NRCS, Allisa Carlson, SCC

**Also present:** Renee Hadley (via phone), Grant Traynor, Annie Byerley, Audrey Ahmann

**Members of the Public:** Dan Milden

*The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Jesse McCaw*

**Minutes:** The Board reviewed the June meeting minutes. **Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Jim Kent to approve the June minutes as presented, motion passed.**

**Financial Reports:** The board reviewed the July Financial Report. **Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Jim Kent to approve the July financial report and pay the bills, motion passed.** July report included checks 14410 to 14442; total revenues 31,288.19 and expenses 78,948.79; total all accounts 277,689.84

**As of this date July 11<sup>th</sup> 2022 the Board by a majority vote does approve for payment checks included in the July financial reports and further described as follows: Checks 14410 to 14442, total all accounts \$277,689.84**

### **New Business:**

- 1. Public Comments:** McCaw asked for public comments; there were none.
- 2. Partner Updates:** **Allisa** reported on the Supplemental Budget funds received by SCC. A round-table discussion is planned on the funds and their use. CREP proposals for additional funds are due August 1<sup>st</sup>. Budget decision packages will be presented for approval to the Conservation Commission members. **Krueger** said the first round of CSP pre-approvals have been completed and CRP contracts are in progress. The Soils Conservationist position has been formally approved.
- 3. NRCS Lease update:** Cowles Cleveland presented the spending to date towards the lease agreement with NRCS.

4. **Plant Sale Opportunity:** Cowles Cleveland spoke to the board about possibly holding a plant sale. Other districts suggested starting small and offer only pre-orders. After getting orders, staff would handle the purchase and sorting of the plants, letting folks know of the pick-up days. Those who order through the district save substantially on shipping and benefit from bulk orders. Staff would put together a species list focused on pollinator plants. The board voiced support for the idea.
5. **Weather Gauge:** Hadley discussed the costs and benefits of several rain gauges. Volunteers who record and submit rainfall data to the district receive a rain gauge for that purpose. The board considered digital automatic gauges and more traditional ones. **Jeff Schulke moved and Jim Kent seconded to provide rainfall-data volunteers with the CoCoRaHS gauges as needed, motion passed.**
6. **Meals with Meetings:** Ahmann suggested that the board consider adopting a formal policy regarding meals with meetings. The board has always had a meal during regular meetings as this allows work to continue without interruption during the evening. However, the state auditor's office prefers that any meals or refreshments offered during a meeting be pre-approved and justified by the governing board. **Jeff Schulke moved and Jim Kent seconded to adopt a Blanket Meeting Expense Authorization as presented, motion passed.**
7. **New Projects:** Annie Byerley presented new projects. The first removes a **Cottonwood log-jam** that runs bank to bank and was left after the last flood event. Landowners approached the district for assistance as the log-jam will cause additional flooding and already impacted septic systems. The flood event exposed an old mainline that runs under the creek. The project will remove the log-jam and help cover the pipeline. WDFW has been consulted and is in support of the project. The second project includes a **series of riparian, upland, and wetland adjacent plantings around the South Fork of Russell Creek.** Another project in development is replacing a **fence on Cottonwood Rd near Pikes Peak Rd** that is frequented as an illegal dump site. She then described a **Coppei bridge** project to replace a field access crossing that has some construction funding but needs permitting. A **Pikes Peak forestry planting** project funds the planting of 40 acres to native trees to protect the headwaters of a perennial stream. **Jeff Schulke moved and Jim Kent seconded to approve the proposed projects as described, motion passed.**

#### **Program Updates:**

**Cowles Cleveland** said additional CREP funding would allow for more sign-ups but the limiting factor is staffing at our partner agencies coupled with the funding deadline. Discussion moved to hydroseeding native grasses when tarps

are removed, since there is limited organic material present, established shrubs and trees limit equipment use, and weed pressure is a serious concern. Landowners have attempted broadcasting seed in these areas with little success. Cowles Cleveland is checking costs to determine cost share rates for hydroseeding. **Traynor** reported continuing to work with the VSP review panel to develop monitoring within a non-regulatory framework. His projects (Touchet RM42, Coppei C7, Touchet MS1) are on track. **Oosterhuis** is working with Tri-State Steelheaders to restart a CURB-like program and contacting former participants for their insights. **Hadley** reported that Peterson is continuing the Tree of Heaven program and assisting Columbia CD with the same work. Hadley also spoke to the board about increasing staff wages to competitive rates. The board requested more information and will revisit this in the fall.


### Joint Agency Meetings

- 1. Snake River Salmon Recovery Board:** Cowles Cleveland announced the SFRB received increased funding and the funds may be extended to 2024. The legislature set aside funds for one five-million-dollar project: this might be directed to the TSS Mill Creek Channel work.

**Public Comment:** The district was asked to seek a better audio system for those who call in and to review links on the district website as some are broken.

With no further business on the agenda, at 7:15 **Jeff Schulke moved and Jim Kent seconded to adjourn the meeting, motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

		
Audrey Ahmann	Jesse McCaw	Jim Kent
Assistant Manager, Finance	Chair	Vice-Chair

Next meeting: Sept. 13th 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

#### Motions:

To approve the June minutes as written,

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Kent  
Motion passed

To approve the July financial report,

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Kent  
Motion passed

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To provide rainfall-data volunteers with the CoCoRaHS gauges as needed,

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Kent  
Motion passed

To adopt a Blanket Meeting Expense Authorization as presented,

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Kent  
Motion passed

To approve the proposed projects as described, <sup>1</sup>

Motion: Kent  
Second: Schulke  
Motion passed

To adjourn the meeting,

Motion: Schulke  
Second: Kent  
Motion passed

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<sup>1</sup> Cottonwood Log Jam, series of plantings on South Fork Russell Creek, Cottonwood Rd Fencing, Coppei Bridge permitting, Pike Peak forestry planting