

# Walla Walla County Conservation District

## Sept. 2022 Board Meeting

Date: Sept. 12, 2022

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: In person and via conference call

**Presiding Officer:** Jim Kent

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

**Supervisor Absent:** Jesse McCaw

**Other Agencies:** Bryce Krueger, NRCS, Allisa Carlson, SCC, Allan Branscom, Oregon SU, Lindsey Williams, WWCC

**Also present:** Renee Hadley, Grant Traynor, Joanna Cowles Cleveland, Kayla Peterson

**Members of the Public:** none

***The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Jim Kent***

Kent invited the public to comment; there were no comments (no member of the public identified his or herself).

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

**Financial Reports:** The board reviewed the August and September Financial Report. **Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the August and September financial reports and pay the bills, motion passed.** August report included checks 14443 to 14460; total revenues 139,185.30 and expenses 97,044.73; total all accounts 319,830.41; September report included checks 14461 to 14482; total revenues 142,408.75 and expenses 197,733.91; total all accounts 264,505.25

### **New Business:**

1. **Review of grant applications:** **Hadley** reviewed new grant applications and new projects for board approval. These included:
  - a. NOAA Transformational Grant \$3.6M
  - b. NOAA Capacity Grant \$250k
  - c. SCC Salmon Riparian projects Yellowhawk and Lasater Creek, Caldwell
  - d. No Child Left Inside
  - e. Equipment purchase request for 6' wide no-till drill and side-by-side
  - f. Plant sale

After discussion, **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve pursuit of the new grants, equipment purchase, and plant sale; motion passed. Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve funding the Salmon Riparian Yellowhawk (Lasater) 4 project and Caldwell Creek project, motion passed**

1. **SCC Engineering Addendum:** Hadley presented an addendum for conservation commission engineering funds totaling 45,180. **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve the SCC engineering addendum as presented, motion passed.**
2. **2023 Salary Schedule:** **Hadley** requested postponement of discussion on the conservation district employee 2022 salary schedule due to low in-person attendance and conflicting schedules for the board meeting. **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to postpone discussion of the 2023 salary schedule; motion passed**
3. **Simple retirement plan:** **Hadley** reviewed the current SIMPLE retirement plan for Conservation District Employees, which is a 2% non-elective plan, and asked the board if they prefer to keep the current plan or change to an elective matching plan. **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to change the WWCCD employee Simple retirement plan from a 2% non-elective match to an up-to-3% matching plan; motion passed.**
4. **Partner Updates:**
  - **NRCS (Bryce Krueger):** EQIP and CSP deadlines for applications due October 13th. More climate smart money should be headed to the region/NRCS with the infrastructure bill that was passed; more details will follow in the future.
  - **WSU Extension (Renee Hadley):** WW WSU Ext is still looking to hire an Agronomist, and the WW County Noxious Weed Board is seeking a new coordinator.
  - **WACD (Renee Hadley):** SE Area meeting at Asotin date changed from October 25th to October 21st.
  - **SCC (Alissa Carlson):** Election training takes place September 28th. SCC is also working on a "Conservation Month" for next year to increase conservation district awareness/outreach and participation in Board of Supervisor elections. Renee Hadley noted Jesse McCaw is up for election next year.
  - **Renee Hadley** reminded the board to consider any potential Board of Supervisor candidates to fill the currently vacant seat.
5. **Allan Branscomb** spoke briefly on the disconnect between extension offices and producers. He believes there is more potential for sharing of information between these interests. Allan requested a letter of support for the board to review to apply for grant money to increase outreach/funding for extensions

and reinforce connections and information exchange between producers and extension offices. Renee sought advice on how we can help, and Allan noted he believes speaking with the state legislature for funding is necessary to get wide-range extension funding and support.

6. **Money Market Account: Hadley** explained that WWCCD has a Money Market account that was created a while back, but the original intention for creating the account or why the money was set aside is unknown. She asked the board if we should keep the account or roll that money into an existing WWCCD account to simplify accounting. After discussion, **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to close the money market account and roll the funds into the existing WWCCD checking account, motion passed.**
7. **Policy re: board supervisor/staff liaison:** The board discussed who should be the WWCCD employee board liaison. Currently the WWCCD Employee Manual states the board chair is this employee liaison. After discussion, the board decided to keep the board chair as WWCCD employee liaison instead of designating a different board member.

#### **Program Updates:**

**Alison Crowley:** Alison has been working to get outdoor education packs in the WW Public Library as well as rural libraries. The NWQI report was submitted at the end of August. A copy of that report was included in the board packets. Various outreach activities included 7 classes scheduled for Wheat Week, BMLT Nature Kids, Tri-State Steelheaders Educate the Educators (U-B article was included in board packets) and hosting a booth at the WW County fair.

**Kayla Peterson:** Kayla and Alison completed their Tree of Heaven work and report, and Kayla is meeting with Columbia County soon to discuss a survey and eradication trials in Columbia County.

**Annie Byerley:** Annie is working on many different projects and also helping process burn permits. The Cottonwood logjam was funded, the logjam removed and site replanted. She completed several conservation planning courses through AgLearn. A few potential projects were discussed: Pikes Peak drainage and Frog/Hollow drainage.

**Joanna Cowles Cleveland:** Joanna informed the board of a fire damaged CREP site and potential replanting of that site. She also briefed the board on the Touchet False Indigo control that started in August; the contract is in progress from Ecology. CREP annual monitoring with Brian with SCC was conducted the previous week. Growth rate in our area is higher than other areas in Eastern WA. Discussion about the WWCCD Plant Sale (pre-order in Fall, deliver in Spring). A new riparian project on Caldwell Creek through SCC Salmon Riparian funding (approved earlier in the meeting) was further discussed. **Lynda Oosterhuis:** Lynda has been working on the beneficial insect/Western SARE grant project, and Polish agronomy

professors toured her project site recently. The guide was finished and will be shared with partners and interested folks. Several new riparian projects on Yellowhawk and Lasater Creeks through SCC Salmon Riparian funding (approved earlier in the meeting) were further discussed. Significant collaboration with partners (Tri-State Steelheaders and Kooskooskie Commons) regarding CURB and expanding riparian efforts to fill in gaps geographically and through existing programs. Plantings on McCaw Phase 3 had a higher than usual portion die as a result of the heat dome during summer 2021, replanting will occur prior to the Dec 2022 deadline.

**Grant Traynor:** Grant has been working half-time on VSP monitoring updates, and the other half has involved projects and CRP status reviews. All riparian projects have contracts out and plantings scheduled.

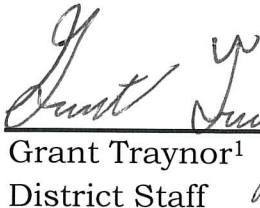
**Renee Hadley:** The Russell Creek Fish Passage Barrier Removal and post-assisted log structures (at the corner of 5 landowners) was completed in August. Additional seeding will occur after the first fall rain. Joe Drazan was able to scan historic district images and share publicly via his blog.


**Executive Session:** The board announced they were heading into executive session per RCW 42.30.110 (1)(g) at 6:50 and that they would return to open session at 7:30. At 7:30 Hadley announced the board needed another 5 minutes and would return at about 7:35.


The board returned from executive session at 7:36. Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve the salary/wage increase schedule as presented for each employee effective Oct 1, 2022. A friendly amendment was included to adjust the title change of a specific employee from technician to scientist. The amendment was accepted and seconded. The final motion was as follows: **To approve the salary/wage increase schedule as presented for each employee effective Oct 1, 2022 and adjust the title change of a specific employee from technician to scientist, motion passed.**

With no further business on the agenda, at 7:40 **Jeff Schulke moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to adjourn the meeting, motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Grant Traynor<sup>1</sup>  
District Staff

  
Jim Kent  
Vice-Chair

  
Jeff Schulke  
member

Next meeting: Oct. 11th 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

Motions:

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<sup>1</sup> Formatted by Audrey Ahmann  
Page 4 of 5

WWCCD Sept. 12 2022 Board Meeting

To approve the July minutes as written,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To approve the Aug-Sept financial report,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To approve pursuit of the new grants, equipment purchase, and plant sale,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To approve the Salmon Riparian Yellowhawk 4 project and the Caldwell Creek project,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To approve the SCC engineering addendum as presented,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To postpone discussion of the 2023 salary schedule,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To change the WWCCD employee Simple retirement plan from a 2% non-elective match to an up-to-3% matching plan,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To close the money market account and roll the funds into the existing WWCCD checking account,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To approve the salary/wage increase schedule as presented for each employee effective Oct 1. 2022 and adjust the title change of a specific employee from technician to scientist,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed
To adjourn the meeting,	Motion: Schulke Second: Buckley Motion passed