



Walla Walla County Conservation District

June 2023 Board Meeting

Date: June 12, 2023

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: In person and via Zoom

Presiding Officer: Jim Kent

Supervisors Present: Jim Kent, Don Schwerin, Alyson Buckley

Supervisors absent: Jesse McCaw, Jeff Schulke

Other Agencies: Mary Collins, Palouse CD & WACD SE area representative

Also present: Renee Hadley, Audrey Ahmann, Alison Crowley

Members of the Public: Dan Mildren, Ms. Andrea Renholds and Mr. Clay Hudiburg

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Jim Kent.

Kent invited the public to comment; there were no comments.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the May 8th board meeting minutes. **Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the May 8th board minutes as presented, motion passed.**

Financial Reports: The board reviewed the June Financial Report. After further review, **motion by Don Schwerin and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the June financial reports and pay the bills, motion passed.**

As of this date June 12th the Board by a majority vote does approve for payment checks included in the June financial reports and further described as follows: Checks 14703 to 14731, revenues 181,038.91; expenses 136,387.78; total all accounts \$173,516.32

- 1. Partner Reports: Hadley** reported the NRCS Local Work Group set nutrient management as a priority (addressing pH and soil amendments). The request is for 5 million in funding for the 5 counties over the next three years. Forestry lands were also prioritized, with preference given to lands adjacent to Forest Service areas. Eligible practices include brush thinning and grazing management.
- 2. SE Area Engineering: Hadley** explained this agreement allows us to participate in the cluster engineer program. These engineers are funded by the SCC and specialize in the conservation practices common to the participating districts. The SE Area engineer is based in Pomeroy and is available to assist

with our projects. **Don Schwerin moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve signing the SE Area Engineering Agreement, motion passed.**

3. **Presentation: Envirothon Club: Hadley** introduced the two advisors and three student members of the Wa-Hi Envirothon club who recently took first place at the state competition. They will be participating in the international Envirothon in New Brunswick in July. District folk helped them prepare for these events. The students spoke of the experience and their interest in ag. and the environment.
4. **Review and approve SCC Master Contract: Hadley** explained the Master Contract is the main contract the district has with the Conservation Commission and all other grants are added via addendums to the Master Contract. **Don Schwerin moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve signing the FY24-25 Master Contract, motion passed.**
 - a. Natural Resource Addendum: Hadley explained the NRI grant allows the district to fund one or two projects totaling 80,000. The first planned project is the Beechinor Bridge which is being developed with NRCS. A second project will be selected at a later time. **Don Schwerin moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve the NRI Addendum as presented, motion passed.**
 - b. Implementation, CREP, and IrrEff Addendum: The Imp addendum includes staff WADE funds and an increase of 11,112 specifically for educational and outreach; 12,500 will be set aside for Basic. Irrigation Efficiency will allow continued participation in water policy forums and small efficiency projects. CREP continues that successful program. **Alyson Buckley moved and Don Schwerin seconded to approve the CREP, IrrEff and Imp grant addendums as presented, motion passed.**
5. **Approve exceeding the per-diem rate: Hadley** explained that lodging in Leavenworth exceeded the state per-diem rate so the board is requested to approve the lodging cost for two staff staying off-site for the WADE conference. **Alyson Buckley moved and Don Schwerin seconded to approve exceeding the lodging per diem rate for staff at the WADE conference, motion passed.**
6. **Approve out of state travel: Hadley** requested that the board approve her attending the NACD Conference in Lake Tahoe August 23-25th. This will be a joint conference between NACD Southwest and Pacific regions. Fire recovery will be a topic. **Alyson Buckley moved and Don Schwerin seconded to approve the out-of-state travel and other costs of Hadley attending the NACD Conference as described, motion passed.**

7. **Approval to surplus:** The board reviewed the list of items (primarily outdated tech. equipment) to surplus. **Don Schwerin moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to surplus the listed items, motion passed.**
8. **Approve light refreshments form:** **Ahmann** explained that due to inflation, the previously approved cap of 35\$ was not enough. **Alyson Buckley moved and Don Schwerin seconded to approve the Blanket Approval of Light Refreshments as presented, motion passed.**
9. **Request to increase wages of a public employee:** **Hadley** explained a staff member requested a higher wage. After discussion, **Alyson Buckley moved and Don Schwerin seconded to approve the raise for the specific employee as presented, to take effect June 13th, motion passed.**

Program Updates:

Crowley gave an in-depth review of her recent work. Among other events, she presented Wheat Week to 14 classes at 6 schools, worked on public events such as Bio-Blitz and Return to the River, held 6 Conservation Conversations, and worked with Dixie Elementary with Conservation Connections. She is also applying for an outdoor education grant with RCO. **Hadley** informed the board that Jeff Klundt would be out for most of June but other staff can fill in for him. She then presented highlights from end-of-biennium reporting to the SCC:

- a) SCC Conservation Tech. Assistance report: The legislature funded additional TA specifically for planning new (unfunded) projects. Oosterhuis contacted previous CURB project participants and completed site visits. Some are interested in cost-sharing additional work and others only additional technical assistance.
- b) Riparian projects: Hadley showed projects photos such as the recently installed Pikes Peak project. She reported on the number of practices implemented, partners, etc., as totals. Projects included work to remove scrapped vehicles from riparian areas along with the usual removal of invasive weeds and replanting.

She also reported on the findings of the Walla Walla University engineering students who were investigating the design of improved water meters for local irrigators. They started with existing meter designs and considered what caused them to fail sooner than expected. Unfortunately, the students concluded improvement was beyond their skill level; however, it was considered a good learning experience.

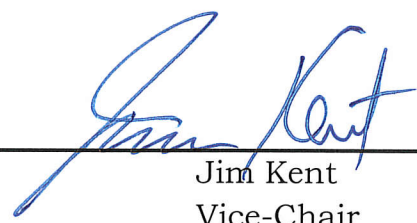
Discussion of soil related efforts was postponed until a future meeting.

With no further business on the agenda, at 6:35 the meeting was adjourned without a formal motion.

Respectfully submitted,


Audrey Ahmann
District Staff


Jesse McCaw
Chair


Jim Kent
Vice-Chair

Next meeting: July 10th, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

Motions:

To approve the June 12th board meeting minutes as written, Motion: Schwerin
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve the June financial report Motion: Schwerin
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve signing the SE Area Engineering Agreement, Motion: Schwerin
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve the SCC FY24-24 Master Contract, Motion: Schwerin
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve the NRI Addendum as presented, Motion: Schwerin
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve the CREP, IrrEff and Imp grant addendums as presented Motion: Buckley
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed

To approve exceeding the lodging per diem rate for staff at the WADE conference, Motion: Buckley
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed

To approve the out-of-state travel and other costs of Hadley attending the NACD Conference as described Motion: Buckley
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed

To surplus the items as listed, Motion: Schwerin
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

to approve the Blanket Approval of Light Refreshments as presented, Motion: Buckley
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed

To approve a raise for the specific employee as presented, Motion: Buckley
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed