



Walla Walla County Conservation District

October 2023 Board Meeting

Date: Oct. 9, 2023

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: In person and via Zoom

Presiding Officer: Jim Kent

Supervisors Present: Don Schwerin, Alyson Buckley (via zoom)

Supervisor absent: Jesse McCaw, Jeff Schulke

Other Agencies: Allisa Carlson, SCC

Also present: Renee Hadley, Jenny Freer

Members of the Public: Dan M.

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

Kent invited the public to comment; Dan had questions about when the seminars would start again. Hadley responded with November to April.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the Sept. 11 board meeting minutes. **Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the Sept. 11th board minutes as presented, motion passed.**

Financial Reports: The board reviewed the October Financial Reports. **Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the October financial reports and pay the bills, motion passed.**

As of this date Oct. 9 2023 the Board by a majority vote does approve for payment checks included in the Oct. financial reports and further described as follows: Checks 14802 to 14822, revenues \$184,276.56 and expenses 287,561.87; total all accounts \$186,132.16

New B

Follow up clarification from Sept board meeting for 8a. Reasonable follow-up for ecology letters, as an introduction to the conservation district, is acceptable.

- 1. Partner Reports: Carlson** gave an update on the search for an executive director for the State Conservation Commission. The SCC is hiring support staff due to new funding becoming available.
- 2. NRCS office lease quarterly update: Hadley** presented the task order accomplishments for our lease agreement with NRCS. Board had a question on the cash balanced owed by WWCCD with a response that we do not pay out of pocket.


3. **October 26 SE Area WACD Meeting hosted by Whitman CD, Headcount: Hadley** shared information on the SE Area meeting and asked if any Board Members would be interested in attending. Don Schwerin stated he may attend. A second headcount was requested for the WACD annual meeting Nov. 27-30, no confirmations at this time.
4. **Resolution to set the Annual meeting and Election date and location: Hadley for Byerley/Garza** proposed January 23, 2024 as a possible date. There were no conflicts of the proposed date at this time. Alternative date options include January 26 if the 23rd is unavailable. Location to be at the airport conference room or other communal space, depending on availability. **Motion by Alyson Buckley and second by Don Schwerin to approve the Annual meeting and election date of January 23rd, 2024: motion passed.**
5. **Request to review and approve Grant Proposals and Envirothon hosting: Hadley** requested to have potential funding applications approved. The three funding applications are Community Wildfire Defense Grant, NOAA: Transformational Restoration (Touchet River Suite), & the Washington Shrub Steppe Resiliency Initiative. The WWCCD was asked if they would host the Envirothon state competition in May 2024.
Don Schwerin moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve the grant proposals and Envirothon hosting as they were presented, motion passed.
6. **Request to approve meters for VSP Projects: Hadley (for Traynor)** discussed the need for two replacement meters on the Walla Walla River. One landowner has two meters that would be replaced as part of VSP's cost share program. It was mentioned that a WWCCD employee is part owner of that farm and CD staff wanted to declare in case of a conflict of interest. **Don Schwerin moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve replacing two meters through VSP as presented, motion passed.**
7. **Annual Review of manuals and request to approve changes: Hadley/Freer** presented manual edits to the October 2021 Personnel Manual and the Jan 2023 Internal Procedures Manual.
 - a. Edits that were made to the Personnel Manual included adding WA Cares (Long-term Care Insurance) and the Juneteenth holiday with additional edits to the Retirement Benefit section for clarity of the expectation of making \$5,000 to qualify for 3% match. **Don Schwerin moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve the draft revisions to the Personnel Manual, motion passed as presented.**
 - b. Edits that were made to the Internal Procedure Manual. Under Asset Management, the word manager was added to define which file cabinet. Under Credit Card Policy and Purchasing, the request to remove credit cards that are


no longer in use. Under internal controls, edits were made to allow for a single signature on checks for reoccurring monthly bills, quarterly state bills, and newsletter fees along with approval of electronic payments to be made for Premera, Spectrum, and CHS Primeland. Additional edits include the removal of invoices being stamped PAID, and the removal of the wording of a bonded employee to open the mail. **Don Schwerin moved and Alyson Buckley seconded to approve the draft revisions to the Internal Procedures Manual, motion passed as presented.**

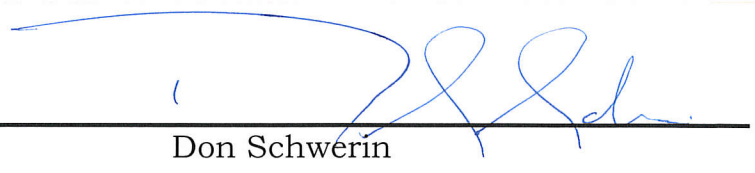
- 8. Annual review and approval of retirement contribution: 2% non or 3% matching:** **Hadley** reviewed the retirement contributions procedures with the board. We currently contribute 3% matching to staff contributions. Board decided to stay with the 3% matching. **Alyson Buckley moved and Don Schwerin seconded to continue with 3% matching for retirement funds, motion passed as presented.**
- 9. Board Governance:** **Hadley** wanted a discussion on the CAPP, Board self-evaluation, and SCC funds returned from the Sept 21 meeting. CAPP discussion led to where the board falls within the Conservation Accountability Practice Procedures, as without this documentation we would not be able to get funding from the SCC. The board self-evaluation is an ad hoc discussion and Hadley will circulate the questionnaire for the board members. For a summary of returned funds, TA was expended to the fullest but project funds were returned due to changes in landowner participation and unforeseen cost savings.
- 10. Need Approval for VSP flow meter and Screen cost increase:** **Hadley** explained that the cost of the flow meter and Screen for D. Smelcer was higher than expected. The CD did receive approval from SCC to increase the cost, board approval is needed. **Alyson Buckley moved and Don Schwerin seconded to increase the flow meter and screen cost as part of VSP Cost Share Program.**

With no further business on the agenda, at 6:54 the meeting was adjourned without a formal motion.

Respectfully submitted,


Jenny Freer
District Staff


Jim Kent
Chair


Don Schwerin
Board member

Next meeting: November 13, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

Motions:

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| To approve the Sept 11 th board meeting minutes as written, | Motion: Schwerin Second: Buckley Motion passed |
| To approve the Oct. financial report, as presented | Motion: Schwerin Second: Buckley Motion passed |
| To approve the date for the annual meeting and election, as presented | Motion: Buckley Second: Schwerin Motion passed |
| To approve the grant proposals for NOAA, Wildfire Defense Grant, & WA Shrub Steppe Resiliency Initiative, along with hosting Envirothon in May 2024, as presented | Motion: Schwerin Second: Buckley Motion passed |
| To approve two replacement meters through VSP, as presented | Motion: Schwerin Second: Buckley Motion passed |
| To approve edits to the personnel manual and make changes, as presented | Motion: Schwerin Second: Buckley Motion passed |
| To approve edits to the internal procedure's manual and make changes, as presented | Motion: Schwerin Second: Buckley Motion passed |
| To maintain retirement contributions a matching 3%, as discussed | Motion: Buckley Second: Schwerin Motion passed |
| To approve cost increase of flow meter and screen, as presented | Motion: Schwerin Second: Buckley Motion passed |