



Walla Walla County Conservation District
May 2025 Board Meeting

Date: May 12, 2025

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: In person and via Zoom

Presiding Officer: Jeff Schulke, Chair

Supervisors Present: Jim Kent, Don Schwerin

Supervisors absent: Jessee McCaw

Other Agencies: Allisa Carlson, SCC; Ryan Baye, WACD; Lindsey Williams, Ag and Natural Resources Center of Excellence WWCC; Rachel Wieme, WSU Ext.; Bryce Kruger, NRCS

Also present: Renee Hadley, Jenny Freer, Annie Byerley, Joanna Cowles-Cleveland, Grace Cooper

Members of the Public: Matt W., Rhonda

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Jeff Schulke.

Schulke invited the public to comment. There were none.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the April 14th board meeting minutes. **Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve the April 14 board minutes as presented, no discussion, motion passed.**

Financial Reports: The board reviewed the April Financial Reports. **Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to pay the bills, motion passed.**

As of this date May 12th 2025 the Board reviewed the April financial reports with no further discussion: Checks 15157 to 15186 and 9 EFTs, revenues \$251,526.95 and expenses \$230,427.93; total of bank accounts \$371,625.20.

(Total Matches Springbrook)

New Business:

1. Partner Updates:

- a. **NRCS: Kruger** shared that CRP was announced today with a deadline of June 6th 2025 for sign-up eligibility. CSP is still under review due to budget cuts. Regular farm bill funds are still up and running with IRA funds on hold.
- b. **WSU Ext.: Wieme** shared upcoming fields days this summer with 2 winter wheat locations and 1 canola field in Walla Walla County. There are soil PH trials happening now just outside the county. They are also hiring a regional agronomist for Columbia and Whitman County.
- c. **WACD: Baye** wanted to give a reminder to the board of supervisors and staff of what the WACD does and who they are. Baye also shared that they are here to help and to reach out to them with any concerns or questions. WACD is

currently taking any issues or comments that may want to be brought up at their next meeting. There is a WACD Southeast Washington representative vacancy on their board. They meet one evening a month. Baye stated that he will return for our October meeting.

- d. **SCC: Carlson** shared that there is a commission tour tomorrow in North Yakima. Board appointment meeting is happening this month with the SCC. June 12th in Leavenworth will be a budget meeting with CD managers and supervisors.
- e. **WWCC: Williams** made note that they are also dealing and preparing for budget cuts. One of notable mention is the Clarkston campus will be reduced to a workforce college only. The Walla Walla Community College still has a Dean position open.

2. **Request to review/edit/and approve the FY26 Annual Plan of Work: Hadley** shared that the annual plan of work is required to be turned in by May 30th and is required by law. The annual plan of work is a revolving document justifying what we plan to do with the funds we currently have. Hadley shared that input on the air quality goal would be appreciated. Both WWCC and WSU ext. offer to collab on this issue. The next goal that was brought up was soil health and how we have a lack of a baseline due to inadequate data from the county for previous years. Hadley stated that a soil map is being produced to help us get closer to establishing a baseline.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve submitted the annual plan of work, as presented: motion passed.

3. **Request to approve new grant applications as presented:**

- a. **Applying for grant funding through Ecology's Water Quality for FY27:**
 - i. **Touchet River at River Mile 33 instream restoration (construction).**

The design is being done now but construction funds will be needed for two and a quarter mile.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve applying for funding for RM 33, as presented: motion passed.
 - ii. **Lower Mill Creek instream restoration (construction).**

Funds are needed to install one and a quarter mile of structures along Mill Creek.

Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve applying for construction funds for Lower Mill Creek, as presented: motion passed.
 - iii. **Upland Soil Health and Erosion Prevention through both Ecology and SCC.**

Hadley shared that bring soil health to the forefront of the district is important. Hadley is asking for approval to seek funding for projects with

a focus on soil health and erosion prevention. One idea is to do a test trial of soil retention utilizing cover crops.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve seeking funding for soil health and erosion prevention, as presented: motion passed

b. Applying for grant funding through the SCC:

- i. **Riparian Maintenance: Cowles-Cleveland** is requesting to apply for maintenance funds through the SCC riparian grant program.¹⁷ landowners.

Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve applying for maintenance funds through the SCC, as presented: motion passed.

- ii. **Cover crop seed for outreach through Sustainable Farm and Field. Combined with Ecology funding above and approved together by the board of supervisors.**

- iii. **Dew Drop maintenance and outreach funds through SFF (5K):** Byerley shared that other districts have received funds through the SFF program for maintenance and promotional materials for the Dew Drop Drill.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve applying for funds for maintenance and outreach for the dew drop drill through SCC, as presented: motion passed.

- iv. **Forest Health TA request for the biennium at 8k per year.** Byerley shared that with the reduction in the Forest Health funds by the state, we would like to request \$8,000 per year in TA to continue building relationships and using the funds to further other grant writing where funds may be more available.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve applying for funds for TA funds through the SCC, as presented: motion passed.

4. **Request to Approve Benefit for Employees (1 hat plus \$50 of apparel of employees choosing):** Freer shared that many employees have retired or changed careers and new employees need apparel with logos to identify themselves within the office and when working with landowners. A request was made to also have a hat for each of our board members.

Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve an apparel benefit to employees, as presented: motion passed.

Program Updates:

A.) Water Topics Presentation: Byerley shared a PowerPoint presentation of the district's efforts of conserving water and what processes are being implemented to continue conservation efforts.

B.) District Operations: Hadley shared a copy of the district operations report which summarizes the above grant applications along with upcoming trainings and partner meetings.


C.) Service presentation given to Jeff Schulke for retiring from the Board of Supervisors of the Walla Walla County Conservation District after 16 years.

Misc. Discussion and Public Comments: NA

Meeting adjourned without a formal motion at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Jenny Freer
District Staff


Board member

Next meeting: Monday, June 9, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Motions:

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| To approve the April 14 th board meeting minutes as written | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To review the April Financial Reports and approve paying the bills, as presented | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve the FY26 Annual-Plan-of Work for Submittal, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Kent
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funding through Ecology's Water Quality Program for Touchet River Mile 33 construction funds, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Kent
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funding through Ecology's Water Quality Program for Lower Mill Creek instream restoration construction funds, as presented | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funding through the SCC and Ecology's Water Quality Program for soil health and erosion prevention, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Kent
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funding through the SCC for riparian maintenance within the riparian grant program, as presented | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funding through the SCC for maintenance and outreach for the dew drop drill within the sustainable farm and fields grant, as presented | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve applying for funding through the SCC for technical assistance within the forest health grant program, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Kent
Motion passed |
| To approve an extra benefit to employees of apparel and a hat, as presented | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |