

SPOKANE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
 210 N. Havana, Spokane, WA 99202
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
 Tuesday, November 8, 2016

Attendees

Supervisors: Jerry Scheele, Randy James, Jaki Shrauger Tom Miller, Wendy Knopp

Absent:

Associate Supervisors:

SCD Staff: Vicki Carter, Erica Johnson, Ty Meyer, Josie Bjordahl, Jim Armstrong, Charlie Peterson, Cori Turntine

Guests: Chad Greif, BIAS; Lynn Bahrych, Soil Health Committee; Bob Schroeter, WACD.

Chair Scheele called the meeting to order at 5pm and led the pledge of allegiance. In honor of Veterans Day on Friday, he recognized our service men and women by letting everyone in the room speak about their military service or family members' service. Chair Scheele introduced Bob Schroeter, WACD Executive Director.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Scheele presented the agenda for approval. Vicki Carter mentioned that the Treasurer's Report will be unverified tonight, but will be reviewed in greater detail next month. Carter made other verbal changes including removing the WSCC Update and the WCS agenda items.

Motion James/Miller to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Previous Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the October 11, 2106 board meeting had previously been distributed for review.

Motion Miller/Shrauger to approve the October 11, 2016 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

Chair Scheele presented the July Planning Session Minutes for approval.

Motion Shrauger/Knopp to accept the July Planning Session Minutes. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

ACCOUNT	BEG. BALANCE	DEPOSITS	WITHDRAWALS	END BALANCE	OUTSTANDING BALANCE	ADJ. BALANCE
PayPal Merchant Acct	1,457.79	10,767.21	7,427.80	4,797.20	-158.32	4,638.88
PayPal Transfer Acct	350	7,427.80	7,427.80	350	0	350
Checking Inland NW Bank	50,505.76	443,244.76	527,095.69	-33,345.17	149,692.93	116,347.76
MMA Inland NW Bank	653,661.17	82.56	20,000.00	633,743.73	0	633,743.73
LGIP	3,016,936.43	1,214.40	0	3,018,150.83	-1,214.40	3,016,936.43

Chad Greif presented his financial summary stating that we have a 10% decrease of loan to book assets in comparison to last year. He noted that this is especially strong because we are in between assessment revenue deposits. Next month we will approve the 2017 budget. Auditor Jaki Shrauger read the adjusted account balances (to be verified next month) and presented the Accounts Payable.

Motion James/Knopp to approve the November Accounts Payable as presented. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS / LINKAGE TO COMMUNITY

Public Comments/Introductions

Chair Scheele introduced Bob Schroeter and Lynn Bahrych and allowed everyone in the room to briefly explain their role at the district.

Washington Soil Health Committee

The Washington Soil Health Committee was formed as part of the 2015 International Year of Soil. It includes producers, WSU scientists, CD representatives, and a representative from Ag Enterprises. They were given a pool of funds and funded five projects. Foster Creek developed a software program to monitor and test soil health. San Juan Island has done a biochar experiment on six farms. Bahrych spoke about all the benefits of biochar. Biochar sells at garden stores for \$18 for a very small bag, but it is inexpensive to make. Ty Meyer added his knowledge of biochar, including recently gained knowledge that Gloria Flora presented at the Farm & Food Expo. Underwood Conservation District did a compost project that determined that a thin layer of compost was better than nothing, and better than chicken manure or chicken manure mixed with compost. Washington Environmental Council initiated a Nisqually Carbon Trading program. NRCS has asked the Soil Health Committee to continue for three more years.

WACD Update

Bob Schroeter was most recently director of operations for the Liquor & Cannabis Board and is now the WACD Executive Director. His goal is to bring Conservation Districts together and to represent them accurately. He is excited for the opportunity to get the word out to everyday people about the work conservation districts are doing. Schroeter invited everyone to contact him if they have any questions about the upcoming WACD Meeting or anything else. Tom Miller commented that Schroeter's presence in WACD has brought life back to the organization.

Rates & Charges

Jim Armstrong gave the background of the rates & charges system as an alternative to the assessment system. Last time our assessment was up for renewal, we decided that our county commissioners were familiar with our assessment system and our work, and went forward with its renewal through 2024. However, we are preparing for the rates & charges system in the event we need to move to a new system. Rather than using the Pierce County matrix as a model (there were 90+ designations), Armstrong met with county staff and determined that our current soil classifications overlaid with critical areas will be enough distinction. The final question is: when should we implement this system? Armstrong argued that it has been so long since our assessment revenue cap has been raised, that it's time to consider a raise. Perhaps in the next couple years we could bring it for discussion to the county commissioners.

GOVERNANCE CULTURE

Loan Request

Dr. Jill Clapperton has submitted a request to renegotiate our contract with her on the soil testing equipment. Our legal counsel Brian Werst has provided us with some legal language that would place the equipment as well as the intellectual property as the loan collateral. Meyer doubts that the equipment alone would not be worth \$50,000 to us. Meyer suggests releasing the land part of the collateral, keeping the CD and adding the equipment and intellectual property. After some discussion, the board decided that they'd like to see Dr. Clapperton work with Eric Choker to do test runs and side by side tests with Choker's equipment. Then, at our December meeting the board will make a final decision on the loan request.

Director's Discussion

Carter notified the board that Cori Turntine will be helping our auditor this week. There will be an entrance conference this week and an exit conference that will probably take place in January. Employee evaluations are coming up. We are starting to look ahead at potential new office space. Carter has a specific building that she will tour next week and can bring board members as well.

Election Resolution

Motion James/Knopp to set March 14, 2017 as our election and adopt election resolution #EL17.11.8. Motion carried.

Carter distributed the 2017 Budget for review by the board. This will be approved next month. Carter distributed the new check signing policy that would need only 1 signature on checks under \$10,000. Turntine detailed controls in the policy such as “not one person should enter, print and sign a check”. This distinction of duties will help keep us in good standing with the auditor.

Motion Knopp/Shrauger to adopt the new check signing policy. Motion carried.

At the NE Area Meeting, Erica Johnson won NE Area Meeting Employee of the Year and SCD won NE Area Conservation District of the Year.

Fire Recovery

Aerial seed with seed/mulch mix can be implemented on 42 burned acres in the Valleyford area. We have a \$20,000 cap for funds to be used in a single project. The cost is \$626 per acre, 25/75 cost-share with multiple landowners on north side of Rock Creek. There is a high soil erosion concern. Board approval is needed to spend the funds; there will be \$30,000 funds remaining for post-burn projects. Bahrych noted that if there is a soil health research opportunity here, the Soil Health Committee could fund some research to measure if this seeding helps.

Motion James/Shrauger to approve the expenditure up to \$20,000 in 25/75 cost-share for aerial seeding in the post-burn area on the north shore of Rock Creek. Motion Carried.

OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Correspondence & Announcements

Carter distributed correspondence regarding a landowner that is interested in having a meeting to discuss our Small Acreage Program Custom Seeding. After speaking with legal counsel, such a meeting should take place in an open meeting format, perhaps coinciding with a board meeting.

Motion Miller/James to set a policy that a community member can submit a request in writing to be on the agenda and they will be limited to five minutes. Motion tabled.

Carter read excerpts of a landowner testimony from a Family Forest Fish Passage Project that stated their happiness and satisfaction over Dan Ross’s work on their portion of the stream.

Dates:

- WACD Meeting, Blaine, WA – November 28-November 30
- NACD in Denver – Meyer & Edelen to attend Jan. 28-31

READING OF THE MOTIONS

Motion James/Miller to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion Miller/Shrauger to approve the October 11, 2016 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

Motion Shrauger/Knopp to accept the July Planning Session Minutes. Motion carried.

Motion James/Knopp to approve the November Accounts Payable as presented. Motion carried.

Motion James/Knopp to set March 14, 2017 as our election date and adopt election resolution

#EL17.11.8. Motion carried.

Motion Knopp/Shrauger to adopt the new check signing policy. Motion carried.

Motion James/Shrauger to approve the expenditure up to \$20,000 in a 25/75 cost-share for aerial seeding in the post-burn area on the north shore of Rock Creek. Motion Carried.

Motion Miller/James to set a policy that a community member can submit a request in writing to be on the agenda and they will be limited to five minutes. Motion tabled.

Meeting adjourned at 7:49pm.
Respectfully submitted by: Erica Johnson

Jerry Scheele, Board Chair

Randy James, Vice Chair