

**Washington Association of Conservation Districts**  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Three Rivers Convention Center - Kennewick  
November 26, 2018

- **Motion:** Javier Lopez moved to approve the previous meeting minutes. Second by Renee Hadley. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Doug Rushton moved to allocate \$30,000 from the Capital Reserve Account for the purchase of a new tractor. Second by Sarah Richards. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Javier Lopez moved to end the initial evaluation of the Executive Director with no change to the Executive Director's employment status. The next evaluation will occur at the June Board Meeting. Second by Doug Ruston. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Theresa Sygitowicz moved to forward Recommendation #2 to the Business Meeting. Second by Amy McKay, motion carried.
- **Motion:** Renee Hadley moved to forward Recommendation #3 to the Business Meeting with an amendment substituting "One supervisor from at least 50% of member districts". Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Javier Lopez moved to forward Recommendation #4 to the Business Meeting. Second by Amy McKay. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Mark Craven moved to forward Recommendations #5 & #6 to the Business Meeting. Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Doug Rushton moved to forward Recommends #7 and #8 to the Business Meeting. Second by Javier Lopez. Jeanette Dorner offered a friendly amendment to adopt the proposed amendment by the Legislative, Bylaws, and District Policies Committee and add "as directed by the President, in consultation with the ED and Nursery manager" and was accepted. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Dean Longrie moved to recommend all proposed technical changes to the Business meeting. Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Lynn Bahrych moved to appoint Larry Davis as Secretary to complete the remainder of her term. Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Doug Rushton moved to authorize WACD to sign memorandum on private forest landowners. Second by Dean Longrie. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Doug Rushton moved to approve a new contract with Martin Flynn Public Affairs. Second by Amy McKay. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Javier Lopez moved to select Hotel Murano for the 2019 and 2020 Annual Meetings and second by Sarah Richards. Motion carried.

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Members Present

Tom Miller, President (Spokane CD)  
Jeanette Dorner, Vice President (Pierce CD)  
Lynn Bahrych, Secretary (San Juan Islands CD)  
Doug Rushton, National Director (Thurston CD)  
Mark Craven, Past President (Snohomish CD)  
Sarah Richards, Northwest Area Director (Whidbey Island CD)  
Theresa Sygitowicz, Northwest Area Director (Whatcom CD)  
Dean Longrie, Southwest Area Director (Clark CD)  
John Keatley, Southwest Area Director (Cowlitz CD)  
John Preston, North Central Area Director (Grant County CD)  
John McLean, North Central Area Director (Foster Creek CD)  
Javier Lopez, South Central Area Director (South Yakima CD)  
Cindy Reed, South Central Area Director (North Yakima CD)  
Eddie Johnson, Northeast Area Director (Lincoln County CD)  
John Floyd, Northeast Area Director (Pend Oreille CD)  
Amy McKay, Southeast Area Director (Whitman CD)  
Renee Hadley, WADE President (Walla Walla County CD)

Staff Present

Patricia Hickey, Executive Director  
Jim Brown, Nursery Manager  
Ryan Baye, Legislative & Membership Assistant

President Tom Miller called the meeting to order at 9:34 am.

Approving Previous Board Meeting Minutes

**Javier Lopez moved to approve the previous meeting minutes.** Second by Renee Hadley.  
Motion carried.

October Financial Report

Patricia Hickey outlined the cover page of the financial summary and answered questions related to PMC aged receivables and the timing of the Executive Operations payments from the WACD. She also shared that 42 of the 45 conservation districts had paid dues and she had communicated with Jefferson CD and Mason CD.

Jim Brown described that a withheld payment from the IRS in 2014 was expected to be settled in the near future. Jim said the seedling harvest had begun earlier than in years past, but was expected to be very successful.

### Fiscal Year Close Out Report

Patricia summarized the year, highlighting the one-time savings from not employing an Executive Director or a PMC position. She also complimented Jim and the other staff in Bow for their work and how the PMC was \$75,000 ahead of last year's sales with over \$780,000 in sales at the start of November. She and Jim answered questions on the increase of fuel prices, how the retirement plan was received by staff, the progress in hiring harvest crews, and the impact of the fires in California on the PMC.

### PMC Manager Report

Jim reiterated some of the information already shared regarding sales. He completed an overview of the successful species and updated the situation regarding new lighting and laying down asphalt. He was starting to search for a new tractor after one broke down. He requested authorization to purchase a new one, with a limit of \$30,000 based on the depreciation schedule.

Jim shared Assistant Nursery Manager John Knox began work on October 1<sup>st</sup>. He thinks John will work out well. Jim started John with a harvest crew conducting quality control. He included information on their attempts to fill out their seasonal labor crew through several venues. He answered questions regarding the requirements for a new tractor; and what he needed from WACD leadership during harvest. **Doug Rushton moved to allocate \$30,000 from the Capital Reserve Account for the purchase of a new tractor.** Second by Sarah Richards. Javier asked about the financing options available to the PMC. Theresa Sygitowicz recommended searching the Capital Press. John Keatley recommended exploring leasing options and how successful that practice had been in southwest Washington. Motion carried.

### Audit Report

Keaton Wersen from Larson Gross PLLC, via telephone, described their audit to the board: the process, what they looked for, and their recommendations based on what deficiencies they found with WACD's current mechanisms.

He answered questions on what next steps WACD should take, described the reasoning behind certain recommendations, and offered names of part-time accountants should WACD decide to address their internal control deficiencies in that manner.

Recess at 10:55

Executive Session from 11:02 – 11:36 to review the performance of an employee.

### Executive Director Performance Evaluation

Jeanette Dorner shared with the new board members the motion in September to re-evaluate the Executive Director's performance. **Javier Lopez moved to end the initial evaluation with no change to Patricia's employment status with the next evaluation at the June Board Meeting.** Second by Doug Ruston. Amy McKay requested discussion in advance of the June meeting so the Board would be prepared. Javier wanted to make Patricia aware his belief she has done an "absolutely fantastic job". *Motion carried.*

### Bylaw Recommendations

Ryan Baye outlined the process that brought the bylaw recommendations to the Board: from initial discussion by the Legislative, Bylaws, and District Policies Committee to the September Board meeting, then the feedback from the area meetings, and a second committee meeting to make a final recommendation to the Board. He also shared the next steps, how the board was making a recommendation to the full membership to be considered at the Association's annual Business Meeting later in the week.

**Theresa Sygitowicz moved to forward Recommendation #2 to the Business Meeting.** Second by Amy McKay, motion carried.

**Renee Hadley moved to forward Recommendation #3 to the Business Meeting with an amendment substituting "One supervisor from at least 50% of member districts".** Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.

**Javier Lopez moved to forward Recommendation #4 to the Business Meeting.** Second by Amy McKay. Motion carried.

**Mark Craven moved to forward Recommendations #5 & #6 to the Business Meeting.** Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.

**Doug Rushton moved to forward Recommends #7 and #8 to the Business Meeting.** Second by Javier Lopez. Jeanette Dorner offered a friendly amendment to adopt the proposed amendment by the Legislative, Bylaws, and District Policies Committee and add "as directed by the President, in consultation with the ED and Nursery manager" and was accepted. Motion carried.

**Dean Longrie moved to recommend all proposed technical changes to the Business meeting.** Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.

### Secretary Election

Lynn Bahrych shared the letter she wrote to the board earlier in November announcing her resignation effective December 1<sup>st</sup>. The Board directed staff to announce a call for applications. Only Larry Davis submitted an application that was included in the packet. **Lynn Bahrych nominated Larry Davis as Secretary to complete the remainder of her term.** Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.

### Forestry MOU

Doug Rushton recounted his work on a forestry memorandum of understanding with several partners and that he circulated the final draft among the officers and area directors in October. **Doug Rushton moved to authorize WACD to sign the memorandum with US Forest Service, NRCS, the Conservation Commission, WSU Extension, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources** Second by Dean Longrie. Motion carried.

Lunch recess from 12:00 to 12:35

### Partner Reports

Roylene Rides at the Door distributed copies of a written report. She noted that the Acting NRCS Chief Leonard Jordan was retiring after 37 years with the agency, and NRCS was in the midst of the most dynamic change in her 14 years. Roylene relayed the downward trend in staff levels and admitted NRCS staff “will have to say “no more”.

Mark Clark announced over fifty people applied for the Assistant Policy Specialist position at the Commission. He discussed the Farm Bill, the relationship with the Department of Natural Resources, and the Commission’s budget requests.

Renee Hadley was glad 254 people attended the June WADE conference. They are at capacity for the current venue and will be adjusting the conference going forward. Renee shared with new board members that she was the third WADE president of 2018.

Doug Rushton shared on behalf of the Conservation Society they were wrapping up conservation education mini-grant reviews and would be announcing the four winners in the near future.

Doug Rushton informed the Board that Wade Troutman of Foster Creek CD would end his term as the NACD Pacific Board member (and NACD Executive Board member) at the NACD Annual Conference in San Antonio in February, and Tom Wehri from California would be taking over as Pacific Region chair, with Doug as the Vice-Chair

### Future of the WADE Conference

Renee Hadley shared again that because WADE was at capacity at their current venue for the summer conference, they were exploring new options. With a goal of incorporating more technical sources, the current thought was to transition the Supervisor/Leadership Track from the WADE conference to perhaps the WACD Annual Conference and wanted feedback from the WACD Board.

Dean Longrie did not want to lose the growing number of supervisors attending the WADE Conference and Javier Lopez thought it would be a great opportunity for WACD.

### Executive Office Report

Patricia and Ryan reported on their activities since the last board meeting. The highlights included time spent organizing the Annual Meeting, helping shape the Commission’s budget request, working on the 2019 legislative strategy, and developing the new WACD website.

Doug Rushton thanked them for the monthly newsletters being distributed.

### Approving Lobbyist Contract

**Doug Rushton moved to approve a new contract with Martin Flynn Public Affairs.** Second by Amy McKay. Motion carried.

### 2019 Annual Meeting

Lori McLaughlin answered questions on the different venues researched – Hotel Murano in Tacoma, the Olympia Red Lion, and the SeaTac DoubleTree. **Sarah Richards moved to hold the 2019 and 2020 Annual Meeting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of November.** Second by Amy McKay.

Theresa Sygitowicz suggested holding the event in Tacoma would be a compromise between attracting agency staff and King County legislators. Amy McKay asked if approving this motion meant staff would have to confirm which hotel would be available during the desired time. **Dean Longrie moved the previous question.** Second by Mark Craven. Motion passed by a vote of 8-3. Motion on holding Annual Meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of November failed.

Dean Longrie moved to select the Olympia Red Lion for the 2019 and 2020 Annual Meetings. Second by Mark Craven. Chair called for the Board to stand at ease for 5 minutes. Meeting resumed. Chair called for vote on the motion. Motion failed.

Javier Lopez moved to select Hotel Murano for the 2019 and 2020 Annual Meetings and received a second. Motion carried.

#### Area Director Reports

North Central Area: John Preston shared that Grant County CD will host a regional VSP meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup> and their rates and charges would be implemented in the spring. John McLean shared Foster Creek CD was focused on fire recovery and was running short on funds.

South Central Area: Cindy Reed had only been on the job for a month and deferred to Javier. Javier Lopez reported South Yakima CD had a successful outreach event to area dairy producers and Kittitas County CD was keeping the area directors informed on their programs.

Northwest Area: Sarah Richards emailed her report to the other Area Directors in the interest of time.

Southwest Area: Dean Longrie announced Clark CD was looking for a part-time farm planner and by 2019 would have only two, part-time staff.

Southeast Area: Amy McKay recapped their October Area Meeting and their area award recipients.

Northeast Area: John Floyd shared a condensed report on an issue regarding a smelter dividing those living in the northeast corner of the state.

#### Closing Remarks

Jerry Hendrickson was recognized by the board for his service to WACD as a long-time SE Area Director.

Jeanette Dorner shared with the board her intention to run as President.

Javier Lopez announced he would run for Vice President.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.