

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Remote Connection through Zoom

February 15, 2021

Summary of Board Actions

- **Motion:** Doug Rushton moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Second by Chris Porter. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** John McLean moved to adopt the November 16th and January 18th meeting minutes as presented. Second by Alan Chapman. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Doug Rushton moved to adopt the 2021 Work Plan as presented. Second by Amy McKay. Motion Carried.

Board of Directors February Meeting Minutes

Members Remotely Present

Jeanette Dorner, President (Pierce CD)
Mike Mumford, Vice President (Pend Oreille CD)
Amy McKay, Secretary (Whitman CD)
Dave Fenn, Treasurer (Lewis CD)
Doug Rushton, National Director (Thurston CD)
Mark Craven, Past President (Snohomish CD)
Chris Porter, Northwest Area Director (King CD)
Alan Chapman, 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)
Cindy Reed, South Central Area Director (North Yakima CD)
Barbara Bailey, South Central Area Director (Underwood CD)
Jeff Schibel, Northeast Area Director (Lincoln County CD)
Jon Birnbaum, Northeast Area Director (Stevens County CD)
Mary Collins, Southeast Area Director (Palouse CD)
Bill Blake, WADE President (Skagit CD)

Others Remotely Present

Tom Salzer, WACD Executive Director
Ryan Baye, WACD Legislative & Membership Lead
Carol Smith, WSCC Executive Director
Michael Crowder, NACD President (Benton CD)
Mike Tobin, District Manager (North Yakima CD)

President Jeanette Dorner began the meeting at 6:02. Bill Blake and Jon Birnbaum were introduced as WACD Board members at their first meeting.

Doug Rushton moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Second by Chris Porter. Motion carried.

Area Director Reports

The two Northwest Area Directors reported there was a lot of snow and a lot of district manager vacancies in their area. Some districts were already meeting with legislators and taking novel approaches to new election systems.

Jeff Schibel attended all five board meetings in the NE Area in January with Ryan Baye, recruiting a 2nd Area Director. He shared some details from a joint project between Stevens County CD and Spokane CD on running a 50-acre production agriculture property.

Cindy Reed and Barbara Bailey commented on water right issues in the SC Area, and some of the district elections taking place.

Mary Collins was attending SE Area meetings with other WACD individuals to recruit for a SE Area Director. She was glad to be able to attend meetings outside of Whitman County.

Dean Longrie recounted operations at Clark CD, had not heard much from the other districts he regularly talked with. John Keatley spoke on vacant supervisor positions in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum CDs.

John McLean and John Preston shared some local challenges the North Central Area districts were facing around water quality issues, fire recovery funding, and applying for federal grants.

Approval of the Minutes

John McLean moved to approve the November and January meeting minutes. Second by Alan Chapman. Dean Longrie asked about approving minutes from the work session. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Dave Fenn described the Association's finances as "very sound" with the growth of the Edward Jones Investment Account and how PMC sales were close to previous years despite COVID. Tom Salzer described an ongoing issue with the IRS refunding several years' worth of taxes while simultaneously believing WACD owed additional funds. He reported on the work done by staff, WACD's accountant, and now an IRS Taxpayer Advocate to resolve the issue.

Partner Report

Carol Smith shared a report from the Conservation Commission, highlighting legislative activity and the potential FY21-23 SCC budget.

Michael Crowder was glad to be welcomed as the new NACD President. He recapped the NACD Annual Conference, his first priorities, and some of his initial actions as President. He answered questions and acknowledged the success of NACD's personnel and programs.

Bill Blake had only been WADE President for six weeks, but already made the decision that the 2021 WADE conference would be virtual. He warned the other board members the 2022 conference would likely look different, either in a new facility or at a different time of the year, to avoid a steep price increase.

2021 Work Plan

Tom Salzer presented the work plan seen at the January Work Session, without changes. Doug Rushton moved to adopt the 2021 Work Plan as Presented. Second by Amy McKay. Motion carried.

Legislative Update

Ryan Baye did a WACD-specific legislative review, summarizing that there was little proposed legislation that would directly impact CD efforts but plenty of bills tangentially related to districts. Tom Salzer discussed the weekly legislative staff activity and what information was being posted on the new WACD Hub website. Ryan and Tom answered questions about SB 5220 to exempt salmon recovery grants from taxes and SB 5342 concerning irrigation district elections.

Brynn Brady joined the call and conducted a brief overview of the legislative session to date. She compared and contrasted this year's session to previous years and how those changes would play out in the remainder of session. Brynn discussed potential federal budget relief legislation and their impact state budget development. She answered questions about the transportation budget and the major legislation which could impact state transportation funding.

Letter from North Yakima CD

NYCD Supervisors George Cameron, Dustin Melius, and Frank Hendrix joined the virtual meeting.

Mike Tobin spoke on behalf of his board, reiterating the points addressed in their letter and illustrating their concerns with resolutions adopted at the 2020 Annual Conference, with additional comments by NYCD supervisors. Michael Crowder and Dave Fenn shared their perspectives, with Tom Salzer reminding the group of the resolution process.

Jeanette Dorner spoke to the procedure used at the business meeting and how she tried to conduct proceedings. John Keatley relayed details from a letter written by Cowlitz and Wahkiakum CDs on the topic the previous year with their concerns. Jeanette closed the conversation with her preference for how districts could choose to communicate with the state board in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40.