

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Summary of February Board Actions

- Alan Chapman moved to adopt the draft board meeting agenda. Second by John Floyd. Motion carried.
- Alan Chapman moved to approve January minutes. Second from Barbara Bailey. Motion carried with Amy McKay's abstention.
- Doug Rushton moved to adopt the reimbursement policy as presented. Second by Jeanette Dorner. Motion carried.
- Jeff Schibel moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Second by Jerry Kolke. Motion carried.
- Amy McKay moved to authorize a waiver for Tom Salzer to submit January 2023 reimbursements beyond the 30-day window. Second by Alan Chapman. Motion carried with an abstention by John Floyd.
- Barbara Bailey moved to authorize up to \$5,000 for an initial legal review of the PMC lease to evaluate the possibility of Skagit CD re-locating to the property and to report back before any additional monies are to be spent. Second by Amy McKay. Motion carried.
- Alan Chapman moved to authorize a \$50 per meeting reimbursement option, as requested by participants and on an as needed basis, for CDs participating in the Shared District Resources Work Group. That no more than \$2500 in total be used for this pilot project. Second by Doug Rushton. Motion carried.

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Remote Connection through Zoom

February 28, 2023

Board Meeting Minutes

Members Remotely Present

Mike Mumford, President (Pend Oreille CD)
Amy McKay, Vice-President (Whitman CD)
Barbara Bailey, Secretary (Underwood CD)
Doug Rushton, National Director (Thurston CD)
Jeanette Dorner, Past President (Pierce CD)
Alan Chapman, Northwest Area Director (Whatcom CD)
Chris Porter, Northwest Area Director (King CD)
Lisa Zaborac, Southwest Area Director (Grays Harbor CD)
Jerry Kolke, Southwest Area Director (Clark CD)
John Preston, North Central Area Director (Columbia Basin CD)
John McLean, North Central Area Director (Foster Creek CD)
Jack Clark, South Central Area Director (Benton CD)
Jeff Schibel, Northeast Area Director (Lincoln County CD)

John Floyd, Northeast Area Director (Pend Oreille CD)
Mary Collins, Southeast Area Director (Palouse CD)
Cindy Pierce, WADE President (Skagit CD)

Others Remotely Present

Tom Salzer, WACD Executive Director
Ryan Baye, WACD Legislative & Membership Director
Jim Brown, WACD Director of Nursery Operations
Chris Pettit, WSCC Executive Director
Roylene Comes at Night, NRCS State Conservationist
Bill Blake, Skagit CD District Manager
Sarah Moorehead, Thurston CD Executive Director
Zorah Oppenheimer, Clark CD District Manager
Dean Longrie, Clark CD Supervisor
Kenna Fosnacht, Lewis CD Resource Technician

President Mumford called the meeting to order at 6 PM. Ryan Baye conducted a roll call of those present to confirm a quorum was present. Alan Chapman moved to adopt the draft board meeting agenda. Second by John Floyd. Motion carried.

Area Focus

Sarah Moorehead presented for Thurston CD. She appreciated seeing WACD's response after speaking at the May meeting last year; she felt there was good dialogue and vulnerabilities at the Annual Conference. With Tom and Ryan, she believed she had never been more informed about WACD's activities between the 5 Things and Legislative Update newsletters. Thurston CD is in the second phase of "education and engagement center", looking to create a community space and build a facility.

Zorah Oppenheimer, as Clark CD's District Manager, echoed Sarah's comments on Tom and Ryan, she couldn't believe how they package that information into digestible pieces and still do other work. Zorah spoke to the Shared Resources Work Group being assembled by her and the WACD staff. She also shared the large amount of growth at Clark CD, with many too staff members and too many grants not to build policies and organizational structure. Dean Longrie added that Clark CD is reborn like a phoenix and he wanted to thank fellow CDs and partners like WSCC and NRCS.

Kenna Fosnacht spoke for Lewis CD. The district had a new no-till drill (funded by the Sustainable Farms and Fields program), a new employee, and a new VCC crew. Their Voluntary Stewardship Program had 550 Individual Stewardship Plans. Kenna talked about the Lewis County stream team, recent tree planting and restoration projects. She wanted to highlight Grays Harbor CD as a great partner, both for shared events and institutional knowledge.

Lisa Zaborac presented for Grays Harbor CD. She discussed a film festival last week on salmon restoration films hosted by the district and partners. There were over 100 people; it was really interesting and there were great questions. Another panel was planned in Chehalis on Friday.

Public Comment Period

No member of the public spoke during the open comment period.

Previous Board Meeting Minutes

Alan Chapman moved to approve January minutes. Second from Barbara Bailey. Motion carried with Amy McKay's abstention.

Treasurer's Report

Tom Salzer presented on behalf of Treasurer Fenn, who was unable to attend the meeting. He walked the board through the January Financials. He answered questions about the percentage of sales to member-districts versus non-members, as well as follow-up questions on the WACD PMC's sales to non-members.

Legislative Update

WACD Lobbyist Brynn Brady joined the call to share legislative status report and how meeting in person again is working. She spoke to the policy cut-off and fiscal cut-off, how "mostly dead" bills could come back to life, which bills were being prioritized by committees, HB 1720, the Climate Commitment Act auction, and provided an update on the VSP re-enrollment bill. She answered questions about riparian buffer discussions, the gill-net bill, and a proposal on off-road diesel reimbursement.

Reimbursement Policy

Tom Salzer presented a proposed change to WACD's reimbursement policy, after noting a discrepancy in the policy book that WACD was supposed to operate on a per diem reimbursement practice but had another section prohibiting per diem reimbursement. He proposed wholly adopting the per diem reimbursement practice and wanted to bring the policy book into alignment with itself. Doug Rushton moved to adopt the reimbursement policy as presented. Second by Jeanette Dorner. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report (continued)

Jeff Schibel noted the board had not voted to accept the Treasurer's Report. Jeff Schibel moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Second by Jerry Kolke. Motion carried.

Reimbursement Waiver

Tom Salzer requested a waiver for January travel, he had missed the 30-day window to submit reimbursements for attending the NACD Annual Meeting. Amy McKay moved to authorize a waiver for Tom Salzer to submit January 2023 reimbursements beyond the 30-day window. Second by Alan Chapman. Motion carried with an abstention by John Floyd.

PMC Report

Jim Brown informed the board that as of Feb 22 the PMC had \$1.6 million in sales from 371 separate orders. He noted an increasing trend of plants being purchased earlier in the year, reducing the need for a separate cooler to store inventory. He presented several changes in expenses versus FY22, with increased costs in federal income taxes, seasonal labor, and operational costs. There had only been a few days of frozen conditions to slow down processing, but workers were starting to leave for their main farming jobs and he had brought in replacement staff to keep up with demand. He answered a question on the new truck purchased for the nursery, a 2019 F-150 with EcoBoost that had 31,000 miles for 39K.

Skagit CD Request for Office Move

Skagit District Manager Bill Blake presented to the WACD Board on the rapid increase in rental rates for the district office and their district's request to explore moving onto the PMC's location without interrupting the nursery's operations. Bill led the board discussion on the lease language and restrictions

on the title, potential timeline, and the need for legal consultation. Barbara Bailey moved to authorize up to \$5,000 for an initial legal review of the PMC lease to evaluate the possibility of Skagit CD re-locating to the property and to report back before any additional monies are to be spent. Second by Amy McKay. Bill Blake shared Skagit CD could provide an additional \$5,000 towards legal costs if necessary. Motion carried.

NACD Annual Conference

Tom Salzer shared his perspective on the recent NACD conference, summarizing it to be a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Doug Rushton shared his NACD Report, that Michael Crowder assumed the role of NACD Past President and Kim LaFleur of Massachusetts was the new president. Doug also discussed NACD's 2023 Farm Bill Priorities and the outcomes of WACD's resolutions from Skagit, Foster Creek and Whitman CD.

NACD Fly-In

Doug Rushton and Ryan Baye co-presented on the upcoming Congressional Fly-In and the authorization in the budget for sending two WACD representatives to DC. Ryan will be there already for AgForestry and Doug Rushton was the second representative. They shared the three state specific priorities they were preparing for their meetings: a SAFE initiative waiver for Douglas County, increasing rental rates, and the Whitman CD resolution on voided FSA contracts.

Committee Updates

Ryan Baye gave an update on the activities of WACD's committees and Work Groups. He also brought forward a proposal to the Board for consideration, to offer reimbursement for attending the Shared Resources Work Group meetings. Alan Chapman moved to authorize a \$50 per meeting reimbursement option, as requested by participants and on an as needed basis, for CDs participating in the Shared District Resources Work Group. That no more than \$2500 in total be used for this pilot project. Second by Doug Rushton. Motion carried.

Announcements

The Conservation Commission was conducting a 360 degree review of Executive Director Chris Pettit and all supervisors were sent an email on February 9th

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33.