

West Multnomah SWCD Board Meeting Wed. May 21, 2008 6:00 PM  
At: 2701 NW Vaughn St, Montgomery Park, Suite 443.

Adopted 6/10/08.

6:07 PM Board Business Meeting called to order.

Present: Directors Brian Lightcap, George Sowder, Kim Peterson

Director Terri Preeg Riggsby participated by telephone.

Associate Director John Eccles (briefly to drop off report).

Staff: Jim Robison, Dick Springer, Steve Fedje, Dave Bowman, Kate McQuillan

Guest: Jayne Cronlund, Executive Director of Three Rivers Land Conservancy

Conservation Technician Dave Bowman reported on his work with the District's landowners. Bowman is essentially the "How to person" for technical assistance, working mostly with livestock owners, especially horse operations.

Conservation Technician Dave Bowman gave the Board an overview of his approach and techniques he uses when he contacts landowners about improvements in livestock and pasture management.

Bowman gave examples of landowners he has worked with.

One landowner previously used the creek for a horse run, but is now an exemplary steward of protecting the stream.

He has seen examples of poor animal health that have been greatly improved by adopting good conservation practices.

Landowners can be moved step-by-step to adopt better practices, by seeing the benefits as they progress.

Dave emphasized that the most effective way to motivate change in behavior and get the landowner to adopt new management practices was to sell conservation through the horse owners interests: the horse.

In response to Board questions, Bowman emphasized that word of mouth is the best outreach tool available to the district.

He also noted that it is helpful if landowners are open to any of the available tools for solving problems, so that the right tool can be selected to fit the situation.

Bowman is working out of the new East Multnomah SWCD office, but is often in the field, and frequently stops in at the West Multnomah SWCD office and the Clackamas SWCD office to complete work.

Director Lightcap directed a question to Dave concerning the extent of his outreach in the area WMSWCD represents.

Jayne Cronlund from Three Rivers Land Conservancy presented an outline and proposal for expansion of the Backyard Habitat Certification Program. Her presentation was accompanied by the submission of the following document: *Backyard Certification Program Expansion – Project Description – May 20, 2008 Backyard Habitat sponsorship Agreement – Draft 4/14/08*; and *Annual Budget for Backyard Habitat Certification*

*Program.* The Backyard Habitat Certification Program was developed out of the West Willamette Restoration Partnership, which West Multnomah SWCD has helped sponsor.

The Certification has three levels:

Level 1: Remove all invasive weeds on the restricted list.

Level 2: Restore 25% of property to native species.

Level 3: Restore 75% of property to native species.

After two years of initial operation in the West Willamette Restoration Partnership target area, the Backyard Habitat Certification program has 50 participating landowners and 12 certified.

The program has proven to be popular, and interest expressed by landowners is quickly outstripping the capacity of the current program to respond. Fifteen agencies, including West Multnomah SWCD, met last fall to review options for expansion, and all agencies expressed support for pursuing the program.

Under the current pilot project, Three Rivers handles intake of calls, and conducts site visits. Landowners receive incentives, such as wholesale native plants and access to an AmeriCorps crew (at landowner cost) to remove invasive weeds. The cost of providing the site visits, incentives, certification and program operations is approximately \$500 to \$1,000 per landowner.

Cronlund outlined the structure of the proposal to be like a tree with the roots being funders (possibly Spirit Mountain and OSU), the trunk being Three Rivers Land Conservancy and Audubon Society for the operations, the branches being sponsoring agencies (SWCDs, Watershed Councils, etc), the leaves being landowners, and raindrops of Master Gardeners.

The West Multnomah SWCD could be involved as either a funding source, or as a sponsoring agency to provide direct service to landowners through the program. Being a sponsoring agency would require dedicating a 1/4FTE staff position to the program (for site visits and technical support) and committing to 33 landowner certifications by 2012.

Sowder and Preeg Riggsby expressed acknowledgement that there is a strong demand for this kind of program, and that this is a way for the District to provide service to urban constituents. Preeg Riggsby noted that Tryon Creek Watershed Council has a similar program in place using volunteer mentors and provision of native plant materials.

Springer and Lightcap expressed a desire to target the program geographically to important watersheds, and target high priority concerns.

Cronlund noted that landowners who are in areas where the Certification program is not available to the, would still be added to an e-newsletter providing them with resources and information.

Sowder noted that having a region wide effort puts everyone on the same page, rather than each organization acting independently. We have to see where the conservation goals overlap. It's been difficult for the District to serve urban constituents, and this could be a way to do that.

Cronlund noted that there will be a meeting on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 10am, at the Oregon Zoo with potential sponsoring agencies.

1. Minutes and Treasurers Report

**Sowder moved to approve the Draft Minutes for 4-15-08. Lightcap 2<sup>nd</sup>. No revisions. Motion passed, Aye 4, Nay 0.**

Treasurer's report was provided:

*Balance Sheet as of May 21, 2008*

*General Fund Budget vs Actual*

*Unpaid Bills Detail*

*Open Invoices*

*Journal: April 2008*

Preeg Riggsby noted that we have good oversight of expenditures in place, with Jim reviewing and preparing expenses to match the budget, Dick approving expenses to be paid, Terri reviewing and making payments, and Brian reviewing specific expenses when necessary.

The board also revisited the Clean Water Services item listed in the document *Open Invoices – As of May 21, 2008*.

2. Directors and Staff Reports

Lightcap reported that he attended the forestry workshop "Diversifying Income Opportunities on Small Woodlands", [see pdf document/flyer: *Diversifying income opportunities on small woodlands – Hopkins*

*Tree Farm < Oregon City, Saturday, May17*] and found it to be very valuable. He expressed support for sponsoring a similar workshop in our district (as proposed by Conservation Planner Kern-Korot).

District Manager Springer submitted his printed report and highlighted items for the Board (see attached, *Manager's Monthly Report to Board – May '08 (Dick Springer)*).

Kate McQuillan, Invasives Species Control Coordinator for WMSWCD, submitted the document: *March-May Staff Report for Kate McQuillan, Invasives Species Control Coordinator*.

3. Discussion

- Office space changes

Robison provided a diagram of existing and proposed office space.

Springer discussed the latest proposal from Montgomery Park management regarding changing office space.

WMSWCD and NRCS currently occupy Suite 450, 443 and 442. WMSWCD has taken over space in 450 previously used by East Multnomah SWCD, and so will begin paying NRCS \$1,500 per quarter (\$500 per month) for use of that space.

WMSWCD currently pays \$350 per month for room 442.

The proposal is to shift the NRCS leased space from room 443 (the conference room) into room 453 (adjacent to 450), release room 442 and for WMSWCD to lease the remainder of room 453.

This shift results in adding approximately 770s.f. to total space, at an additional cost of approximately \$1,000 per month.

The current NRCS (GSA) lease was recently renewed for 5 years, and no amendment to the existing lease is necessary. The proposed WMSWCD lease is on terms matching the NRCS (GSA) lease, and includes three additional parking spaces (two regular parking passes plus one reserved space for a district vehicle).

Robison and Springer noted that the additional space will allow the District to house at least four additional new staff and incorporate a library/resources room, along with providing for the conference room and other needs.

Springer noted that the builder owner is very motivated to help us make this move, in order to free up rooms 443 and 442 for a large space tenant. They are very willing to provide tenant improvements to room 453 to meet our needs in order to encourage the move.

Robison noted that room 442 is currently on a month-to-month rental which building management could cancel at any time, while room 443 is included in the NRCS (GSA) lease and is locked in for 5 years.

**Sowder moved to Authorize District Manager Dick Springer to finalize a lease agreement with Montgomery Park for room 453, releasing rooms 442 and 443, to review the lease with the Treasurer, the Board, and GSA, to sign the lease agreement, and to provide to the Board in June cost amendments for the FY08-09 Budget. Lightcap 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed, Aye 4, Nay 0.**

Director Preeg Riggsby had to leave the meeting at this time, resulting in loss of a quorum.

Lightcap reported that he attended the hearing on the ESCO landfill on Sauvie Island. He further reported that he attended the Sturgeon Lake meeting. The Sturgeon Lake group is pursuing getting Metro involved in the project, and Multnomah County has become involved. Director Lightcap explained that one motivation for seeking to include Metro was identifying possible new sources of funding. He mentioned that although Sturgeon Lake is outside Metro's boundary, Metro does have programs outside its current boundary. Rhoda Portis is in the process of drafting a Declaration of Cooperation for all potential partners.

Lightcap attended the Board of Districts meeting where a major item of debate was the OACD dues policy. The plan developed at the meeting calls for District to pay based on ½% of the District operating budget (similar to NACD), with a \$1,000 minimum and \$5,000 maximum.

Fedje reported that there is currently an EQIP signup (including for forest land owners).

- Logo

Lightcap stated that he will seek Board member's votes by email regarding selection of a logo, from the two finalists.

4. Board Meeting Schedule: Lightcap requested that the Board consider setting the meeting night to either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. He will poll Board members as to their preferences. Support was expressed by those present to change the June Board meeting to the night of June 10<sup>th</sup> to be held immediately after the Budget Hearing.

Meeting was adjourned.