



West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board Meeting Minutes 5/19/2020

### **1. Meeting Location and Time:**

Location: Held via Conference Call (1-800-309-2350). The meeting was called to order by Director Preeg Riggsby at 6:02 PM.

### **2. Introductions and Agenda Approval**

Directors Present: Hartline, Lightcap, Looney, Miller, Peterson, Preeg Riggsby, Sowder; Associate Director Present: Hamer; Interim Co-District Managers (DM): Levis and Logalbo; Staff: Razalenti; NRCS Staff: Galland; Guests: Marganne Allen, Oregon Department of Agriculture Water Quality Program Manager.

The agenda was approved by acclamation.

### **3. Minutes:**

*WMSW Conservation District Board Meeting minutes<sup>i</sup> and Budget Committee minutes<sup>ii</sup> from 04/21/2020*  
Director Miller made a motion to approve both the Board meeting and Budget Committee meeting minutes from 4/21/20 as written, and Director Hartline seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

### **4. Review of Treasurer's Reports**

Director Miller reviewed the financial reports for the month of April, noting that the District is in a good position and will likely have extra funds to carry into next fiscal year. DM Levis reported that the District should see approximately \$20,000 or more come in from property tax revenues by the end of the fiscal year.

The following reports were reviewed:

- a) *WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of April 30, 2020<sup>iii</sup>*
- b) *WMSWCD-General Fund Budget Only Budget Performance April 30, 2020<sup>iv</sup>*
- c) *WMSWCD-Sturgeon Lake Fund Budget Performance April 30, 2020<sup>v</sup>*

### **5. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report**

NRCS staff Galland reported the current status of NRCS work regarding social distancing guidelines and employees' ability to work from home, as well as reported on some recent outreach efforts and available grants. The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and NRCS are funding technical assistance grants and are accepting applications. The District will be applying for this grant, focusing on the forestry program.

### **6. Public Comment Period**

No public comment.

## 7. Long Range Business Plan (LRBP)

DM Logalbo encouraged the Board to read the Long Range Business Plan Board report 5/12/20<sup>vi</sup> for a summary on recent progress. The District is moving from the information gathering and planning phase into the direction setting phase for the LRBP update. The major Conservation Scope specific takeaways from the information gathering phase were provided in the Long Range Business Plan Conservation Scope Information Gathering Report 5/12/20<sup>vii</sup>, and DM Logalbo reviewed the overarching themes/findings. DM Logalbo explained a similar report will be developed for the Organizational Health takeaways as well.

The equity lens revisions to the evolving success criteria were also highlighted and included on page 15 of the board packet. One important issue flagged in reviewing the equity lens criteria was the need to further define the subjective aspects of the criteria, to ensure success criteria is agreed upon and clear. Items underlined in the version provided to the board will be further reviewed as we move through the process. Technical staff provided some initial thoughts to the board to consider on one of the criteria flagged for further defining: the criteria related to addressing priority conservation threats. Staff wanted to share the following threats they are considering a priority to address in the next LRBP as we move into the mission and other direction setting questions:

- 1) Lack of conservation education & awareness of WMSWCD (the need to broaden our reach)
- 2) Climate change (the need to highlight how we address this more clearly in our plans and communications, but also a desire to work more proactively on addressing this threat)
- 3) The following historical conservation focal areas are facing continued threats:
  - a. Water Quality
  - b. Soil Health
  - c. Wildlife Habitats
- 4) Threats related to relevancy, equity, access and disparities must be addressed by better understanding historically underserved communities and then responding to what we learn.
- 5) Development & urbanization (interests in creative ways to “get in front” of related threats as well as mitigate for the same was discussed)
- 6) Lack of incentives
- 7) Decreasing partner capacities (related to COVID-19)

The Board discussed some of the questions related to the “mission affirmation or modification” listed in the LRBP Conservation Scope Direction Setting Conversation Questions<sup>viii</sup>. The Board agreed that broadening our mission beyond just soil and water conservation was desirable and appropriate to capturing work we now do and what we hope to do in the future, but wasn’t in agreement about how to wordsmith this. A discussion about having more general wording in the mission about natural resources or conservation rather than specifying soil and water or being redundant and mentioning both was discussed, as well as keeping the mission clear yet concise. Staff member Magyar will be working on any wordsmithing.

DM Logalbo & Director Preeg Riggsby discussed how others explain how or with whom they get their work done (sharing EMSWCD & NRCS mission statements as examples) in their mission and how we fail to do so. We just say what we do, but fail to give any distinction as to how. There was a board discussion supporting looking into mention of these aspects and a desire to have a mission statement that distinguishes our mission as being unique from our partners’ missions.

The Board retreat that was originally scheduled for the spring, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will take place in a modified version that follows CDC guidelines sometime in the fall. In the meantime, the feedback provided by the Board so far will be brought back to staff and an advisory committee. The Board is welcome and encouraged to further review the above-mentioned materials and provide any feedback to DM Logalbo.

## **8. Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI)**

Director Preeg Riggsby asked for feedback from the Board regarding the frequency with which the Board would like to be updated regarding the District's DEI work. The consensus was that the Board would like to get a quarterly report out on both organization efforts as well as the DEI Committee efforts that are happening at the District, specifically as it relates to strategies and goals in the annual work plan. This can be more often as needed if something important comes up.

## **9. District Manager Check-in**

DM Levis gave an update on the Sturgeon Lake restoration project progress – three out of four easements will be completed by June 30<sup>th</sup>, and the irrigation work for one of the landowners should also be completed by that time. The District will be in good position going into next fiscal year. Feedback regarding staff presentations during the COVID-19 office closure was discussed. The general consensus was that Board meetings will stay in the current phone call format and staff presentations will be on hold until the Board is able to meet in person again.

## **10. Directors' and Associate Directors' Check-In**

Director Preeg Riggsby announced that if the Board should have anything specific that they want to bring to a Board meeting to be in touch ahead of time with Director Preeg Riggsby, DMs Logalbo or Levis, or staff member Razalenti to ensure time on the agenda, as this topic can sometimes be short or skipped due to packed agendas.

Associate Director Hamer reported that Sturgeon Lake has had great water flows the last three weeks.

Director Lightcap reported that he, Tom Josephson from CREST, and staff member Gall and are working on a scientific paper on the Sturgeon Lake restoration project. They are going to make a professional presentation on water flows into the lake. A kayak trip or canoe trip may happen as well and Director Lightcap will keep the Board posted.

Director Looney reported recently seeing five otters in Dairy Creek.

## **11. Announcements/Reminders/Confirmation of next Meeting:**

Director Preeg Riggsby announced that the next Board meeting and Budget Hearing will be held on June 16<sup>th</sup>. The next Conservation Scope Planning team meeting will take place on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and the next Organizational Health and Development Planning team meeting will take place on June 9<sup>th</sup>. Board members who want to join those planning team meetings should be in touch with DM Logalbo for information to access the meeting. Director Preeg Riggsby announced that a microaggression training will be taking place for the staff and board in July or August. Staff member Razalenti will be in touch to find

out if there are any specific weekdays or dates that do not work for Board members. The Board adjourned at 7:53pm.

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*<sup>i</sup> WMSWCD 4/21/2020 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes*

*<sup>ii</sup> WMSWCD 4/21/2020 Board Meeting Minutes*

*<sup>iii</sup> WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of April 30, 2020*

*<sup>iv</sup> WMSWCD-General Fund Budget Only Budget Performance April 30, 2020*

*<sup>v</sup> WMSWCD-Sturgeon Lake Fund Budget Performance April 30, 2020*

*<sup>vi</sup> Long Range Business Plan Board report 5/12/20*

*<sup>vii</sup> Long Range Business Plan Update Report Conservation Scope Information Gathering Report 5/12/20*

*<sup>viii</sup> LRBP Conservation Scope Direction Setting Conversation Questions*

*<sup>ix</sup> Staff Reports*