



West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board Meeting Minutes 02/16/2021

1. Meeting Location and Time:

Location: Held via Zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order by Director Preeg Riggsby at 6:05 PM.

2. Introductions and Agenda Approval

Directors Present: Hartline, Lightcap, Looney, Preeg Riggsby, Sowder; Directors Absent (excused): Miller, Peterson; Associate Directors Present: (none present for this meeting); District Manager (DM): Cathcart; Staff: Levis, Razalenti; NRCS Staff: Galland

It was announced that the Board meeting would be recorded. The agenda was approved by acclamation.

3. Minutes:

West Multnomah SWCD Board Meeting minutes from 1/19/2021ⁱ

Director Looney made a motion to approve the Board meeting minutes from 1/19/21 as written, and Director Lightcap seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 5-0.

4. Review of Treasurer's Reports

Staff member Levis highlighted that revenue is a bit below budget, but is narrowing compared to last month. The conservation program underspending will start to decrease in March and April. The overall picture is the revenue deficit is narrowing and we are keeping an eye on it. If we need to decrease spending, we can do so in conservation programs and the Sturgeon Lake budget.

The following reports were reviewed:

- a) *WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of January 31, 2021ⁱⁱ*
- b) *WMSWCD-General Fund Budget Only Budget Performance January 31, 2021ⁱⁱⁱ*
- c) *WMSWCD-Sturgeon Lake Fund Budget Performance January 31, 2021^{iv}*

5. Budget Officer Appointment and New Citizen Budget Committee Member Recommendations for Appointment^v

Director Preeg Riggsby announced that it's time to appoint a Budget Officer for the fiscal year 21-22 budget development process. Director Hartline made a motion to appoint Michele Levis, Controller, as Budget Officer for the fiscal year 2021-2022 budget. Director Looney seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 5-0.

Director Preeg Riggsby explained that four positions on the Budget Committee required action – Jan Hamer's and Finlay Anderson's citizen member positions on the Budget Committee have expired and two other citizen member positions have been vacated due to members moving out of our district. Staff member Levis gave a brief background on two applicants who expressed interest in serving on the Budget Committee.

Director Looney made a motion to reappoint Jan Hamer and Finlay Anderson to continue serving as citizen members of the Budget Committee for three-year terms beginning in April 2021 and to appoint Laura Foster and April Gutierrez to serve as new citizen members of the Budget Committee for three-year terms beginning in April 2021. Director Sowder seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 5-0.

6. US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners Checklist^{vi} & NRCS Update

NRCS staff member Galland gave a general overview of the NRCS Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners checklist for the board to sign annually. The public notification responsibilities are only applicable to those Districts where NRCS shares office space or otherwise is present on site. Director Preeg Riggsby noted that it would be good to have these postings on site regardless and that we should look into this after the office has reopened. The checklist is outdated and references an outdated memorandum of understanding between NRCS and districts. Staff member Razalenti will send this checklist to the board members to sign and NRCS staff Galland to sign electronically, following up with those that cannot access the form electronically to sign via mail.

NRCS staff member Galland reported meeting with DM Cathcart about an upcoming (March 2nd) local workgroup meeting, and also reported that most of the regional energy at NRCS is going into wildfire restoration in Clackamas County. Director Lightcap would like to see an analysis of the Lower McCarthy Creek Restoration project, which involves the NRCS wetlands reserve program. DM Cathcart noted that staff member Kern-Korot may be able to present on this when staff presentations start up again.

7. Public Comment Period

No public comment.

8. National Association of Conservational Districts (NACD) / Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) Update

This item was moved up per Director Lightcap's request. Director Preeg Riggsby reported that as President of OACD she represented Oregon at the national board level when she attended the NACD annual meeting. She gave a general overview of the ten day long virtual annual meeting including that they had a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion, more than they had in the past; and NACD recognized that they are not experts in this realm and voted to get funding for consulting in this work. This will be to assist not only themselves, but also to help others that they serve. Director Preeg Riggsby shared at the meeting that our District has done quite a bit of work in this area, and we may hear from NACD to share some of our successes and challenges. Director Preeg Riggsby received relevant materials on diversity, equity and inclusion that she can share with other interested board members. Director Preeg Riggsby reported that OACD works with Nellie McAdams who is the person who helped create the Agricultural Heritage Program in Oregon. OACD worked with Nellie and submitted several policies and proposals specific to NRCS' Agricultural Conservation Easement Program for consideration by NACD; of those submitted, two were accepted. NACD has a lot of persuasion around the farm bill and will bring these proposals to NRCS at the national level. This is about protecting agricultural land, especially as it changes hands in ownership, ensuring to keep the land protected as agricultural land.

9. Long Range Business Plan (LRBP)- Draft Plan^{vii} for Review

DM Cathcart sent staff member Logalbo's regrets about not being able to present at the meeting due to the massive power outage in the area. The window for comments from the Board was extended to February 26th due to the power outage.

Director Looney read the new mission statement. DM Cathcart explained that the word 'education' was changed to 'information' from the last time the Board reviewed this after staff member Magyar reviewed. This change makes the vision language consistent with the language used in LRBP Strategic Direction 4 - Share conservation information so people have the knowledge and confidence to take action. DM Cathcart read the new vision statement. Staff member Magyar added the word 'about' to make it grammatically correct, and also added the word fish at the end as we did in the mission statement as well as added an extra comma. The Board will approve this as part of the final approval of the plan in March.

Director Looney read through the Guiding Values. DM Cathcart mentioned that these have been vetted/agreed upon by staff and are fundamental beliefs to be shared by both staff and the board and asked two questions of the board:

Are these things that you can believe in/do believe in?

Is there anything missing from this list in terms of a fundamental belief?

Directors Looney and Hartline both commented that they liked these guiding values. Director Preeg Riggsby agreed that these are great values.

DM Cathcart noted that the Guiding Principles explain our behavior, and that these have been vetted by staff and have achieved consensus. They have not been reviewed for grammar or punctuation at this point and weren't in a particular order; principles that were similar were grouped near each other. The Board was encouraged to note any room for improvements. The principles were read aloud and the following comments/revisions were made (DM Cathcart edited the draft in real time):

- Integrity and Balance – no comment
- Financial Accountability -no comment
- Timely Service -no comment
- Opportunity – no comment
- Partnerships – Director Hartline noted adding a phrase about expanding our reach through partnerships
- Conservation Planning – a missing comma was inserted
- Science Based – a missing comma was inserted and Director Looney noted making the change from 'like Traditional Ecological...' to 'such as Traditional Ecological...'
- Climate Change – no comment
- Relationship with the Land – no comment
- Non-Regulatory – no comment
- Non-Partisan- no comment

The order of the guiding principles were changed based on board feedback. The suggested order was Conservation Planning, Science Based, Climate Change, Relationship with the Land, Opportunity, Partnerships, Financial Accountability, Timely Service, Non-Regulatory, Non-Partisan and Integrity and Balance. Director Lightcap mentioned potentially addressing in a preamble that financial accountability is an essential backbone to doing the work.

DM Cathcart moved on to the audience section of the introduction of the LRBP that calls out the LRBP is being written for Board and staff understanding, and explained that we would like to wait until June in terms of general public and media launch so we can develop materials that explain the plan in simpler

terms that communicate its content more plainly. This also enables us to launch this along with the budget that will support the implementation of the first year of this plan.

The history section gives information about the District's diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiative. There will be a sidebar acknowledging our shared history with the *Whose Land is Our Land?* document. The land acknowledgement was written by staff, and DM Cathcart would like the board to take time to read this after the meeting and welcomed any thoughts using their own words. The purpose is to acknowledge this history and to reference that it hasn't been taught and has been nearly erased. Director Hartline noted wanting to see additional language acknowledging farmers and landowners that the District typically works with earlier on so there isn't misconception that the District is making a complete shift in who we are serving. DM Cathcart agreed that this was necessary and that it is important that farmers and landowners see themselves in this plan along with the other new audiences that the District has been investing time in engaging with. DM Cathcart mentioned that the Principles for Advancement of Equity and Inclusion and the Racial Equity Statement have both been previously approved by the board.

DM Cathcart presented the summary of strategic direction items that were listed in the LRBP board report^{viii} and that were changed since January based on board feedback. February 26th is the deadline for any further comment on LRBP strategic direction, goals and tactics. Director Hartline was concerned about the order of strategic goals. DM Cathcart explained the reasoning behind the order – the first four (equity, organizational health, financial sustainability and sharing information) as being foundational and the remaining 6 covering the scope of our conservation work. DM Cathcart suggested adding a graphic may help explain this.

DM Cathcart noted that staff have just started to scratch the surface about opportunity areas. Opportunity areas, a part of the previous plan, are referenced in the strategic directions, goals and tactics and the idea is to make easier reference to the areas by using maps. There are a lot of spatial elements to the LRBP in terms of where we are doing our work geographically. We're going to take a good look at those so people can see where we are prioritizing our work visually.

DM Cathcart also noted that performance measures still need to be developed for the LRBP. This will be developed at the strategic direction level of the plan. Specific metrics of performance will be identified in the annual work plans because these plans are measurable. The LRBP has abandoned the development of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound) goals; SMART goals may be revisited over the course of implementing the LRBP as time allows.

10. District Manager's Report

DM Cathcart reminded the board that as part of the Equal Pay Act, most of the staff's job classifications were examined, and reported that staff member Levis's role had been recently reclassified to reflect additional responsibilities in the administrative management area in addition to her Controller role. The analysis resulted in a salary increase that was retroactive to October 1st. This was already budgeted for as the Board anticipated that this adjustment might be necessary.

11. Directors' and Associate Directors' Check-in

The board discussed availability of having a Board Practices Assessment with Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) in the summer. July and August were both open for board members who were present.

12. Announcements/Reminders/Confirmation of next Meeting:

Director Preeg Riggsby noted the following upcoming meeting: Next Board meeting – March 16, 2021.

The Board adjourned at 7:58 pm.

ⁱWMSWCD 1/19/2021 Board Meeting Minutes

ⁱⁱWMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of January 31, 2021

ⁱⁱⁱWMSWCD-General Fund Budget Only Budget Performance January 31, 2021

^{iv}WMSWCD-Sturgeon Lake Fund Budget Performance January 31, 2021

^v Budget Officer Appointment and New Citizen Budget Committee Member Recommendations for Appointment

^{vi}NRCS Civil Rights Responsibilities Checklist for Partners

^{vii}Long Range Business Plan draft

^{viii}Long Range Business Plan board report

^{ix}Staff Reports