

DATE: July 26, 2021

TO: Randi Razalenti, Office Manager
Michele Levis, Controller & Budget Officer

SUBJECT: Consultant's Impressions and Recommendations
Board Practices Assessment
Conducted July 20, 2021

FROM: Teri Dresler
SDAO Consulting Services

It was a pleasure meeting with your board members and conducting the Board Practices Assessment for your district. Accompanying this memo is your board's **Assessment Summary**. I trust that you will find that it accurately reflects what was discussed and that it paves the way for continued discussion and follow-up actions as appropriate.

Your **Consultant's Impressions and Recommendations** are outlined below. We discussed in our meeting the importance of reviewing these documents at your next board meeting and taking action on "flags". SDAO will do a 60-day follow-up to check progress and offer additional consulting support if desired. Again, please extend to your board members my sincere appreciation for participating in the Board Practices Assessment.

Impressions

The Board of Directors of West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District is comprised of 11 dedicated and experienced members elected by the citizens of the district. Board members are fully engaged in directing the district to accomplish the mission of providing resources, education, and expertise to inspire people to actively improve air and water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and soil health.

The board undertook a lengthy long-range planning project that guides the scope of the conservation work and the supporting financial sustainability and organizational health initiatives needed to implement this work over the next 5 years. The plan is centered on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The outreach conducted throughout the process of gathering input and writing the plan forged new relationships and gathered input from marginalized and historically underserved communities and individuals not traditionally engaged by the district. The district plans to foster these new relationships and strengthen them through implementation of the plan. Overall, the West Multnomah SWCD is fortunate to have such a well organized and professional board. The new long-rang plan sets this organization apart from others with a clearly articulated diversity, equity and

inclusion plan. It will be exciting to see how the district engages and learns from new audiences as you work toward accomplishing your mission.

Recommendations

As discussed in our BPA session, I recommend the board keep an open ear to staff as they transition back to “normal” working conditions. Open communication is already part of the district culture, and communication will be important as staff readjust. Similarly, the new salary schedule could have an impact on employee morale, that will need to be monitored and discussed as well. I encourage the board to take on the work of a board handbook and board policies which you mentioned were on the to-do list. Those additional documents will formalize the good governance practices already in place with your board.