



West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) Board Meeting Minutes 09/21/2021

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

Location: Held via Zoom meeting. Due to technical difficulties with Zoom account login, the meeting was not recorded. The meeting was called to order by Director Preeg Riggsby at 6:07 PM.

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

Directors Present: Hartline, Lightcap, Looney, Miller, Peterson, Preeg Riggsby, Sowder; Associate Directors Present: Hamer; Staff Present: District Manager (DM) Cathcart; Kern-Korot, Magyar; NRCS Staff Present: Galland; Guests: Tom Josephson, Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST); Jerry Ward, Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Commission

The agenda was approved by acclamation.

### **3. 2019 Annual meeting**

The 2019 Annual meeting was opened by Director Preeg Riggsby at 6:09pm. Director Preeg Riggsby referenced distribution of the Fiscal Year 2018-19 Annual Report<sup>i</sup> and the 2019 Auditor's Report<sup>ii</sup>. The 2019 Annual Meeting was closed at 6:10 p.m. by Director Preeg Riggsby.

### **4. Minutes:**

*West Multnomah SWCD Board Meeting minutes from 7/20/2021<sup>iii</sup>*

Director Miller made a motion to approve the Board Meeting minutes, and Director Sowder seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 7-0.

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

Director Miller reviewed the July and August financial reports, noting that the District is in a good financial position and spending for operating and personnel expenses are in line with the budget. The following reports were reviewed:

- a) WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of July 31, 2021<sup>iv</sup>
- b) WMSWCD-Budget Performance Report for July 31, 2021<sup>v</sup>
- c) WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2021<sup>vi</sup>
- d) WMSWCD- Budget Performance Report for August 31, 2021<sup>vii</sup>

### **6. Public Comment**

Commissioner Ward commented on a September 2021 Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) newsletter which includes an article on an ODA staff position dedicated to working with soil and water conservation districts. Ward advocated for the new position and asked that the Board of Directors send any comments on the position to ODA by 5:00 p.m. on Friday October 8, 2021. DM Cathcart will forward the newsletter to board and staff for reference.

Director Preeg Riggsby asked Commissioner Ward for any new information from the Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Commission on the topic of soil and water conservation district director eligibility.

Ward conveyed that there has been no recent discussion on the topic by the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and Ward welcomes further discussion.

#### **7. Staff Presentation – Senior Conservationist**

Staff member Kern-Korot presented the Board with an overview of WMSWCD's Lower McCarthy Creek habitat restoration project. The presentation included the history of the project, a description of the project site's ecological features and value to salmon as well as other wildlife, project funding, monitoring results, and the accomplishments made over the three phases of the project. This included: Phase 1) first culvert removal, multiple years of preparatory weed control, and riparian plantings; Phase 2) 8.6 acres of floodplain (or "marshplain") lowering, additional upland and wetland habitat enhancements, and associated plantings; and Phase 3) current expansion of the project to include restoration at a large, adjacent restoration site.

CREST staff member Josephson presented on portions of the project related to construction activities funded by the Bonneville Power Administration and overseen by CREST, including removal of additional culverts and a water control structure that blocked fish passage, even more acreage of marsh/floodplain lowering at both Lower McCarthy and next door, as well as installation of beaver dam analogs and lots of large wood structures to slow flow and add habitat complexity. CREST staff member Josephson shared before and after photos, and a drone video of earth-moving activity and progress. Staff member Kern-Korot noted that monitoring and adaptive management has been practiced for the life of the project and will continue for at least another five years.

#### **8. Sturgeon Lake Restoration Project – Monitoring Update**

CREST staff member Josephson presented the Board with an update of the Sturgeon Lake Restoration project, including an overview of the construction that occurred in 2018, and the monitoring that has occurred since the completion of the construction. Monitoring includes water level and temperature, vegetation monitoring, aerial imagery, channel cross sections, and fish monitoring.

#### **9. Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) Board Assessment**

Director Preeg Riggsby provided the Board with a summary of the Special District Board Practices Assessment<sup>viii</sup> noting the board scored very well across all categories. One category was noted as having received a "caution" status for "Staff morale and work climate" related to work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **10. District Manager**

DM Cathcart shared three updates:

- 1) WMSWCD has been selected to host a Portland State University (PSU) Institute for Sustainable Solutions (ISS) Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Climate Change Intern. The intern will help the District develop a climate change lens under supervision by the Urban Conservationist. The internship addresses goals in Strategic Direction 8 in the District's Long Range Business Plan (LRBP).
- 2) A member of a federally-recognized tribe is interested in partnering with a land owner on Sauvie Island to develop a conservation plan for the site for cultural use restoration. Pending approval by the party's tribal council, WMSWCD would help develop the conservation plan and serve as co-manager of the site. This initiative addresses goals of Strategic Directions 6 and 9 of the LRBP.
- 3) WMSWCD is working in partnership with Friends of Fanno Creek to seek a long-term agreement with Portland Bureau of Transportation for permanent protection of the headwaters of Fanno

Creek located along a section of Portland's Southwest Trails along Southwest 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This initiative addresses goals of Strategic Direction 10 of the LRBP.

#### **11. Director, and Associate Director Check-ins**

The Board of Directors and Associates did not check-in due to limited available time in the meeting.

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

Director Preeg Riggsby noted the following upcoming meetings/events, all to be held virtually:

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Meeting – October 12<sup>th</sup>
- Next Board Meeting and Annual meeting – October 19<sup>th</sup>
- Oregon Association of Conservation District's Annual meeting is November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>

The Board adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

*<sup>i</sup>Fiscal Year 2018-19 Annual Report*

*<sup>ii</sup>2019 Auditor's Report*

*<sup>iii</sup>WMSWCD 7/20/2021 Board Meeting Minutes*

*<sup>iv</sup>WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of July 31, 2021*

*<sup>v</sup>WMSWCD-Budget Performance Report for July 31, 2021*

*<sup>vi</sup>WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2021*

*<sup>vii</sup>WMSWCD- Budget Performance Report for August 31, 2021*

*<sup>viii</sup>SDAO Board Practices Assessment, conducted July 20, 2021*

*<sup>ix</sup>SDAO Consultant's Impressions and Recommendations of Board Practices Assessment*

*<sup>x</sup> Staff Reports*