



West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) Board Meeting Minutes 1/18/2022

1. Meeting Location and Time:

Location: Held via Zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order by Director Preeg Riggsby at 6:02 PM.

2. Introductions and Agenda Approval

Directors Present: Hartline, Looney, Miller, Peterson, Preeg Riggsby, Sowder; Directors Absent (excused): Lightcap; Associate Directors Present: (none); Staff Present: District Manager (DM) Cathcart, Razalenti; Guests: Cliff Jones, Capacity Building Partnerships (trainer); Emogene Waggoner, Friends of Tryon Creek (FOTC); Alexis Barton, Tryon Creek Watershed Council (TCWC); Rebecca Crosby, TCWC & FOTC; Stephanie Wagner, FOTC

The agenda was approved by acclamation.

3. Minutes:

West Multnomah SWCD Board Meeting minutes from 12/21/2021ⁱ

Director Looney made a motion to approve the board meeting minutes as written, and Director Miller seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 6-0.

4. Review of Treasurer's Reports

Director Miler reported that the District is halfway through the fiscal year and in good financial shape. The District did a good job of budgeting accurately this year and are on track in terms of spending.

The following reports were reviewed:

- a) WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2021ⁱⁱ
- b) WMSWCD-Budget Performance Report for December 31, 2021ⁱⁱⁱ

5. Public Comment

No public comment.

6. Gender Awareness Training

Staff member Razalenti reminded the Board that the staff had an in-depth 2-part Gender Awareness training that took place in August of 2020. It's important to the staff that the Board have a training regarding this topic so that they can have a basic understanding of terms and language that staff, partners, current or future board members may use regarding gender and other LBGTQ+ matters, as well as have a general understanding of how to be respectful and welcoming to LBGTQ+ communities.

Due to Board demands regarding the Long Range Business Plan (LRBP) update that took the District until June 2021 to complete, and the Microaggression training that most of the Board participated in the summer of 2020, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee was asked to hold off on this training for the Board until the LRBP update was completed so the Board would not be overwhelmed.

The DEI Committee meets every other month, and with all the new LRBP initiatives that the DEI Committee is a part of, this was the soonest the Board was able to have this training.

Cliff Jones of Capacity Building Partnerships facilitated the training. The training focused on terminology and inclusive practices relating to gender identity and gender expression. Invited partners from Tryon Creek Watershed Council and Friends of Tryon Creek joined the Board for this training.

All attendees were invited to email Cliff afterwards with any questions or clarifications.

7. Succession Management

Director Preeg Riggsby reported that Directors Miller and Preeg Riggsby along with staff member Levis have started to assemble documents including the job descriptions of the Controller, Senior Conservationist, District Manager, and Office Manager. They will be pulling together job descriptions of Board members as well. This is all part of developing a succession management plan for upper level management staff positions and for Board Directors and Associate Directors – which will cover tasks identified in the District’s Long Range Business Plan (Strategic Direction 2 – Organizational Health). If any Board members want to provide feedback, they should contact staff member Levis, Director Preeg Riggsby, or Director Miller. There will be future opportunity to provide comment.

It was reported that Associate Director Finlay Anderson is unable to continue in the Associate Director role. Upon learning this, Director Preeg Riggsby thanked Finlay for Finlay’s time. This highlights the need to continue to recruit Associate Directors. The importance of looking for an Associate Director with a human resources background was noted, as the District doesn’t have anyone on the Board that has this experience.

8. Unannounced Public Email Meeting Regarding Office Location – Bringing the Discussion into the Public Record

Director Preeg Riggsby announced that a non-noticed public meeting inadvertently took place when Board of Directors exchanged emails on 12/25/21 and 12/27/21 about a potential new office space location^{iv}. Director Preeg Riggsby reminded all Board members that there cannot be any email discussions amongst a quorum of Directors. Director Preeg Riggsby recommended to all a training offered by Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO): Public Meetings Overview and Executive Sessions (<https://www.sdao.com/public-meetings-overview-and-executive-sessions>), which provides a great refresher on Oregon’s public meeting law and requirements, including what constitutes a public meeting. The link to the training will be emailed to all board members.

Director Looney made a motion to accept the email exchanges on 12/25/21 and 12/27/21 into public record as part of the January 2022 Board packet and Director Peterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 6-0.

9. Employee Handbook Update

DM Cathcart reported that all the changes in the Employee Handbook were made for clarity and there were no policy changes made that were subject to Board approval.

Summary of Changes made:

- Probation period removed (deemed unnecessary)
- A reference to merit-based step increases has been added for clarity that it is tied to performance
- COVID-19 Safety policy has been updated

- Information Security Policy has been added to the Employee Handbook
- Holiday changes have been made (Presidents' day omitted, Juneteenth included)
- Manager Discretionary Leave expanded to workplace shutdowns due to extreme heat and poor air quality
- Clarification in Issue Resolution Policy that alleged violations of federal, state, or local laws or regulation will be investigated by a 3rd party as required by law
- Update to Background Check Policy in what types of conduct that come up on a record would cause a pause in hire

Staff will be acknowledging the updated Employee Handbook in the next few weeks.

10. Director and Associate Director Check-ins

Director Hartline reported moving 181 frogs in one night in the frog shuttle. Director Preeg Riggsby reported that she will be participating at the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) conference in-person on the east coast the night of the February Board meeting, and may not be able to participate in the District Board meeting due to this. Director Sowder will be able to Chair the meeting in lieu of Director Preeg Riggsby as needed.

DM Cathcart reported that the District's Safety Committee will be meeting in mid-February to address if the planned March 1, 2022 office reopening date of the District for internal operations needs to be postponed based on ongoing COVID-19 variants.

11. Announcements/Reminders/Confirmation of next Meeting:

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

- Next Board Meeting – February 15, 2022
- Planned Office Reopening – March 1, 2022

The Board adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

ⁱWMSWCD 12/21/2021 Board Meeting Minutes

ⁱⁱWMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2021

ⁱⁱⁱWMSWCD-Budget Performance Report for December 31, 2021

^{iv}Director Emails on Potential Office Location

^vStaff Reports