



West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) Board Meeting Minutes 05/16/2023

1. Meeting Location and Time: Location: remote via Zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order by Chair Preeg Riggsby at 6:03 PM.

2. Introductions and Agenda Approval.

Directors Present: Hartline, Lightcap, Looney, Miller, Preeg Riggsby; Directors Absent: Peterson, Sowder; Associate Director(s) Present: Hamer; Staff Present: District Manager (DM) Barlow, Conway, Kern-Korot, Razalenti; NRCS Staff: Galland

The agenda was approved by acclamation.

3. Minutes

Board members reviewed the West Multnomah SWCD Budget Committee minutesⁱ and Board Meeting minutesⁱⁱ from 4/18/2023.

Director Looney made a motion to approve the Budget Committee minutes as written, and Director Miller seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 5-0.

Director Hartline made a motion to approve the Board meeting minutes as written, and Director Looney seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 5-0.

4. Review of Treasurer's Reports

Director Miller reported that the District has \$2 million in cash accounts, and the District is in a good cash position. Urban program grant that was anticipated this fiscal year will be coming through next fiscal year instead. Everything is on track for what we expect this time of year.

The following reports were reviewed:

- a) WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of April 30, 2023ⁱⁱⁱ
- b) WMSWCD-Budget Performance Report for April 30, 2023^{iv}

5. Senior Conservationist Presentation

Staff member Kern-Korot presented to the Board about Emerald Ash Borer, a highly destructive invasive beetle that recently arrived in Oregon and has killed hundreds of millions of ash trees in the US since first detected in Michigan in 2002. Detailed in the presentation were reasons why the District is involved and with which partners, how the District is responding, and implications for the future. Staff member Kern-Korot also presented on the role of assisted plant migration in the face of climate change.

6. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Update

This agenda item was moved up after the Senior Conservationist presentation to preserve NRCS staff member Galland's time. NRCS staff member Galland reported that two new staff members are expected to start in July. The NRCS Urban County Executive Director, Amanda Welker, would like to join the District's Board for an upcoming meeting, potentially in June if possible.

7. Public Comment

No public comment.

8. Metro's North Tualatin Nature Park update/review of District's approval letter of Metro application

Director Preeg Riggsby reminded the Board about meetings that happened around this issue in the past and guided them to the letter that the District wrote to Multnomah County Land Use Planning Office^v regarding Metro Park and Nature's North Tualatin Mountain Access Master Plan. Director Lightcap reported that he is unable to access a forested area on his property due to Metro cutting off access, and this prompted Director Lightcap to want to discuss this with the Board. Director Lightcap noted that one of the recommendations ~~noted~~ in the letter from the District was to engage adjacent landowners in the ongoing process, and he was never contacted about this land access cutoff.

DM Barlow noted that she had been in contact with Kevin Cook at the County, and there is information^{vi} from Kevin on the project that is included in the Board packet. This includes a more recent letter from this past March 2023 from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, which was mostly regarding the impact of trails on red-legged frog habitat and movement.

The final Multnomah County approval of this plan will be sometime this fall. Director Lightcap is concerned about the access that has been cut off by Metro in part because of fire threats that could come up and wants to make sure that Metro has a fire access plan. DM Barlow will reach out to Jonathan Soll of Metro to find out if there is a fire access and exit plan in place for Metro owned natural areas.

9. Discuss Board Stance on Current Legislative Issues

Director Preeg Riggsby reported that the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) has their advocacy meeting this Friday at 9:30am. House Bill 2527, which former DM Jim Cathcart worked on, supports tax credits for wildlife. It passed the House and is moving to the Senate. Director Preeg Riggsby will send the list of what OACD is currently tracking to staff and Board.

10. District Manager Update

This agenda item was added by Director Preeg Riggsby. Director Preeg Riggsby noted to Board members that the best way to work with staff with questions or new initiatives is to connect through DM Barlow.

DM Barlow reminded the Board that staff member Razalenti will be phasing out of the District in the next few months but will be overlapping with her successor once they are hired. For the Office Coordinator recruitment, the District received 186 applications, of which fewer than 30 passed minimum qualifications. The first-round interviews will be held next week.

Staff member Magyar will also be phasing out of the District in the next few months, as she heads to graduate school, and will also overlap with her successor. The recruitment for her position will be initiated within the next three weeks. DM Barlow also noted that staff member Logalbo found a wonderful diversity, equity, and inclusion training series that the staff is engaging in. Staff member Levis will be retiring from the District sometime after the fiscal year ends.

11. Director and Associate Director Check-ins:

Director Lightcap mentioned that he found an uncommon native plant coming up in his pasture.

12. Announcements/Reminders/Upcoming Meetings:

Director Preeg Riggsby announced the following upcoming meetings/events:

- Next Board Meeting and Budget Hearing will be on June 20, 2023 – The Board agreed to hold this as a remote meeting.

Director Preeg Riggsby declared the meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.

ⁱ*WMSWCD Budget Committee meeting minutes April 18, 2023*

ⁱⁱ*WMSWCD Board meeting minutes April 18, 2023*

ⁱⁱⁱ*WMSWCD-Balance Sheet as of April 30, 2023*

^{iv}*WMSWCD-Budget Performance Report of April 30, 2023*

^v*WMSWCD letter to Multnomah County Land Use Planning Office dated September 17, 2019*

^{vi}*Supplemental information from Kevin Cook, Senior Planner of Multnomah County Department of Community Services*

^{vii}*Staff Reports*