

West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District

Board Budget Committee Meeting Minutes – April 21, 2026

Directors Present:

Preeg Riggsby, Oliver, Looney, Sowder, Hamer, DeFuria, Topaz

Budget Committee Members Present:

Adelmann, Hartline (Associate Director), Koerner, Sibell, Spector (Associate Director)

Staff Present:

Jogerst, Clarenbach, Greene, Scipioni

Public:

Rhonda Z., Monica I., Tunie B.

The meeting officially began & started recording at 6:09pm.

1. Budget Committee Formation and Chair Election

The committee reviewed the budget process and confirmed Jogerst as Budget Officer. Oliver agreed to serve as Budget Committee Chair. Looney made a motion to appoint him.

Before voting, the committee reviewed membership requirements and determined it was not balanced between Board and non-Board members.

Preeg Riggsby made a motion to appoint Hartline to the Budget Committee to meet this requirement.

Seconded: Oliver

Voted to approve: Preeg Riggsby, Oliver, Looney, Sowder, Hamer, DeFuria, Topaz, Adelmann, Hartline, Koerner, Sibell, Spector

Following this, Preeg Riggsby again made a motion to appoint Oliver as Budget Committee Chair

Seconded: Looney

Voted to approve: Preeg Riggsby, Oliver, Looney, Sowder, Hamer, DeFuria, Topaz, Adelmann, Hartline, Koerner, Sibell, Spector

2. Budget Overview Introduction:

Jogerst introduced the budget process and outlined the structure of the meeting, noting that she would provide a high-level overview before Clarenbach presented more detailed financial

information. She shared her background in forestry and 12 years of work with the City of Portland, and noted she has been with the District for approximately seven months and is continuing to build familiarity with District operations.

Jogerst described the budget development process, including the use of an interim contractor, transition to Clarenbach, and staff-led program budget proposals. Staff were asked to identify potential reductions to better align proposed work with realistic capacity, and those proposals were reviewed and refined collaboratively to produce the draft budget. She noted that the District is facing broader economic pressures and has prioritized on-the-ground conservation work, pass-through grant funding, and continued development of the long-range business plan. She also emphasized the importance of pursuing new grant opportunities and establishing clearer prioritization for future funding decisions before turning the presentation over to Clarenbach.

3. Budget Presentationⁱ and Discussion

Clarenbach presented the proposed FY 2026–27 budget, noting a decrease from approximately \$5.2 million to \$4 million, largely due to reduced state and federal grant funding. He highlighted efforts to align the budget more closely with actual spending, reduce administrative and contracted costs, and maintain investment in conservation programs. Key changes included a modest reduction in personnel costs through a part-time position, an increased contingency of \$100,000, and continued emphasis on directing funds toward on-the-ground work and partner funding.

Clarenbach reviewed revenue assumptions, including relatively flat property tax growth based on TSCC projections, reduced grant funding, and conservative estimates for interest and miscellaneous income. On the expenditure side, he emphasized that personnel remains the largest cost driver, with a focus on realistic projections based on known expenses. The budget also includes a \$200,000 reserve for future opportunities and an unappropriated ending fund balance to support operations between tax revenue cycles.

Board and committee members discussed the implications of flat revenues in an inflationary environment, noting that maintaining similar funding levels may result in reduced program output. Staff clarified that the budget is based on actual historical spending rather than prior inflated budget estimates, and reflects a more realistic scope of work. Additional discussion addressed staffing structure, benefit cost changes, and efforts to manage expenses across programs.

Questions from the committee and public addressed property tax forecasting, program funding structure, and the budget development process. Staff explained that projections are provided by TSCC and that program budgets were developed from prior-year baselines and refined

collaboratively. TSCC staff provided positive feedback on the District's approach and noted optional practices such as revising current-year budgets for more accurate comparisons. The committee expressed general understanding of the budget and no modifications were proposed.

Moved: Preeg Riggsby moved to approve the proposed budget of \$4,020,061 for the general fund.

Second: Looney

Voted in favor: Preeg Riggsby, Oliver, Looney, Sowder, Hamer, DeFuria, Topaz
Adelmann, Hartline, Koerner, Sibell, Spector

Director Oliver requested a motion for the tax levy.

Moved: Preeg Riggsby moved to approve the property tax levy at the full permanent rate at the rate of \$0.075 per \$1,000 of assessed property value.

Second: Spector

Voted in favor: Preeg Riggsby, Oliver, Looney, Sowder, Hamer, DeFuria, Topaz
Adelmann, Hartline, Koerner, Sibell, Spector

Meeting adjourned at 7:31pm.

ⁱ Budget Committee Meeting Presentation