



UPPER WILLAMETTE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

63rd Annual Meeting

February 13, 2018 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Lane Electric Coop Conference Room

787 Bailey Hill Rd, Eugene, OR 97402

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Andhi Reyna, Niles Brinton, Keir Thomas, Tom Snyder

Board Attending: Gary Jensen, Ralph Perkins, Al Hyrnyshyn, Tim Hovet, Todd Anderson, Paul Reed, Chuck Arrera

Staff Attending: Dave Downing, Clarissa Berndt, Lily Leitermann

Welcome: Board Chair, Gary Jensen welcomed everyone at 1:00 pm. All attendees were asked to introduce themselves. He then led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

District handouts included the Agenda, the 2016-17 Annual Report, the 2016-17 Budget and Balance Sheet as of 6/30/17. The 2016-17 Audit Review was present and made available to be viewed.

Public Comment: none

Report of the 2016-17 Annual Report: Dave Downing gave an overview of the Annual Report (report attached). The District is looking to increase capacity and expand services. Todd mentioned that the district operates well considering the small budget we have to work with. Discussion regarding funding followed.

The budget and balance sheet from 16-17, and the minutes from 15-16 meeting was reviewed. Ralph Perkins made a motion to approve the 2017 Annual Meeting minutes. Al Hyrnyshyn seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

OR Dept of Ag Review:

Dave Downing gave overview. Mentioned that capacity funding has increased slightly. Discussion regarding solidity of funding in federal political climate then followed. Because we are primarily state funded, we have no concerns about solidity of our funding at this time.

PWP Update:

Lily Leitermann gave an update regarding PWP program. PWP is in the initial stage with approx. 10 landowners involved. Discussion regarding landowner incentives for riparian restoration acres then followed.

NRCS Report:

Tom Snyder gave an overview of the LWG meeting from earlier today, as well as an update on the possibility of getting a permanent DC in the Lane County NRCS office. Because there will only be 27 DC's hired throughout the whole country, chances are slim.

Gary thanked Tom for the partnership between the NRCS and the UWSWCD. Tom thanked the UWSWCD staff for the assistance received in the office.

Cooperator of the Year Award: Dave Downing gave an introduction to Andhi Reyna and Branch Road Farms and how she promotes conservation. Andhi has been farming and educating in the Willamette Valley for 20 years and is the President of the Oregon Biodynamic Group. Branch Road Farm, located in Cottage Grove, OR, is a 73 acre diversified, organic and biodynamic farm and forest land, growing annual and perennial crops for their CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), markets, kid's culinary programs and farm events. They also raise sheep, goats and chickens for meat, dairy, pasture improvement and fertility. As of December 2017, their land is now in a Conservation Easement. Branch Road Farm also has a non-profit farm education center which hosts field trips, Kids Farm to Table Cooking Classes, Summer Camps, and coming this year, Farm Pizza Nights. Their mission is to contribute to the revitalization of our communities and our farm and forest lands through food, farming, education and the arts.

A plaque was awarded and presented to Andhi Reyna with our sincere appreciation.

Andhi graciously accepted the award, and then spoke to how much she appreciates the work of the SWCD and the NRCS. She gave great perspective on how we as a district can get our name out to more people so they can benefit from our services. Tim suggested Branch Road Farm for our 2019 summer tour.

Guest Speaker: Niles Brinton

Niles Brinton, from the Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture, spoke about the threatened state of the streak horned lark. Through a slideshow, he presented information regarding why the species is declining, as well as what is being done to prevent the decline. They are working to not only make landowners aware of the dangers presented to the streak horned lark, but also to get them on board with conservation plans to preserve the lark habitats. Outreach materials were made available to us to handout to landowners.

Closing Remarks:

Gary gave a special thanks to the district staff for the work that they do and to the Board of Directors for volunteering their time as well.

Gary Jensen adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.

Submitted by:

Clarissa Berndt
UWSWCD Administrative Specialist