



UPPER WILLAMETTE

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday March 9, 2021 3:00 pm

APPROVED 4/13/2021

Meeting held via Zoom

Directors Present: Al Hrynyshyn, Gary Jensen, Abel Kloster, Malcolm Wilson, Chuck Arrera, Mary Durfee.
Staff Present: Dave Downing, Lily Leitermann, Clarissa Berndt. Partners Present: Sydney Nilan, UWSN;
Tom Snyder, NRCS. Public Present: Julie Hulme, Greenway Guardians.

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm by Chair Hrynyshyn.

1. **A. Approval of Agenda:** Chair Hrynyshyn asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Since there were none, Director Kloster moved to accept the agenda as presented, and Director Jensen seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved with a vote of 4-0.
B. Public Comment: Chair Hrynyshyn welcomed Julie Hulme from Greenway Guardians. Since her comments are not related to any agenda item, she will wait until the end of the meeting to address the board.
2. **A. Board Minutes – Feb 9, 2021:** Chair Hrynyshyn moved to approve the minutes as presented, and Director Arrera seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved with a vote of 4-0.
B. Annual Meeting Minutes – Feb 9, 2021: Director Kloster moved to approve the minutes as presented, and Director Jensen seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved with a vote of 4-0.
[Director Durfee joined the meeting.]
C. February Financial Reports: *[Reports reviewed and discussed: Balance Sheet, Check Register, Fund Balance Spreadsheet, Profit & Loss Budget v. Actual, Profit & Loss by Class, Profit & Loss Previous Year Comparison.]* Director Jensen mentioned that there have been some new grant contracts signed for PWP for calendar year 2021, and deferred to Dave and Clarissa to clarify the details to that. Clarissa stated that there are now three PWP contracts for both regular and fire recovery work: McKenzie Recovery grant through June 2021 for \$19,000; Task 1 grant through Dec 2021 for \$25,000 (this is an adjustment to the Fund Balance Spreadsheet, as we have received clarification from CPRCD that only EWEB funds have been secured to date); Task 5 grant through Dec 2021 for \$61,000. Based on the amount of funds we are expecting to use and receive through the end of this fiscal year, she suggested an amendment to the FY 2020-21 budget of an additional \$38,500 in grant income. Director Jensen moved that the board amend the FY 2020-21 budget to add \$38,500 to the PWP grant income line, and Director Arrera seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was passed with a vote of 5-0. [Director Wilson joined the meeting.] Director Jensen concluded by stating that the accounts look to be in good condition. The board asked a few questions regarding specific payments made. Director Wilson made a motion to accept the February financial reports as presented, and Chair Hrynyshyn seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved with a vote of 6-0.
3. **Committee Reports:**
 - A. Transition Committee Report:** No meeting since last report. Chair Hrynyshyn mentioned that the Committee Leads had a meeting to discuss the roles of each committee and how each fits in to the larger picture. Chair Hrynyshyn mentioned that the board will be transitioning toward more of a policy board rather than dealing with day to day issues moving forward. Dave mentioned that he is currently working with Verizon to set up the District's cell phone plan starting immediately.
 - B. Personnel Committee Report:** Director Arrera mentioned that the committee has prioritized the first two employees to be hired as the Financial Officer and another Conservation Technician. Director Arrera moved

to approve the District Hiring Policy as presented by the Personnel Committee to the Board of Directors, and Director Durfee seconded the motion. Director Wilson shared his concern over the apparent contradiction of the phrasing. The second bullet point under Hiring Principles states that “employment decisions are made *without regard* to race, age,” etc. while later in the document there is clear indication about “Veteran Preference”. The board agreed that this is a contradiction, and changed the wording of the second bullet point to more accurately describe the district’s policy. Director Arrera amended the motion to approve the District Hiring Policy with the second bullet point edited to say “Employment decisions will not discriminate against applicants on the basis of race, age”, etc., and Director Durfee seconded the amended motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved with a vote of 6-0.

Director Arrera moved to approve increases to the FY 2020-21 budget of two FTE positions, consisting of a Fiscal Officer and a Conservation Technician job classification. Hiring of the new employees is contingent upon the deposit of a bridge loan into the district bank accounts sufficient to cover the expenses of the new employees through Dec 2021. The personnel budget line item for FY 2020-21 is to be increased by \$41,000. Director Durfee seconded the motion. Director Kloster suggested amending the Equal Employment Opportunity statement on both announcements to match the edited wording of the Hiring policy previously amended. Director Arrera amended the motion to include the edited wording as discussed, and Director Wilson seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved with a vote of 6-0.

C. Finance Committee Report: Director Jensen shared that there have been no meetings for the Finance Committee. He deferred the report to Chair Hrynyshyn and Dave who have been working to get in contact with Ulbricht for an update on the bridge loan. Chair Hrynyshyn reached out to Ulbricht, and immediately afterward, Dave received an email from him. Dave is expecting to receive an update tomorrow from Ulbricht regarding the current status of the bridge loan process, and will update the board accordingly.

D. Project Committee Report: Chair Hrynyshyn shared that he attended the wildfire event put on by the neighborhood councils, and was able to get some contact information from some around the state that may be helpful when we move forward with our fire program. Sydney had brought up in the committee meeting that the REC partners still wanted to continue with regular meetings to keep all updated on the district’s transition. Also, Director Durfee has been appointed to take the lead in working with a commercial real estate broker to look for office space. She said that she is in the process of working with Pennington and will keep the board apprised of any updates.

E. JEDI Committee Report: Director Kloster reminded everyone that the decolonization training is coming up on March 16th. The committee sent out budget committee outreach announcements to various organizations to encourage a diverse response from the community. The committee also did last minute DEI language adjustments to the hiring documents and job announcements. He mentioned that the urgency dynamic isn’t compatible with inclusivity, but in time it will get better.

4. **Correspondence:** Dave mentioned that SDAO is looking for district support for legislation to renew COVID relief funding for special districts, and he is asking the board if they would like to support that initiative. The board agreed to have Dave fill out the forms needed for the district to support this.

Sydney wanted to bring to the board a request for up to 3 directors to volunteer to serve on the REC committee. Chair Hrynyshyn asked for any who would like to volunteer to contact Dave or Clarissa.

5. **Staff Report Summary:** Staff reports have been provided to the board. Dave asked if there were any questions for any staff regarding their reports/work for the past month. There were no questions or comments.

6. **Partner Reports:**

A. NRCS Report: Tom updated the board on the new federal guidelines for the use of the office. It is closed to all public and in-office staff is to be kept at a maximum of 2 at any given time between the NRCS and SWCD agencies. He felt that the LWG meeting went well, and thanked the board for attending and Dave for his report. NRCS is currently working on a source water protection project for the South Willamette Valley, and Taylor Larsen is taking the lead on writing this. There is a new program called Conservation Incentive Contracts that is coming out this year. There is not much information out on this yet but he will keep the SWCD informed on it. He also mentioned that there will be a new MOA for the NRCS/SWCD that will be drafted and should be ready next month – he’s not expecting anything to be different than previous agreements.

8. **Other Reports/Discussion:** None.

Public Comment:

- Julie Hulme, Greenway Guardians:

She thanked the board for the invitation to the meeting and the opportunity to speak regarding Potters Field. She gave a brief history of Potters Field and how Greenway Guardians is using legal and political means in an effort to get the land back into public hands in order to preserve it. They have looked into our district's mission and strategies and feels that it would be ideal for the district to own, and use for a conservation campus and/or a conservation property. In this respect, on behalf of Greenway Guardians, Julie offered to fund the initial legal fees to initiate a conversation between the district and the developer who currently owns the property. The board discussed the possible benefits and challenges with this proposition. Chair Hrynyshyn clarified that Greenway Guardians is only offering to begin the conversation, and he gave Julie the green light to initiate this conversation so that the board can receive more information to make an informed decision regarding this property. He then thanked Julie for taking the time to address the board and making herself available for further questions.

Chair Hrynyshyn mentioned the next meeting is set for April 13th at 3 pm via Zoom. Chair Hrynyshyn adjourned the meeting at 5:07 pm.

All supporting documents mentioned in the minutes are a part of the official record, and are available upon request. Please contact the office at admin@uwsxcd.org to request copies.

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