



Walla Walla County Conservation District
December 2024 Board Meeting

Date: Dec. 9, 2024

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Place: In person and via Zoom

Presiding Officer: Jeff Schulke, Chair

Supervisors Present: Jim Kent, Don Schwerin, Jesse McCaw

Supervisors absent: Jesse McCaw

Other Agencies: Lindsey Williams, WWCC; Paul Castoldi, WW Noxious Weed Coordinator; Allisa Carlson, SCC (Zoom)

Also present: Renee Hadley, Jenny Freer, Joanna Cowles-Cleveland

Members of the Public: Dan (Zoom), Matt

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Jeff Schulke.

Schulke invited the public to comment. Public comments were made.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the Nov 14th special board meeting minutes. **Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve the November 14th special board minutes as presented, no discussion, motion passed.**

Financial Reports: The board reviewed the November Financial Reports. **Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to pay the bills, motion passed.**

As of this date December 9th 2024 the Board reviewed the November financial reports with no further discussion: Checks 15067 to 15087, revenues \$359,672.54 and expenses \$337,393.32; total of bank accounts \$209,254.02.

(Total Matches Springbrook)

New Business:

- Partner Reports: Hadley** shared that she attended the WACD conference in Spokane Washington in the first week of December and had attached a summary of the conference for the board. **Hadley** shared on behalf of WDFW that almost all open positions are now filled. **Hadley** shared that WSU Ext. has a save the date of January 24 for their Wheat Academy. **Carlson, SCC**, shared that the budget shortfall for Washington State has led to a hiring freeze, contracting freeze, and eliminating non-essential travel for cabinet members but the SCC is following these same protocols. A VSP specialist is still being hired and newly hired is a legislative director. **Castoldi, Noxious Weed Coordinator** stated that he is still pretty new but the board is planning on approving a cost share program with a focus to be determined at the Jan. and Feb. board meetings. This program will be for county residents. **Williams, WWCC**, shared

that a plant and soil science instructor has been hired named Joe Montoya. An interim dean of Ag Forestry is getting up to speed on policies and procedures. WWCC has the only Farm to Fork program in a college in Washington State. The students raised turkeys for a fundraiser and it was a success. Currently a state wide student tour is being planned for March and is funded by Ag West.

- 2. Request to Cancel DRS Participation: Freer** shared that WWCCD is currently enrolled in Department of Retirement Services program that only one staff member has voluntarily signed up for. After a recent audit for DRS, it was found that all new employees must fill out a specific form and that form must be retained for 60 years. As a participant in this program, we would have to follow the retention schedule. Our request would be to exclude the District from this program due to low participation and burdensome retention.

Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve the request to cancel WWCCD's participation in DRS, as presented: motion passed.

- 3. Annual Review of CREP Maintenance Hold-down Rates and Increases: Cowles-Cleveland** shared that CREP maintenance hold-down rates are for the first five years after installation. These rates are not part of FSA or due to the audit. The increases that are listed are due to inflation but to don't adjust the overall CAP (\$2,700 per acre over 5 years). The requested increases will help us find contractors who are willing to do the work.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve the CREP Hold-down Rates, as presented: motion passed.

- 4. Request to Waive Cost Share Portion for Pilot Project: Hadley** shared on behalf of Traynor that VSP approved a project with supplemental funds for a trial plot as part of the VSP Monitoring plan. This project does not fit into either a cost share or a DIP project. WWCCD's request would be to waive the cost share portion for the landowners since they are contributing the land and the trial plot does not benefit them directly but is for the resources as a whole (similar to how we treat larger instream restoration projects).

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve the request to waive the cost share portion for the test pilot program, as presented: motion passed.

- 5. Resolution to Waive Public Records Index: Hadley** shared that after reviewing RCWs related to public records request that WWCCD is requesting a resolution to waive the public records index due to burden it would take to create and maintain such and index.

Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve drafted resolution 2024-02, as presented: motion passed.

- 6. A) Request to Approve Grant Application for 5 Star: Hadley** shared on behalf of Crowley grant has opened up that she wishes to apply for. This grant is the Urban

Water Grant Program from the National Fish and Wildlife Department. This grant would be an expansion of our outdoor education growing minds grant. This application would be for less than \$50k for outreach.

Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve the request to apply for the 5 Star grant, as presented: motion passed.

B) Request to Re-apply to the Community Wildfire Defense Grant: Hadley shared on behalf of Byerley the request to reapply for assistance of a chipper that we would partner with a local fire department as a part of a thinning project to reduce wildfires.

Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve the request to reapply for the Community Wildfire Defense Grant, as presented: motion passed.

7. Discussion of Rainfall Gatherer Status 2024: Hadley started the discussion by sharing our current process of gathering rainfall data and asked the board if this should be a program we continue. This program is not funded by any grant and we currently use an outdated process. After board discussion ideas were to see if WSU would be willing to run the platform if we could find funding for new weather stations. **Motion is delayed until further options are available.**

8. WACD Annual Meeting Summary: Hadley shared a summary of the WACD annual meeting. Jeff Schulke received a congratulatory award and pin for being a board member for fifteen years. No further discussion was held.

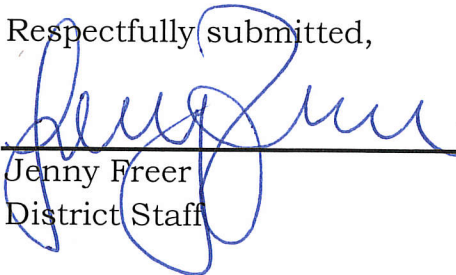
Program Updates:

A.) District Operations: Hadley reviewed district operations including staff updates, outreach efforts, and upcoming partner meetings.

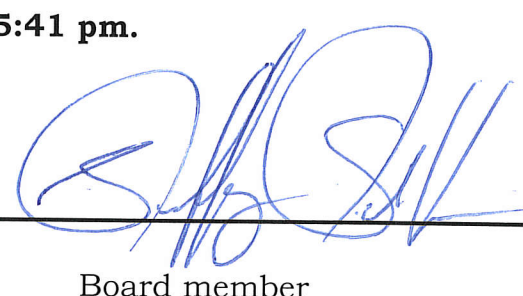
Misc. Discussion and Public Comments: None at this time.

Meeting adjourned without a formal motion at 5:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Jenny Freer
District Staff



Board member

Next meeting: Monday, Jan. 13, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

Motions:

WWCCD December 9, 2024 Special Board Meeting

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| To approve the November 14 th board meeting minutes as written, | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To review the November Financial Reports and approve paying the bills, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Kent
Motion passed |
| To approve the Cancellation of DRS Participation, as presented | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve CREP hold-down rates for 2025, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Kent
Motion passed |
| To approve the request to waive cost share for pilot test program, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Kent
Motion passed |
| To approve the resolution to waive public records index, as presented | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve application for 5 Star grant, as presented | Motion: Kent
Second: Schwerin
Motion passed |
| To approve application for Community Wildfire Defense grant, as presented | Motion: Schwerin
Second: Kent
Motion passed |