



Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District

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Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2023

Directors

Anna Thomas
Jason Davis
Brent Johnson
Dave Hunt
James Collins

Employees

Cassandra Newton
Ayla Morehouse
Kristen Neuburger

Others Present

Brian Reeves, US-FS Ochoco
Don Sietz

The board meeting was called to order by Chair Collins at 6:15 p.m. by the clock on the wall.

1. **Boarding Training**

a. **Public Contracting**

Cassi presented the basics of public contracting laws and regulations and provided an overview of how contracts are solicited, executed, and managed by the District.

2. **Agency Reports**

a. **None**

3. **District Reports**

a. **District Manager, Cassi Newton**

Cassi stated her report in the packet is current and she provided an overview of project work she completed in Brooke's absence. Cassi also shared that US-FS Ochoco staff visited the office to discuss project planning efforts and funding with District staff.

b. **Conservation Manager, Ayla Morehouse**

Ayla stated she spent some time in the field with Kristen and preparing with Brooke for her leave of absence. She advised that she has been working on the OWEB applications that Brooke started and she has been attending meetings with Cassi.

c. **Conservation Technician II, Brooke Moore**

Brooke is on maternity leave.

d. **Conservation Technician I, Kristen Neuburger**

Kristen stated her report is current and she provided details about the biological control agents update included in her report.

4. **Monthly Business**

a. **Review and approve minutes**

i. **August 31, 2023 minutes**

ii. **September 19, 2023 special meeting minutes**

‡**Motion** made by Director Johnson to approve the board meeting minutes from August 31, 2023 and special board meeting minutes from September 19, 2023, director Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. **Review and approve financial reports**

Cassi advised that she will have both September and October financial reports at the October board meeting.

c. **Review and approve Accounts Payable**

i. **September 19, 2023**

Meeting Location: The Rock in Spray, Oregon

To Join from a computer or smartphone:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/954414701> (Contact the office for meeting password)

To dial in using a phone:

(571) 317-3122 (Access Code: 954-414-701)

ii. September 28, 2023

‡**Motion** made by Director Davis to approve the check registers from September 19, 2023 and September 28, 2023 as presented, Director Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Upcoming Meetings & Events

a. Staff Meeting, every Monday

b. October

- i. 16th-18th OACD Conference (Redmond)
- ii. 19th JDBP Uplands, 10am
- iii. 24th-25th OWEB Meeting
- iv. 25th LJDWG, 10am
- v. 26th SWCD board meeting, 6pm**

c. November

- i. 13th Obs. of Veteran's Day (office closed)
- ii. 23rd Thanksgiving (office closed)
- iii. 30th SWCD board meeting, 6pm**

6. Upcoming Deadlines

a. October

- i. 16th CREP TA application
- ii. OWEB open solicitation applications

b. November

- i. 13th FIP OWEB application

7. District Management

a. Delegations of Authorities

Cassi requested this item be tabled until next meeting.

b. Policy Revisions

Cassi requested this item be tabled until next meeting.

c. Annual Meeting

Cassi recommended that the Annual Meeting be served with tri-tip catered by Travis Ferguson and held at The Rock. The Board discussed options and costs, agreeing with Cassi's recommendation. The Board requested the topic to be Rejuvra, staff to provide short presentations, and that partners be invited to provide updates on programs and funding opportunities.

d. Property

i. WIG Status

Cassi presented the latest slide deck development by LEVER Architecture with three facility layout options. Cassi advised about the layout she recommends approving and requested that the Board consider removing the existing building to proceed with the recommended layout.

The Board agreed that the recommended layout was the best option and after great discussion, agreed to remove the existing building. The Board provided a few requested edits to the recommended layout and Cassi agreed to present those edits to the design team.

The Board and Cassi discussed the status of construction funding and how to further engage the public into the development process of the facility.

8. Legislation

a. None

9. Projects/Programs

a. In-House Weed Cost-Share

Staff provided an extensive presentation on the in-house cost-share program, named Wheeler Weed Warriors that they developed. The Board was highly impressed and praised the staff for the thorough efforts put into developing the program. The Board expressed great excitement for staff to provide the presentation to Wheeler County in November.

b. OWEB Open Solicitation

Cassi provided an overview of the two restoration grant applications being drafted. She also provided the feedback from the John Day Basin Partnership (JDBP) regarding the two Focus Investment Program (FIP) proposals.

c. BLM – Priest Hole Restoration

Cassi advised that there is no update on the Priest Hole project due to still waiting on the grant agreement from OWEB.

d. BLM – Noxious Weeds

Kristen provided an overview of the work planned with BLM. She advised that there were fall treatments conducted by BLM seasonal staff and she will be working with Jarod Lemos (BLM) to plan spring treatments. Kristen further advised that the agreement includes funding for private land treatments that she will conduct this fall and she is drafting some outreach material for those opportunities. She stated that she is planning educational signs for BLM public access locations, as well.

e. NRCS/SNW – RCPP

Cassi advised that discussions are still occurring for the preparation of an RCPP application in August of 2024. She stated that the focus currently is seeking match dollars.

10. Partners

a. None

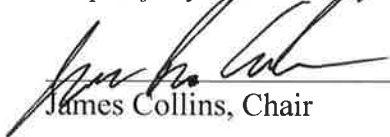
11. Business Not Listed

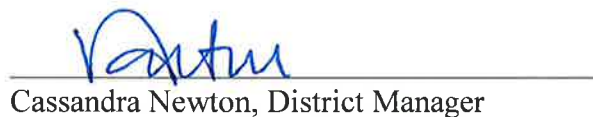
a. None

Next Meeting October 26, 2023

The board meeting was adjourned by Chair Collins at 8:48 p.m. by the clock on the wall.

Respectfully submitted by Cassandra Newton


James Collins, Chair


Cassandra Newton, District Manager

