

**WHEELER SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

June 24, 2020

The board meeting was called to order by Chairman Holmes at 6:25 p.m. by the clock in the Big Sarvice Corral meeting room, located at 40280 Hwy 19, Fossil, Oregon.

Directors

Jeremiah Holmes
Wayne Lindquist
JimBob Collins
Jason Davis
David Hunt
Rusty Rutherford

Assoc. Directors

Rob Wade

Employees

Chase Schultz
Cassandra Newton
Brooke Moore
Bodie Brown
Debbi Bunch

Others Present

AGENCY REPORTS

None.

DISTRICT STAFF REPORTS

District Manager: Chase stated that OWEB voted at the last meeting to fully fund all recommended projects from the last grant cycle. Partially made funding available for FIPs that had interest forms for projects that were most likely going to go through. The current open solicitation cycle is scheduled to close in July, but funding will not be determined until OWEB has a better revenue forecast to know where the funding line will be.

Watershed Council: Debbi stated that her report current and provided the following meeting dates

Mid John Day Bridge Creek Watershed Council Meeting // Tiger Town Brewing in Mitchell // 07.06.2020 @ 6pm
John Day Basin Partnership // Virtual // 08.25.2020
Lower John Day Working Group // Virtual // 07.28.2020 // 08.18.2020 // 09.15.2020 (hoping to be in person)

Debbi also stated that OWEB is currently experiencing staff reductions of nearly 33% at the main office.

Field Tech II: Bodie advised of a lack in funding for weed projects, as OWEB voted to change the weed grants to biennial. Thus, no weed funding will be provided in 2021. *How many weed grants do we have this year?* Two through the OSWB and one through APHIS. *Wasn't the river project funded through a weed grant?* Yes, through CRWMA. *What are the biocontrols you are releasing now?* Knapweed.

Field Tech I: Brooke stated her report is current.

MONTHLY BUSINESS

Minutes: The May 27, 2020, minutes were presented for review. Director Lindquist **moved that the minutes from April 22, 2020 be approved**, Director Hunt seconded the motion. The **motion carried unanimously**.

Budget Expense Report: The budget report dated April 16, 2020 was reviewed. Directors asked clarifying questions pertaining to which District costs were included in which revenue line items. Also discussed was the budgeting process of two-year grants, which accounts for differences in some budgeted revenue figures versus actual. Directors questioned the how no weed funding in 2021 would affect the budget and employee wages. After all questions had been asked and answered, Director Davis **moved that the budget report dated April 16, 2020 be approved**, Director Haberman seconded the motion. The **motion carried unanimously**.

Bills: The check register dated June 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020 was reviewed. Director Lindquist **moved that the check registers dated June 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020 be approved**, Director Collins seconded the motion. The **motion carried unanimously**.

OLD BUSINESS

LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LAC) MEETING: Due to COVID19, state government operations are still under strict regulations regarding in-person gatherings. Maria requested the opinion of the District as to if the LAC meeting should take place virtually or if it should be postponed until an in-person meeting is permitted. The Directors all agreed they would prefer the meeting to be in-person.

Cassi provided the notes from a meeting between Maria Snodgrass, Ted Molinari, and the District staff. The topics discussed were potential new LAC members and geographical areas of Wheeler County lacking LAC representation.

NOVEMBER 2020 ELECTIONS: Cassi reminded everyone of the deadline of August 25, 2020 @ 5pm for the Declaration of Candidacy & Petition for Nomination Signature Sheet.

NEW BUSINESS

SURVEY OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) requested that all SWCD Directors complete a survey pertaining to eligibility criteria and in an email, Jan Lee explained the following:

Existing eligibility criteria were the subject of legislation in 2019, which there would have been significant changes to the criteria to manage land. The legislation was pulled back to allow the Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) to form a work group to discuss and evaluate issues and options. The matter has not yet come to conclusion, and it is very important to get a solid understanding of SWCD opinions on the subject. It is expected that the SWCC will continue to address the issue later in 2020 and 2021.

Each Director completed a survey and Cassi collected them to be returned to OACD.

HB2437 AG CHANNEL MAINTENANCE: Debbi forwarded an email from ODA regarding the public hearings held on June 17th & 18th. ODA has opened the Public Comment Period for these draft rules, OAR 603-095-4000 through 603-095-4060. The Public Comment Period will be open from June 1, 2020, through 5 p.m. June 30, 2020.

House Bill 2437 directed the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to create a streamlined, notice-based process by which a person or water control district could engage in maintenance of channels used for agricultural drainage without a removal-fill permit from Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) under certain conditions.

There was brief discussion of the current regulations, what is changing, and how it pertains to local landowners.

APPROVE/ADOPT 2020-2021 ANNUAL WORK PLAN: The Annual Work Plan was reviewed. Director Lindquist **moved that the 2020-2021 Annual Work Plan be approved and adopted as presented**, Director Collins seconded the motion. The **motion carried unanimously**.

APPROVE/ADOPT 2020-2021 BUDGET: The 2020-2021 budget was reviewed. Cassi provided a brief overview of the changes made since the draft reviewed in May. Director Hunt **moved that the 2020-2021 budget be approved and adopted as presented**, Director Davis seconded the motion. The **motion carried unanimously**.

APPROVE/ADOPT 2020-2021 WAGE SCHEDULE: The 2020-2021 Wage Schedule was reviewed. Director Haberman **moved that the 2020-2021 Wage Schedule be approved and adopted as presented**, Director Hunt seconded the motion. The **motion carried unanimously**.

OTHER BUSINESS NOT LISTED

WHEELER COUNTY WEED BOARD: Director Haberman suggested having a WCWB meeting prior the Board meeting in August to discuss funding options in lieu of OWEB for next year. The meeting will take place at 5:30pm on August 26th in the Big Sarvice Corral meeting room.

NEXT MEETING DATE: The next meeting date will be on **August 26, 2020** at 6:00 pm. This meeting will be in person, at the Big Sarvice Corral Meeting Room, unless otherwise determined.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Holmes at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Cassandra Newton



Jeremiah Holmes, Chair



Chase Schultz, District Manager

