



# Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District

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Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes  
November 21, 2024

## Directors

Jim Bob Collins  
Anna Thomas  
Jason Davis  
Brent Johnson  
Ross Ryno

## Employees

Cassandra Newton  
Brooke Moore  
Kristen Neuburger

## Others Present

Eric Nusbaum, ODA

The board meeting was called to order by Chair Collins at 6:04 p.m. by the clock on the wall.

### 1. **ODA Board Training**

Eric Nusbaum conducted a board training on performance evaluations.

### 2. **Agency Reports**

a. none

### 3. **District Reports**

#### a. **District Manager, Cassi Newton**

Cassi stated that her written report is included in the packet. She provided an update on the ODA SIA and the LAC meeting schedules. Cassi advised that the ESD is working on the handbook transferring and is making good progress. She stated that the past couple weeks were focused on EQIP applications for fire recovery and had many visitors into the office which isn't common!

#### b. **Conservation Technician II, Brooke Moore**

Brooke stated that her report is current. She advised that her and Cassi worked quickly on a PFA application for a in-stream restoration planning and implement, as well as planning for a large conservation easement. Brooke stated that she attended an intermediate forestry training as steps towards receiving JAA for forestry practices.

#### c. **Conservation Technician I, Kristen Neuburger**

Kristen advised the OISC education grant was partially funded and she is finishing up the two ODA/OSWB grant applications. She also advised that she is working on revising the Wheeler County Weed Board list and is working towards developing a Wheeler SWCD weed list for adoption by the District.

Cassi took a moment to express gratitude to the directors who have assisted with various management tasks while all the staff have a heavy workload. She thanked Director Johnson for assisted with handling the research and sourcing of the weed program pickup; Director Ryno for assisting with sourcing a repair shop with availability for the white pickup and doing the shuttling; and, Chair Collins for making the trip to Central Oregon to retrieve the custom future purchased through the Roundhouse funding.

### 4. **Monthly Business**

#### a. **Review and approve minutes**

##### i. **October 30, 2024 regular minutes**

**Meeting Location:** Fire Hall 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)

‡**Motion** made by Vice Chair Thomas to approve the board meeting minutes from October 30, 2024, Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**b. Review and approve financial reports**

**i. November**

‡**Motion** made by Director Davis to approve the financial report as presented, Vice Chair Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**c. Review and approve Accounts Payable**

**i. November 12, 2024**

**ii. November 21, 2024**

‡**Motion** made by Director Davis to approve the check registers from November 12, 2024, and November 21, 2024, Vice Chair Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**5. Upcoming Meetings & Events**

**a. Staff Meeting, every Monday**

**b. November**

**i. 21<sup>st</sup> Wheeler SWCD Board Meeting, 6pm**

**ii. 28<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving, OFFICE CLOSED**

**c. December**

**i. 4<sup>th</sup> JDB Coordination Meeting, 9am *virtual***

**ii. 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> ODA INW Symposium, Corvallis**

**iii. 11<sup>th</sup> JDBP Meeting, 9am *virtual***

**iv. 17<sup>th</sup> Wheeler SWCD Board Meeting, TBD**

**6. Upcoming Deadlines**

**a. November**

**i. 29<sup>th</sup> EQIP (fire)**

**ii. 29<sup>th</sup> RCPP (30/Butte)**

**b. December**

**i. 2<sup>nd</sup> FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant**

**ii. 5<sup>th</sup> FSA Emergency Conservation Program**

**iii. 6<sup>th</sup> OSWB applications**

**iv. 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Audit and Report to ODA/SOS**

**v. 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Accomplishments to ODA**

**7. District Management**

**a. Staffing**

Cassi asked the Board if they would like her to post the Office Assistant position or they would like to hold a Personnel Committee first. The Board requested that the Personnel Committee meet and determine the hiring process.

Director Davis advised that Cassi approached him about a consideration of something for the holidays. Cassi stated that the District has never done anything for the holidays. The Board discussed the need for a policy to be implemented should a bonus be approved to ensure equity and appropriate actions moving forward.

‡**Motion** made by Director Davis to approve a one-time \$500 holiday bonus to each employee, Director Ryno seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**b. Annual Meeting**

Cassi provided an update the planning efforts of the Annual Meeting.

**c. Property**

Cassi advised that there are no updates on the projects at this time.

**8. Legislation**

**a. none**

**9. Projects/Programs**

**a. RCPP-Waterman**

Cassi advised that the negotiation period with NRCS has begun and should be completed early next year.

**b. Fire Recovery**

Cassi provided a list of deadlines approaching for fire recovery efforts through USDA assistance. She stated that she is working with partners to ensure that a FEMA application is submitted by December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Cassi advised that AgWest Farm Credit will provide assistance to landowners unable to cover upfront cost. She explained that AgWest will work directly with each individual landowner. Lastly, Cassi advised that OWEB approved a fire recovery TA with allocations based on fire size for each fire. She explained that only one application is permitted per fire, so collaboration amongst partners is required.

**c. BLM-Priest Hole Restoration**

Cassi advised that construction contractors mobilized to the site on October 1<sup>st</sup> and construction is under way. She stated that she hosted a tour with OWEB and BLM on October 28<sup>th</sup>. She also stated that she is still waiting on execution of funding agreements for the irrigation portion of the project.

**d. US-FS Ochoco- City of Mitchell**

Cassi advised that there is no update currently, but she will be working with USFS to finish up the application for review by the City prior to the deadline in January.

**e. TBD-City of Spray**

Cassi stated that she is still working to locate the proper partners and funding source.

**f. OSWB Weed Grants**

Cassi provided an overview of the two application Kristen plans to submit.

**10. Partners**

**a. none**

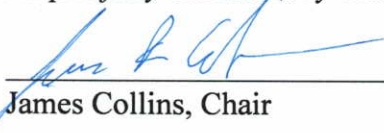
**11. Business Not Listed**

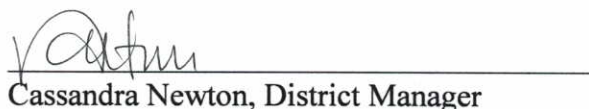
**a. None**

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, December 19, 2024

The board meeting was adjourned by Chair Collins at 7:26 p.m. by the clock on the wall.

*Respectfully submitted by Cassandra Newton*

  
James Collins, Chair

  
Cassandra Newton, District Manager