



Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District

40535 Highway 19, Fossil, OR 97830

(P) 541.468.2990 • (F) 541.468.2991

administration@wheelerswcd.org

Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2022

Directors

James Collins

Anna Thomas

Jason Davis

David Hunt

Wayne Lindquist

Ross Ryno

Assoc. Directors/Emeritus

Brent Johnson

Employees

Cassandra Newton

Brooke Moore

Kristen Neuburger

Others Present

Gabe Williams, RSI

The board meeting was called to order by Chair Collins at 6:08 p.m. by the clock on the wall.

1. Agency Reports

a. Gabe Williams, RSI

Gabe advised that he was able to include hydroseeding in the Pine Hollow budget and will be contracting that as soon as weather warms up.

2. District Reports

a. Administration Manager, Cassi Newton

Cassi stated her report is current.

b. Conservation Technician II, Brooke Moore

Brooke stated her report is current. She advised that she has been focused on submitting the OWEB grant applications, as well as CREP contracts and RCPP applications.

c. Conservation Technician Assistant, Kristen Neuburger

Kristen stated the only addition to her report is that ODA opened the OSWB Noxious Weed Grant cycle and she will be submitting two applications this winter.

Chair Collins asked Kristen how her training with Sue Greer went. Kristen stated that the training was very helpful and she has since been able to begin assisting with completion reporting through the online systems.

Chair Collins asked if the staff could provide a handout of the Calibration Clinic. Kristen and Cassi stated that they developed an overview report of the Clinic and have copies of all the provided handouts. They also advised that Habco Ag Services provided an excellent calibration guideline that includes a form that can be used for the calibration calculations. Cassi displayed the overview on the screen for those present. She advised that she recorded the trainings and received permission from Habco Ag Services to publish and use the videos for additional education outreach.

3. Monthly Business

a. Review and approve minutes

- September 29, 2022 regular minutes

Ross advised that he was in attendance at the September meeting but was not on the minutes. Cassi apologized for the mistake and stated she will have a corrected set of minutes for signature at the November meeting.

‡ **Motion** made by Director Lindquist to approve the board meeting minutes from September 29, 2022 with corrections, Director Ryno seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Review financial report

- September/October

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)

Chair Collins asked Cassi to provide details of the outstanding requests for funds. Cassi explained where each of the requests were at in process.

The Board asked if the check received by the Watershed Council the full amount. Cassi advised that the check received is only the first portion of payment and that per the Transition Agreement, the Watershed Council has until November 30, 2022 to issue payment for the remainder.

Cassi went through the remainder of the financial report and provided details of the expenditures.

‡**Motion** made by Vice-Chair Thomas to approve the September/October 2022 financial report, Director Ryno seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Review and approve Accounts Payable

- October 18, 2022
- October 27, 2022

Director Davis asked if the payment to Overland Law was a duplicate payment. Cassi stated that Overland Law did not receive the first check issued, so she processed a stop payment on the original payment and issued another check.

‡**Motion** made by Vice-Chair Thomas to approve the check registers from October 18, 2022 and October 27, 2022 as presented, Director Lindquist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Staff Meeting, every Monday
- **October**
 - 12th West Bologna and Burnt Cabin Stewardship Tour, 9am
 - 13th Calibration Clinic, 3pm
 - 25th LJDWG Meeting, 10am
 - 27th Board Meeting, 6pm

5. Upcoming Deadlines

- **October**
 - 3rd Oregon Wildlife Foundation Small Grant
 - 5th NOAA Resilience Grants
 - 7th Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund
 - 31st OWEB Open Solicitation

6. District Management

a. Staffing

Cassi advised that at the September meeting, the Board did not discuss her recommendation of moving Kristen into the Conservation Technician I position. She stated her recommendation would be to make the motion retroactive to October 1st, should they approve the recommendation since Kristen has been managing a project workload.

The Board apologized to Kristen for the Assistant position not being held for the intended year to allow for adequate training and they expressed appreciation to her for stepping up to manage a project workload so quickly. The Board asked Kristen if she would accept an offer to move into the Conservation Technician I position. Kristen stated she would accept the offer.

‡**Motion** made by Director Lindquist to offer a Conservation Technician I position to Kristen Neuburger and make the annual salary offer of \$39,240 retroactive to October 1, 2022, Vice-Chair Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Cassi advised that there was not a quorum presented at the special meeting scheduled on October 11, 2022 and the position descriptions have not been adopted. She further advised that in addition to the position descriptions needing to be adopted, that the Board will need to determine the solicitation and hiring process.

‡**Motion** made by Vice-Chair Thomas to adopt the District Manager, Conservation Manager and Office Assistant position descriptions as presented, Director Ryno seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board agreed to solicit the positions in the local media for 1 month and all available listserv options. They directed Cassi to provide the applications to the Personnel Committee Chair and Board Chair for review and to schedule interviews with all available Personnel Committee members once 3-5 applications are submitted.

b. Property

Cassi advised that the District received the final deed for the property. She stated that she has arranged with JM Works to clean up the property in preparation of winter. Cassi advised that she is currently working on drafting an application for grant funding towards a security fence and cameras to be installed. Cassi explained that she is also working on a funding opportunity for engineering and design for the new facility and has an abundance of resources in line to discuss the construction of the facility utilizing Mass Timber.

The Board asked if Judy was contacted about the property and Chair Collins advised he had not spoken to her.

c. Annual Meeting

Cassi provided the Board with the planned details of the Annual Meeting. The Board discussed the complimentary ticket and Partner of the Year award.

7. Legislation

a. Legislative Advocacy Policy (SDAO)

Cassi reminded the Board that SDAO is asking special districts in Oregon to consider passing a resolution that authorizes general managers or board chairs the ability to take legislative positions on certain topics recommended by SDAO without full board approval. Cassi advised that the Board did not provide her any direction at the last meeting and she asked the Board if they would like to revisit the topic when the District is fully staffed. The Board agreed.

8. Projects/Programs

a. AgriMet Weather Stations

Cassi stated that CTWS is interested in applying for the funding opportunity for equipment and installation and she is still working with BOR to determine the process for applying for that funding. Cassi advised that BOR installed the OWRD station in Twickenham earlier in October, but she was unable to attend the installation. The Board asked Cassi to provide the link to access AgriMet weather station details.

9. Partners

a. OWEB Capacity Survey

Cassi stated that OWEB has been conducting a study on how capacity funding is used by SWCDs and watershed councils. She provided some insight of information she learned at the Connect+ Conference and advised that one of the researchers reached out to the District. Cassi explained that the researchers are selecting districts and councils to participate in interviews so they get a deeper understanding of the organizations than what can be provided through their research. Cassi advised that she is willing to participate in an interview but the researchers are requesting directors and prior employees to participate, as well. The Board suggested Cassi to reach out to Ted Molinari and Judy Potter to inquire if they would be interested in participating. Chair Collins advised he would be willing to participate.

b. ODA Soil and Water Conservation Committee, *Business Not Listed*

Cassi stated that the ODA SWCC has been reviewing ORS 568.560 and the eligibility requirements for district directors. She advised that the SWCD provided the survey results from

2020 and an overview of their suggested options, which she included in the board packet. Chair Collins provided an elaborated explanation of the options on the table and the Board discussed their perspectives. Chair Collins and Cassi both advised they would be in attendance at the SWCC meeting held on November 2nd at 1:30pm.

Next Meeting November 15, 2022

The board meeting was adjourned by Chair Collins at 8:00 p.m. by the clock on the wall.

Respectfully submitted by Cassandra Newton


James Collins, Chair


Cassandra Newton, Administrative Manager