



Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District

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Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2023
Annual Meeting

1. Opening Comments

Chair Collins thanked everyone for coming, the Spray Assembly of God for hosting, and T. Wayne BBQ and Live Fire Cooking for catering. He explained the purpose of the Annual Meeting and advised that Annual Report and 2022-2023 financial audit copies are on the tables.

2. Introductions

Cassi introduced the Board of Directors and staff. She also encouraged everyone to visit the display booths to see the exceptional restoration efforts the District put in during the past year with help of landowners, various partners, and contractors.

3. Awards

Cassi presented the 2023 Partner of the Year to DelRae Ferguson with USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) saying the following: "As we showcase Wheeler SWCD efforts over the last year, we also have a tradition of recognizing a partner that has gone above and beyond to make these efforts possible. The 2023 Partner of the Year is an individual always thinking of creative ways to partner on projects and get others involved, sharing funding and collaboration opportunities, promoting SWCD events, and supporting landowners. They are honest and realistic when committing their efforts and quick to offer their support when they can; be this training staff, meeting landowners in-person despite not living in Wheeler County, or facilitating communication between project partners to ensure all are on the same page. Even as I was preparing tonight's agenda and script, this person reached out to offer supplies to help decorate for the annual meeting and has checked in with me non-stop this past week to ensure everything was in place for this event. This year we would like to recognize our District Conservationist, DelRae Ferguson, as Partner of the year. DelRae, we cannot thank you enough for the incredible work you put into Wheeler County lands and your unwavering assistance to Wheeler SWCD and our landowners. Your hard work and dedication are appreciated beyond measure."

4. Partnering Agency Updates

Cassi introduced DelRae Ferguson with NRCS, Amy Charrette with OWEB, Dan Son with ODA, and Matthew Brown with ODF. All of whom provided a 5-minute update about their agency.

5. Dinner

Door prizes announced

6. Speakers

Cassi showed the video that the District developed through the US-FS Wood Innovation Grant. She then conducted a presentation on the future Wheeler SWCD Conservation Community Center. Cassi introduced Matt Wenick, Weed Control Coordinator with Grant SWCD prior to his presentation on invasive annual grass treatment success with Rejuvra and David Helmricks, Community Wildfire Forester with the John Day Unity of Oregon Department of Forestry prior to his presentation on defensive space and fire resiliency.

6 door prizes announced

7. Closing Comments


Chair Collins thanked everyone again for coming. He thanked the staff for the outstanding organization of the Annual Meeting and reminded attendees to visit the displays and to reach out with conservation needs and concerns.

8. Business Meeting


- a. SB775
Cassi presented the approved ODA map for Board signature.
- b. PHR Bid Authorization
Cassi advised that BLM has agreed to award the engineer bid to Alta Science and Engineering as the sole proposal received, but she did not have all the required documentation to present for the Board award the bid. She explained that since the next board meeting will not be for another month, she requested that the Board grant authority for her to award the bid to Alta upon receipt of the full proposal and BLM's final approval.
‡**Motion** made by Director Davis to authorize Cassandra Newton to award the Priest Hole Restoration project engineer to Alta upon receipt of the full proposal and final approval from BLM, Vice-Chair Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- c. Special Meeting Date – LRBP
The Board agreed to hold a special meeting on January 8th at 7AM to approve and adopt the Long-Range Business Plan.
- d. Business Not Listed

Next Meeting January 25, 2024

Respectfully submitted by Cassandra Newton



James Collins, Chair



Cassandra Newton, District Manager

Complimentary Tickets
Cassandra Newton
Ayla Morehouse
Brooke Moore
Guest, Brooke Moore
Kristen Neuburger
Guest, Kristen Neuburger
Jason Davis
James Collins
Anna Thomas
Brent Johnson
Ross Ryno
Zach Bruce
Jeremiah Holmes
Arcadius St Laurent
Ben Logan
DelRae Ferguson
Guest, DelRae Ferguson
Jessica Jones
Matt Wenick
Guest, Matt Wenick
David Helmricks
Timothy Cooke

In attendance 74
Complimentary 22
Paid 52

Paid Tickets	
Matthew Brown, ODF **	John Crafton
Amy Charette, OWEB **	Jordan Zettle
Antone	Julie Warhlich
Antone	Justin Tryon, ODF
Antone	Kara Doescher, ODF
Becky Clark	Lisa Greene
Bonnie Tolton	Lisa Greene
Brad Campbell	Lisa Greene
Bryon Clark	Lisa Greene
Camden Jones	Maria Logan
Candy Humphreys	Melody Holmes
Dan Son, ODA **	Michelle Crafton
Dave Boise	Mike Gillen
Don Sietz	Mike Towell
Don Sietz	Peggy Lindquist
Earl Mortimore	Robin Ordway
Ellen Mann	Sandy Speer
Emma Asher	Six Shooter
Emma Asher	Six Shooter
Frank Dyer	Six Shooter
Gordon Tolton	Steve Allen
Isabel Montclair	Tara Holmes
Jennifer Boise	Toby Lindquist
Jennifer Mortimore	Toney Ryno
Jess Gillen	Victoria Binning, ODA **
Joel Buck	Wayne Lindquist