



Whidbey Island Conservation District

P.O. Box 490 – 1 NE 4th Street, Coupeville, WA 98239 - 360.678.4708 Fax: 360.678.2271

Public Meeting Minutes June 24, 2020; 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

1 Public Meeting

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Whidbey Island Conservation District was held remotely via Zoom.

2 Attendance and Quorum

The following Supervisors, being a quorum of the Board, were present:

Sarah Richards – Chair Tim Keohane – Member
Mark Sytsma – Vice Chair Gary Ketcheson – Member

Presenters:

Matt Zupich – WICD Manager Sandy Welch – WICD Administrator
Gwendolyn Hannam – WICD Staff

Other Attendees:

Dave Edwards - citizen

3 Call to Order and Welcome

Sarah Richards called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Matt Zupich requested to add an agenda item relating to membership renewal with the WA Conservation Society. The board consented.

4 Minutes

Mark Sytsma noted a correction needed in the May minutes. Matt made the correction.

Motion (1) Gary Ketcheson moved to approve the May 27, 2020 meeting minutes as corrected. Motion passed.

5 Financial Report and Other Business

- Sandy Welch reviewed the monthly Financial Report and answered a few questions from the board.

Motion (2) Tim Keohane moved to approve the Payroll, Expense, and Voucher #s 6764-6766 totaling \$4,848.91; Bank direct vouchers for payroll & expenses #s 1022-1036 totaling \$29,063.78; Bank POS purchases & online bill payments totaling \$1,167.41; and monthly 941 payroll tax filing totaling \$4,654.03. Motion passed.

- Matt briefly reviewed the benefits of and recommended renewing WICD's membership with the WA Conservation Society (WCS). He requested the board authorize him to vote on behalf of WICD at WCS meetings and grant him authorization to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to renew membership.

Motion (3) Mark Sytsma moved to authorize Matt Zupich to vote on behalf of WICD at WCS meetings and grant him authorization to sign the membership MOU. Motion passed.

- Matt and Sarah reported that Shannon has been working for the newly formed Whidbey Island Grown Cooperative (WIGC), formerly Whidbey Island Grown (WIG), on a voluntary basis the past few months. Shannon asked if she could be paid for up to 5 hours/week to provide administrative support for WIGC until the organization is able to hire staff in the near future. WICD still holds funds from prior work with WIG so it is reasonable to use those funds to support WIGC.
- Matt reported that WSCC is currently able to allocate only 6 months of funding to districts in FY21, at the same level as FY20, due to budget cuts on the state level. WSCC is committed to making internal cuts rather than pass on reduced funding to CDs but the effects of COVID-19 on funding for the second half of FY21 are yet to be seen.
- Matt reported on a gap in WICD's FY21 budget due to loss of funding that was expected from a PSCD Caucus-sponsored Shoreline NTA. He laid out an immediate action plan involving cuts to full-time staff hours while retaining them on WICD's Shared Work Plan so they can receive partial unemployment benefits. He is also pursuing funding through a USDA grant as

well as waiting to hear from Island County regarding potential State Dept of Health funding for WICD. He will continue working with staff to find ways to close the budget gap.

7 WSCC Update

- Matt gave a brief update regarding WSCC deadlines for upcoming year-end grant reports for FY20 and FY21 grant addendums.

8 NRCS Update

- Matt gave an update on Jared Hamman's behalf. He noted there are 3 high tunnel applications on Whidbey for FY20.

9 NW Region Engineering Cluster Agreement

- Matt briefly discussed the Shared Engineer program for the benefit of new supervisors. He indicated that the annual engineering cluster agreement expires at the end of June however some revisions are still being made to some language in the agreement in an effort to make it cleaner and a more efficient renewal process. Matt requested authorization to sign the agreement once the final revisions are completed and acceptable.

Motion (4) Gary Ketcheson moved to authorize Matt Zupich to sign the revised engineering cluster agreement on behalf of the WICD board unless substantial changes to the agreement are presented. Motion passed.

10 Cost-Share Agreement

- Matt reported that Erin Borden was originally assigned this project and wrote the farm plan which was approved at the March 2020 board meeting. Erin also entered the project into the WSCC Cost-Share Database and received the notice of funding. The project was re-assigned to Gwendolyn Hannam when Erin resigned in May. Gwendolyn reviewed details of the proposed project but an error with the funding breakdown was noticed while reviewing the contract during the meeting. Gwendolyn will work to resolve the issue with WSCC.

Motion (5) Tim Keohane moved to authorize Matt Zupich to sign the Noble Cost-Share Contract conditioned on adequate funding available from WSCC to carry out the project. Motion Passed.

11 Greenbank Project Update

- Matt gave a brief overview of the Greenbank Marsh Restoration Project. He reported that the effort to replace a failing tidegate with an open channel to benefit salmonids is no longer being pursued mainly due to funding constraints. Tom Slocum, WICD's Shared Engineer, will continue to work with the property owner on a different strategy moving forward.

12 Lone Lake Project Update

- Gwendolyn reported a successful, virtual stakeholder meeting was held by WICD the previous evening to review the results of the projects and algae management plan. There was some discussion regarding the content and quality of the plan compared with available funding and cost of the consultant such that the plan was somewhat "cookie-cutter" rather than highly customized. Mark Sytsma noted that the most feasible path forward, due to funding constraints, is to allow the lake to recover naturally which it seems to be doing since grass carp were removed. Also, the consultant does not believe the lake outlet is part of the algae problem but it is still a concern of landowners around the lake.

13 District Manager Report

- Matt discussed one minor change to WICD's "Return to Work Plan" which complies with the Governor's "Safe Start Washington" plan. Staff has been successfully implementing the plan for just over a week both in the office and field. They are working staggered shifts in the office to minimize risk of exposure and at the Governor's suggestion to continue telework if possible. Matt recommends keeping the office closed to public visitation for the foreseeable future, until staff can feasibly return to a normal work schedule versus staggered shifts. He also noted that in-person Open Public Meetings are still prohibited by the Governor's order.
- Matt gave an update on the progress of the PSCD Caucus piloting a Shared Forester program. 3 regional foresters are to be hired for 3 areas – WICD and Snohomish CD will be sharing 1 forester. Subcommittees have been formed to review applications and conduct interviews once the full committee completes a job description and position announcements.
- Matt led a brief discussion of last week's virtual WADE conference. Overall, it seemed to be well coordinated and carried out despite the abrupt change from in-person to virtual.

14 Upcoming Dates and Review of Motions

- June 30 – End of FY20
- July 1 – Beginning of FY21
- July 3 – Independence Day Holiday – office closed
- July 10 – WSCC FY20 Grant Reports Due
- July 16 – WSCC Regular Meeting, 8:30 – 4 pm via GoToWebinar
- July 22 – Board meeting, 9 am – Noon, via Zoom
- July 31 – WSCC FY21 Grant Addendums Due

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15 Adjourned at 11:00 a.m.