



**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **Audit:** Hard copy of audit given to board. A PDF version was emailed with the meeting reminder last week. Over expenditure on payroll due to SBWC fiscal admin. Debt services overpayment due to loan payoff on the smaller of the two building loans. Lona commented that the auditor mentions throughout the audit that he has no opinion. Kari would hope for a timelier audit next year. KC suggested in the contract with auditor that we fine them every day they are late. Can't do that because of extensions. We could do an incentive though. Randy mentioned that at the OACD meeting they talked about standardized accounting practices that could be done in house for audits. Kari mentioned that we have to have this audit due to our being a taxing district. KC mentioned that this is not a fraud audit. Lona asked if the audits are used for loans. Yes, in fact US Bank requested our last 4 audits in the decision about the loan refinance. Randy would prefer to wait to accept the audit until next month's meeting.
- **Job Title Change for Malyssa Legg:** Kari proposed that Malyssa's title be changed from Operations Admin to Assistant District Manager. It would make it more professional for day to day operations/decisions to outside agencies when Kari is not available. Malyssa's job description hasn't been updated in 7 years and is no longer accurate. Randy asked if we are bonded. We have crime insurance per Kari. **Motion** Pierce/Freytag to update Malyssa's title to Assistant District Manager **Approved Motion passed by unanimous vote.**
- **Loan Refinance:** We have sent the last 4 years of audits to US Bank. Waiting to hear back from bond council. Estimated new interest rate is 2.5%, the current rate we have is 4%. It would be a 5-year loan with the ability to pay off early. Lona asked if we would then need to refinance again after the 5 years. Per Kari, no we would be paid in full by that time. At that point all rent from NRCS would be for building maintenance etc. Hope to have an update by the end of the week.
- **New Hires:** We received a good amount of applications and good candidates for both positions. We will be doing interviews the first week of March. Kari will be contacting a few board members to assist with interviews. Malyssa will help with the Office Assistant interviews and Tyler or Nathan will assist with the Field Tech/Outreach Coordinator.
- **Groundwater Study Funding:** Tyler spoke with Dr. Perkins to try to get the cost below \$20,000. Got the cost down to \$10,200. Hope to have a grad student start in the summer to begin data collection and well log reviews. Local well drillers willing to allow sample collections when they are out drilling. Bill mentioned that there is a lot of interest in this in the community. Tyler spoke about as we build the program it would be useable by landowners and the County to compare properties or determining where to develop properties to avoid groundwater limited areas. Looking at about 15-20 thousand per year to have a grad student. Would hold back 15% until final product delivered. Having a long term relationship with PSU will be beneficial in getting things done right and in a timely manner. Kari asked that tonight the board approve the \$10,000 to get started and once we are working on the budget for the new fiscal year we can determine how much we want to fund each year. LDS is trying to put some money in their budget for it also. Randy asked who would own the documents. Tyler said it would be a thesis document so it would be a public document available to all and we can use it as we wish. **Motion** VanNatta/Pierce to approve \$10,000 funding to begin study. **Approved Motion passed**

Approved 03.16.16

**by unanimous vote.** Lona asked if this would be helpful for where to put a septic system. Tyler said it would just give basic info and not be site specific.

- **RCPP:** Our RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program) request has been approved! It is for \$3 million from NRCS, \$2.9 million from OWEB and \$5.8 million from 11 other partners. Total of \$8.8 million the next 5 years. 11 signed on partners, cash and in/kind. Other partners may be added. 51 projects in the pipeline in various stages of development. Wildlife habitat, erosion and sediment control, water quality in the streams. Includes LWD projects, stabilization, plantings, fish passages, and more. There is also a monitoring plan that is included. We are developing the monitoring plan with LCEP and DEQ. If it is successful in the RCPP project area, it can then be used to monitor other areas of the county. We chose the Clatskanie River area and neighboring systems because we have been working on it for 20 years, we have landowners that have seen the success their neighbors have had and not are willing to participate in projects with us. Columbia River is a CCA (critical conservation area) for the nation. Can run program as a direct funder, don't need individual landowner agreements. The first year of this we will be working with NRCS and partners to develop the watershed plan then it will go to NRCS' Chief in DC to approve. There were 265 total applicants. 85 were in the CCA funding pool, and 16 CCA's were approved. Bill thinks this is amazing and we need to be proud of this and get the word out. Kari mentioned that NRCS is doing good about getting the word out also. Lona asked who wrote the proposal. It was Tyler, Nathan, Margaret, and Kari. LCEP did assist with the monitoring question.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Budget Committee:** The board was presented with a list of 7 citizens to serve on the budget committee. No issues. **Motion** Pierce/VanNatta to approve list. **Approved Motion passed by unanimous vote.**
- **Budget Calendar:** The board was presented with the budget calendar. The Budget Meeting will be on 04/28/16 at 6:30 PM. Dave noted he will be out of town. When will the budget docs be sent out? Per Kari the week before the meeting. **Motion** Pierce/VanNatta to approve calendar. **Approved Motion passed by unanimous vote.**
- **Budget Officer:** **Motion** Freytag/VanNatta to name Kari as the budget officer. **Approved Motion passed by unanimous vote.**
- **Fox Creek:** Margaret mentioned that Kari has done an outstanding job of representing the SWCD at all of the meetings regarding Fox Creek. Kari gave a very detailed breakdown of everything that has been going on since the last SWCD board meeting. Most of Kari's time has been dominated by Fox Creek.

The Columbia SWCD is lead on the Fox Creek Sinkhole project. At the January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting the SWCD offered their services to the landowners and city to facilitate a solution. Working with the permitting agencies and with water quality and salmonid streams is experience neither the landowners or the city had. This project has taken quite a bit of time, but we are coming to a close on the temporary fix and now have the opportunity to have the rest of the creek day lighted as many have wanted for several years now. The current landowners and the City of Rainier have all signed a cooperator agreement through 2021 to work with us on this current project as well as the future day lighting project. Article from the Daily News is in your packet about last night's meeting.

Randy asked if the sewer pipe was in good shape. Tyler said he hasn't seen it and hopes not to see it. So far no leakage. Lonny asked why not daylight to C Street. Tyler mentioned water and sewer too much money for the short term protection, daylighting is the goal of the long term solution.

- **Fair Sponsorship:** Kari contacted Judy Reid about getting into the Fair book this year. She asked if the district would be interested in sponsoring the Ag building. It would give the SWCD a constant presence at the fairgrounds. It needs some TLC including a concrete floor put in. Our name would be on the building and we would work in that we could use other fair buildings for events we want to hold. Cost for the floor? Kari will work to get some bids. It's about a 100x100 building. Kari will bring some prices and sponsorship options to the next meeting.
- **EWP:** Lots of people on the list in the county that would qualify. Speaking with NRCS they are willing if we are. The main projects we have this year are plantings, weeds and 2 culverts. Staff has agreed that we should at least attempt to get approved. Kari is requesting that the board approve to request sponsorship for EWP. If approved we would facilitate, permit, work with NRCS on designs, and make sure done in a timely manner. 25% match is required but we wouldn't have any problem with that. We have done 2 prior EWPs with no problem. If needed, we can hire termed people or "borrow" staff from other SWCDs. The last EWP we did we only had 3 staff and NRCS ended up being audited on our paperwork and there were no corrections needed. **Motion** VanNatta/Bergman to request EWP sponsorship from NRCS for Columbia County. **Approved Motion passed by unanimous vote.**
- **New Cooperator:** Chris Lieziert, Yankton, 18.72 acres **Motion** Bergman/Pierce to approve cooperator. **Approved Motion passed by unanimous vote**

## REPORTS

### BOARD

Bill attended the Annual RC&D meeting. They continue to have to maintain their 501c3 status. There is a possibility that they could join with Rural Development in the future. Bill mentioned that Lyle is 90 and still sharp as a tack. He remembers everything.

KC talked about an LCEP project in La Center that had an 80-year high of water flow.

Randy attended the OACD directors meeting. Some significant issues with NRCS and SWCD relations were discussed including some of the problems in Burns. Ron Alvarado gave a very straight forward report. Randy asked about the space agreement for Clatsop SWCD. Kari wasn't sure of all the details but knows it's a very detailed arrangement.

Lona will be sending out Kari's 1/2-year evaluation form to the board. It will be very brief. She would also like if the board would consider doing a board self evaluation. It is recommended in the policy and lots of boards do it annually. She will get something sent out to the board.

### KARI

*Report in packet*

Beginning to work on budget and work plan for coming fiscal year. Bridges program with FSA in moving forward and the SWCD is a part of it. The website will have a soft launch this spring.

### NATHAN

He has been working with ODA and their SIA in the Birkenfeld/Mist area. The SWCD is supposed to be Ccd on all the letters sent by ODA to the landowners. We have not received all of them though

Approved 03.16.16

because we were getting calls from landowners and we didn't have any info from ODA. We have now received the master list from ODA. Most of them are low priority, 4 moderate, and 2 severe.

**TYLER**

Has been working on planting for Batwater and Floodplain. Lots of work at Fox Creek and helped clean out the fish ladder in Clatskanie on Simmons Road. Pictures of the before and after were given to the board.

**SBWC**

Moving forward on projects. In April will know if the project on Robinette is approved by OWEB.

**ROADS DEPT.**

Dam on Goble Creek, fish ladder inoperable? Plugged? Tyler will talk to someone about.

**LCRWC**

*Report in packet*

Participated in many Fox Creek meetings with the SWCD. At the Weed Board meeting it was proposed for the 17/19 budget that funding come directly to the counties. Columbia County could then designate a group to be in charge of weeds. SWCD is the current lead agency but that's different from the weed board structure. A reminder that the Friends of Fox Creek dinner is tomorrow at 6:30 PM in Rainier.

***VanNatta/Pierce moved to adjourn meeting***

***MEETING ADJOURNED 9:45PM***

Respectfully Submitted:

***Malyssa Legg***

Malyssa Legg, District Clerk