



Board Approved 10/20/2021

Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District
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MINUTES NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED

September 15, 2021
Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District
(JSWCD)
Board Meeting

Directors, Associates

Allan Campbell – Director
Stan Dean – Chair
Don Hamann – Director
Ron Hillers – Secretary/Treasurer
Gordon Jones – Director- via ZOOM
Barbara Niedermeyer – Vice Chair
Nicky Webb Smith – Director - via ZOOM
Pam Hillers – Associate Director

Staff & Guests

Randy White – District Manager
Markie Germer
Amy Hackler Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Executive Director – arrived at 5pm
Via ZOOM:
Meghan Montgomery
Kora Mousseaux
Paul DeMaggio
Colleen Roberts, Jackson County Commissioner
Bob Jones – Rogue River Watershed Council
(RRWC)
Peter Winnick – District Conservationist -
Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
Marganne Allen - Oregon Department of
Agriculture (ODA)
Dr. Erica Fleishman - Director of the Oregon
Climate Change Research Institute and
Professor at Oregon State University (OSU)

Board Chair Dean called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Director Dean introduced Marganne Allen, ODA Program Manager for Agriculture Water Quality. She asked for some time to address the board.

Director Jones introduced Dr. Erica Fleishman, Director of the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute (OCCRI). She will give a presentation on the basics of climate change and factors that drive climate and how humans are involved. This is the first of a series of presentations and discussions on climate change. Dr. Fleishman began with the history of OCCRI which was established in 2007 by the Oregon Legislature through House Bill 3543. The organization includes a network of researchers from Oregon's universities as well as representatives from federal and state agencies. The affects of climate change are not isolated from other types of changes. Land use changes, like urban use, is an example. There has been a long history of how humans effect the world. It is a combination of how many people there are and how much they consume which is often related to affluence and technology.

Technology can either lessen the effect on lots of people and their consumption or it can increase the effect. Climate change does not operate in isolation. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) releases periodic reports with scientific consensus on climate change. Hundreds of scientists worldwide contribute to these IPCC reports. These reports are considered rigorous in part because they are probabilistic, and they look at scientific confidence. The latest report that came out on warming shows that scientist say that the recent warming is unprecedented in more than 2000 years. Humans contribute to the warming through greenhouse emissions. But some of the warming is through natural events such as solar and volcanic activities. In Oregon, the temperature has increased about two degrees per century. Summers are warmer and nights are warmer. Scientist project that in the next 50 years, extreme heat events could be 4.8 times more likely than the last 50 years. Precipitation on an annual basis is increasing slightly. The wet seasons are wetter. Winter storms are more severe. More of the precipitation is in the form of rain and less in snow. Since the mid-1900, there has been a decrease of less water in snow by 15-30%. Snow melt is happening earlier. Scientists believe that the change in heavy precipitation is less human caused in North America. Drought means not enough water to meet needs. Contributors to drought are warmer temperatures, low precipitation, wind speed, solar radiation, and humidity. In Oregon, droughts have been more frequent and more severe. Agricultural carbon sequestration is another contributor in climate change. The US National Academies of Science reported on some potential ways to help with this issue: reduce winter bare-fallow, plant seasonal cover crops, plant crops with residues, reduce summer fallow in semi-arid environments, increase proportion of perennial grasses and legumes in crop rotations, less or no tilling, especially in warm and dry areas. Warming is inevitable but humans can help by modifying their actions now. The presentation concluded with some questions and answers.

RRWC

Bob Jones reported that Crystal Nichols, the new Community Engagement Project Manager, is on board and just released the *Friends Update* newsletter that tells of the council's activities. RRWC, Lomakatsi, and the Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG) are stewarding seven riparian restoration projects on private lands in the Almeda Fire footprint. The Council is organizing a post Almeda fire tour for elected officials. The annual *Celebrate the Rogue* fund raiser event will be virtual from October 1st to 17th. RRWC is working with partners including JSWCD on an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Focus Investment Partnership (FIP) Grant. This would be for water quality restoration projects on the Little Butte Creek and Elk Creek drainages. This grant could provide several million dollars per year for six years. Since this spring, 5000 plants have been planted along Bear Creek. Plant Oregon will be planting 1500 plants over ten acres in the Blue Heron Park. There was a blackberry pulling event at the Suncrest rest area along the I-5 highway. Seventeen volunteers removed blackberries on 2.5 acres which is about 60% of the area that needs to be treated.

FSA

Amy Hackler is the FSA Executive Director for Jackson, Josephine, and Douglas counties. The CREP program has been revamped into a new branch called Clear 30. They have one client who is enrolling in the Clear 30 program. This Clear 30 program requires a conservation plan from NRCS and must be submitted by Monday, September 20th with all required signatures. Amy is asking for the Board to give signatory authority to a JSWCD employee to sign the documents when the paperwork is ready to be submitted. Director Dean asked Amy why does JSWCD need to sign this FSA program. Amy responded that she is required to go through the Board for a signature. She said there is no legal obligation to the district, and it is a FSA policy to obtain a signature from the district.

A motion by Director Hillers with a second by Director Hamann to give signatory authority to District Manager White for this one FSA Clear 30 program passed unanimously. District Manager White will follow-up with Amy regarding the future of required signatures on FSA programs.

Staff was excused at 5:10pm.

ADMINISTRATION

Agenda

There were no corrections, additions, or deletions to the agenda.

Minutes

A motion by Director Niedermeyer with a second by Director Campbell to approve the minutes from August 18, 2021, as presented passed unanimously. The misspelling of Colleen Roberts was noted on the first page.

Treasurer's Report

A motion by Director Hillers with a second by Director Campbell to accept the August treasurer's reports as presented passed unanimously.

NRCS

Peter Winnick, NRCS District Conservationist, reported that they are finalizing their contracts. They have 17 contracts with most consisting of forestry producers. The other contracts are with irrigators and high tunnel producers. These contracts cover over 1145 acres and amounts to \$1.35 million in funding. This NRCS office made a job offer for a new soil conservationist and they are waiting for a response. NRCS is working with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to split a half time job position for a biologist that will be housed in this building. More information will follow. The State NRCS has decided to have just one sign up deadline for all of their programs starting in 2022. The deadline will be November 19th. NRCS is continuing to work with RRWC on the development of the National Water Quality Initiative Program. Pete has been working with the US Fish and Wildlife, Lomakatsi, Rogue Forestry Partnership and the City of Ashland on a *partners scape program* to highlight the success of Ashland's Forestry Resilient Project. This will be a virtual event sometime in mid-October.

ODA

Marganne Allen from ODA is the Water Quality Program Manager. She gave a couple of updates. The agency transitioned to Windows 365 and their emails addresses have changed. The old email addresses will still work for a time. The Oregon Legislature ended its session with ODA receiving funds to hire positions that have been vacant and for some newly created positions. They are looking to hire a SWCD Specialist. They are in the process of finalizing the position description and she welcomes feedback and suggestions. Director Dean asks if the SWCD Specialist is different from a SWCD Manager position. She responded saying that ODA has the discretion to hire a manager or a specialist. Right now, on the books, the position is classified as a specialist. She continued to say that reclassifying the position is possible. A manager is considered an administrator and the manager works more *on the business* instead of *in the business*. A specialist would have more time to work directly with districts.

UPDATES

Personnel Committee

District Manager White reported that the Personnel Committee met to review the position description drafts for the District Manager, Business Manager, and the Natural Resource Supervisor. The committee made suggestions and edits. He will make the changes and have them ready for Board approval in October.

Climate Change Committee

The Climate Change Committee meeting that was scheduled for tomorrow has been cancelled. Marty Main is scheduled to talk about climate change affects to forests at the November Board meeting. The urban speaker is scheduled for the January Board Meeting. The fourth speaker will represent the agriculture community and has yet to be determined.

Legislative Update

The session has ended. There will be some activity with interim committees meeting in the fall. OACD is promoting the wildlife tax deferral program through the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Clint Nichols is working with staff from several SWCDs in the Willamette valley to resuscitate the program.

OLD BUSINESS

Two Rivers Soil Water Conservation District (TRSWCD) and JSWCD Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Update

District Manager White reported that one of the TRSWCD Board Members has passed away. Eric Nusbaum from ODA will be meeting with the TRSWCD Board to determine if they want JSWCD's assistance. The district received a letter from Courtney Shaff, OWEB's Business Operations Manager, stating that the Applegate SIA grant has been officially cancelled.

NEW BUSINESS

Due to the new marijuana laws, District Manager White asked HR Answers to review the section on Drugs and Alcohol of the personnel policy. HR Answers sent back a modified copy that is included in the board packet. Yesterday, District Manager White and Director Dean edited the HR Answers modified copy and it is the pink copy that has been passed out to the board. The board was asked to review both the HR Answer paper and the edited pink one for discussion and decision at the next board meeting. If the board sees anything that they feel needs to be change, let District Manager White know before the next board meeting.

REPORTS

Managers Briefing

The OWEB FIP grant that Bob Jones talked about looks like it will be a fantastic program and the district should be supportive of it. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant and the OWEB FIP grant will bring in a lot of funding to the area which includes the Obenchain Fire area.

OWEB – Small Grant Team

Director Niedermeyer reported that the Small Grant Team's open window for applications starts on September 16th and goes through September 30th. All applications must be submitted online. The small grant team will meet on the 12th of October to review the applications.

OACD

Director Dean reported that the OACD Annual Meeting is scheduled for November 9th and 10th, and it will be a virtual meeting. Jeff Gordon, Oregon State Senator from Southern Oregon and Pam Marsh, Oregon State Representative, also from Southern Oregon will be keynote speakers on the November 10th.

SWCC

The notes from the SWCC meeting held on August 24th and 25th were included in the board packet.

NRAC

Director Campbell informed the board that the Natural Resource Advisory Committee (NRAC) has been disbanded.

Agenda Build

The board talked and agreed to schedule staff updates before a guest speaker takes the floor at the board meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 5:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Markie Germer

Markie Germer

Minutes approved as printed:

Stan Dean

Date 10-20-21

Approved as amended:

_____ Date _____

