**SAN JUAN ISLANDS CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**Special Meeting Minutes – Board Retreat**

**March 22, 2022**

**Location:** 2098 Deer Harbor Road, Eastsound WA 98245

and online via Zoom

**In Attendance**

**Supervisors:** Vicki Heater, Lynn Bahrych, David Bill,

Carson Sprenger

**Associates:** Deanna Eltinge (absent), Jerry Rasmussen (absent),

Linda Lyshall (absent)

**Staff:** Paul Andersson, Tony Fyrqvist

**Partners:** Jean Fike, WSCC Puget Sound Regional Manager; Alan Chapman, WACD NW Region Representative

**Public:** None

**MEETING SUMMARY – Final**

**Meet and Greet – Coffee and pastries**

**Board performance self-review**

* WSCC Performance Audit.
  + The Board revisited this audit and discussed its merits.
* The Board and staff worked through some elements of the SJICD board self-performance review document, with a focus on board responsibilities in public outreach.
* RCW 89.09 – Review of District duties and non-duties
* <https://appp.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=89.08.220>

**Adjourn for Regular Board meeting (10:30-11:30am via Zoom)**

**Resume Retreat –**

**Annual Plan and 5-year Plan (working lunch) Development**

* Program and financials review
  + General review of programs and financials.
* Staffing Review – Roles and responsibilities, program oversight.
  + General review of programs with emphasis on discussion regarding Biochar.
* New endeavors – property acquisition, education and workforce development, biomass processing, water retention capacity building, equipment sharing/subsidies, other ideas.
  + Discussed potential property acquisition which included identifying a suitable property, financing the purchase, and continuing to build the Reserve Account balance for a down payment. Board members had general agreement that the District should continue to pursue the acquisition of real property where feasible.
  + Equipment sharing - The discussion compared and contrasted the costs and benefits of the District owning equipment such as the currently owned No-Till Drill, and providing cost subsidies to clients for leasing equipment. Some of the specifics included the maintenance and storage costs as well as the required technical capacity to operate the equipment. It was generally agreed that the District should continue supporting the new No-Till Drill ownership and rental program but that equipment purchasing is not desirable. Subsidizing equipment use for landowners is a preferred alternative to ownership.
  + Biomass processing in the form of compost, gasification for “combined heat and power” or pyrolosis for biochar was generally supported as a continued endeavor of SJICD. The improved production and use of value-added biomass products was also maintained as a priority, and could be implemented by the District through grant-funded subsidies, infrastructure, feasibility studies, and continued networking with other agencies.
  + Water retention, conservation, quantity improvements – the board discussed that water efficiency is still the best method of improving water quantity. There was general agreement that the District continue working toward increasing available water for landowners through best management practices in efficiency and infrastructure, as well as support the work of partners in quantifying water availability.

**Turtleback Preserve forestry tour:**

The Board and staff members were led by Peter Guillozet (Orcas Island Preserve Steward for the San Juan County Conservation Land Bank) through a trail covering a small portion of the Turtleback Mountain Preserve. He demonstrated forest health, fuel break and fuel reduction, and Garry Oak restoration activities conducted by ICC and a private contractor. Funding for this program was provided by SJICD through DNR grants obtained in 2021.

**Closing thoughts**

**Adjourn**

The Board Retreat was adjourned at 3:30pm.