**SAN JUAN ISLANDS CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Supervisors**

**July 27, 2021**

**Location:** Friday Harbor Fire Hall/Zoom Meeting

**In Attendance**

**Supervisors:** Vicki Heater (in Person), Lynn Bahrych (via Zoom), David Bill (via Zoom),

Carson Sprenger (via Zoom), Angie Freeman-Shephard (in Person)

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

Linda Lyshall (absent)

**Staff:** Paul Andersson (in Person), Tony Fyrqvist (in Person)

**Partners:** Jean Fike, WSCC Puget Sound Regional Manager (in Person); Alan Chapman, WACD NW Region Representative (Via Zoom)

**Public:** None

**Location:** Zoom Meeting

**MEETING SUMMARY - Final**

Vicki Heater convened the regular meeting held at Friday Harbor Fire Hall and via Zoom at 10:00 am.

1. **Agenda Approval:**

David made a motion to approve the Agenda and was seconded by Angie. During discussion the Agenda was updated correcting a minor typographical error and adding the request to approve the WSCC Implementation breakdown for FYE 6/30/22 under Agenda Item 6 – New Business. The motion carried.

1. **June 22nd Meeting Minutes Approval:**

David moved to approve the June 22nd Regular Meeting Minutes and was seconded by Carson. The motion carried without discussion.

1. **District Manager’s Report:**

The District Manager covered the discussion items in the report (a separate attachment is enclosed):

* VSP has been extended and the Work Group is under reconstruction. New members are being recruited and recommendations are welcome. In the past the group consisted of 15-20 individuals, however, it would be more manageable to scale down the group size to 10. The County Council will appoint the members. The Adaptive Management Plan has been approved by the State Advisory Committee.
* Kwiaht - which is a Lopez Island based nonprofit organization with a mission of scientific research in the service of good stewardship of cultural and biological resources in the San Juan and Gulf Islands, and the improvement of local science education – has expressed concerns in social media about YCC weed removal in sensitive areas on Indian Island - particularly around the Oystercatcher nests on the Island. YCC works on this project annually together with Bureau of Land Management, which is the owner of the Island. The concerns have been acknowledged by the District Manager and discussed with YCC and CCC Program Coordinators.
* Beginner Farmer Rancher Grant – in conjunction with SJI Ag Guild a $38,000 grant has been awarded for recruitment and training of minors.
* Coast Consulting Contract is funded to the extent of $15,000 by Career Connect and Orcas Island Community Foundation for development of a program similar to CCC for members of the Lummi Tribe. NW Indian College is participating in this program.
* Civil Conversations Project was a diversity training program on 7/22/21 on the history of racism. The 2.5 hour session at English Camp was run by Wayne Hare was attended by Paul, Tony and Cathi from the District.
* As a risk sharing pool for special purpose districts in Washington Enduris covers the District’s general liability, property and auto insurance. The District will encourage a site visit for them to keep abreast of the changes within the District.
* House in order workplan:
	+ The District is in process of developing distinctive branding with apparel, thank you cards and new business cards.
	+ The District is currently evaluating the budgetary impact of hiring a VSP coordinator/Natural Resource Planner. As the Senior Planner is expected to retire in 9 months it is imperative to implement a sufficient training period in order to assure an efficient transition.
	+ In light of the former Board Treasurer becoming an Associate Member, there was a brief discussion regarding nominations for various board positions.
1. **June 2021 Financial Officers Report:**

The Financial Officers Report commenced with report of the changes in the 6/30/21 Statement of Revenue & Expense from the previous month:

* It was mentioned that June 30 was the end of the Fiscal Year which entailed the depletion and wrap-up of all Commission grants.
* The major change from the previous month was the fact that the most significant sources of ordinary income were from the Shellfish Cost Share (24% of total income) and NRI Cost Share (22% of total income). With the scaling down of operations CCC only amounted to 13% of total income vs. 55% in May of 2021. Commerce grant also showed a substantial invoicing during June amounting to 16% of total income.
* New grants, such as Regional Forester Career Connect and San Juan County Public Works ILA began to play a larger roles within district finances accounting for 7%, 5% and 2%, respectively, of total revenues.
* Implementation was fully depleted with a final invoice of $3,033.79.
* It was mentioned that the District incurred an unexpected repair expense of $900 as the water heater in the District office disintegrated. Fortunately it occurred during working hours and the District staff was able to clean up the water containing any damage. The commercial lease was examined and it was determined that appliance failures are the responsibility of the Lessee.

6/30/21 Balance Sheet

* The total Deposit account balances amounted to $274,934.42 – down by $42,324.74 at month end in May 2021. However, this was primarily due to the cashing of checks by 3 cost share recipients amount to a total of $40,142.19 while the District had not received corresponding reimbursement from WSCC.
* As shown on the enclosed Grant Tracking Spreadsheet the CCC prepaid grant balance at the end of June was $102,686.92 leaving the District with $172,247.50 in operational liquidity.
* Overall District balance sheet remained relatively stable.

The discussion also covered the 2.50% COLA awarded to each staff member effective 7/1/21 per Board adoption of the Salary Committee recommendation on 2/24/21. With the reduction in PERS retirement employer contribution from 12.97% to 10.25% also set to take place on 7/1/21 the Composite Rates for staff members remained relatively unchanged.

The Grant Pipeline report was briefly mentioned and it was stated that many of the grants have been approved and moved to the Grant Balance Tracking report. After the summer vacations the District will embark upon the task of identifying and processing new grants.

David made a motion to approve:

* The Financial Statements
* Credit Card Detail
* Bank Reconciliation

The motion was seconded by Angie. The motion passed.

1. **Old Business Reserve Fund Policy (discussion)**

The enclosed Reserve Fund Policy is almost completed and involves the establishment of a target $40,000 fund within the next 2-3 years. The procedure of borrowing from the fund was clarified and the policy will be ready for Board approval next month.

1. **New Business**

Action Item – Approval to accept WSCC DOH NEP grant for $71,061: Motion to approve was made by David with a second by Carson. The motion carried.

Action Item – Approval of proposed NRI Cost Share Projects: Motion to approve was made by David with a second by Carson. The motion carried.

Action Item – Approval of proposed Implementation Funding Breakdown: Motion to approve was made by David with a second by Carson. The motion carried.

There was discussion about the USDA Drought Declaration Letter (copy enclosed): The enclosed declaration was developed by the Senior Planner at the District office. In light of the abnormally long period of nonprecipitation (last rainfall occurred on June 14) and the fact that rainfall is the primary contributor to aquifer recharge and surface water that allows for agricultural operations a declaration of San Juan County as a drought zone could:

* Release disaster funding to the County.
* Result in establishment of additional weather monitoring stations in conjunction with WSU.

It was mentioned that actual statements from local farms could further fortify the letter. The District will be further refining the letter.

WSCC Elections Proposed Changes (copy attached) – Joint Committee on Elections is seeking feedback by August 18, 2021. Generally BOS is supportive of the Election Reform Proposal which states that Districts would hold elections every other year which would save costs associated with conducting an election. The extension of the term to four years could be acceptable but serving for six years would be too long. Conducting elections during one Conservation month encountered no objections. But having the option to go on the general election ballot might increase costs. It was stated that the objectives should be to have an easier, consistent process while saving money.

On the state level there is legislative interest in modifying the system while avoiding additional costs. As a modification proposal cannot satisfy all districts adoption of a “Hybrid” or “Consensus Model” will be the most likely alternative.

1. **Subcommittee Updates**

Forest Health Collaborative: Discussion centered around the expected increase in DNR funding which could result in filling of 12-13 Regional Forester Positions which will impact Conservation Districts. Conservation Districts are looking to increase collaboration with DNR. The funding could also benefit District “shovel ready” projects.

Discussion also involved collaboration with Fire Districts, wildfire training opportunities and establishing a District budget for training. This would be particularly important with CCC and YCC. Consistency with Biochar and Burn Permits was also deemed to be important to the District.

1. **Staff and Program Reports – no discussion.**
2. **Upcoming Trainings/Webinars/Events.**

The Senior Planner from the District has scheduled several Saturday training sessions on utilization of the District owned no-till drill. The training sessions have been assisted by Andrew Borner from Natural Plant Solutions on Shaw Island who is an experienced drill owner/operator and transportation specialist. The WSU BIOAg grant program funded the training sessions.

The discussion also covered possible repairs to the drill and finding a qualified mechanic who is able to make the repairs. Cost of the repairs will be built into the rental fee. Currently the drill is still stored in the garage of the former Executive Director of the District, but a search is being conducted for a new, safe, inside storage location.

The farm tours are scheduled:

San Juan Island: September 22-26, 2021

Orcas Island: October 1-3, 2021

Lopez Island: October 16 & 17, 2021

1. **Idea Pot – no discussion**

1. **Partner Reports**

Alan Chapman from WACD briefly reported that the Annual Meeting will be held in person in Tacoma the 1st Tuesday in December. He also discussed WACD reserve funds, reports from the 2 committees, webinar presentations and technical training.

Jean Fike, who is the WSCC Puget Sound Regional Manager, discussed:

1. Conservation Commission Strategic Planning effors and goals. District input/feedback is requested by 8/16/21.
2. The retirement of SCC Executive Director Carol Smith. Her last day will be October 22nd.
3. The changes to SCC Cultural Resources Policy. On April 7, 2021 Governor Inslee issued Executive Order (EO) 21-02, regarding archeological and cultural resources. This replaced EO 0505. While the two are largely similar, there are some differences. WSCC is modifying policy and procedure to ensure compliance with EO 21- 02.
4. **Public Comments - None**
5. **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 Noon.

**Next General Meeting: Tuesday, August 24, 2021.**

**From 10:00AM to 12:00NOON**