

SAN JUAN ISLANDS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Special Meeting of the Board of Supervisors

September 9, 2020

Location: Zoom Meeting

In Attendance (Via Zoom)

Supervisors: Deanna Eltinge, Vicki Heater

David Bill, Lynn Bahrych, Carson Sprenger

Staff: Tony Fyrqvist, Ryan Palmateer

Matt Claussen, Bruce Gregory, Erin Licata, Cathi Winings

Partners: Kai Hoffman-Krull

Location: Zoom Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY- Final

Vicki Heater convened the Special Meeting at 10:05 am.

Vicki mentioned that no Agenda was prepared for this meeting, rather, each subcommittee, or “mini-team” as they were referred to in the meeting of 9/3/20, would give a report of their findings. No executive session was to be part of this meeting.

Team 2: Budget Refinement Team.

Vicki started with explaining that the team consisting of Vicki, Deanna, Tony and Bob Brunkow have received a good perspective of the complexity of District Finances and the ebbs and flows of monthly cash flow. It was also stated that since District payroll processing, grant billings and retirement reporting are all due in the beginning of each month the staff person in the group could not dedicate time to budgetary analysis.

Team 1: Staff Compensation Team.

Vicki has received Jean’s email regarding Pierce County Salary Survey. Vicki stated that the best steps would be:

- The District needs to first evaluate the possibility of restoring staff hours, which were reduced last spring.
- Then it needs to further evaluate funds available for an Interim Director on a contract basis.

Matt is working on breaking down funding for administration. He stated that staff is busy and we need to carefully evaluate where we are with deliverables, new grants and expectations.

A discussion ensued about implementation and assessment funding along with Mike working on the Eelgrass Grant. Matt presented a conservative picture of funding available and what is left on from implementation and assessment to pay staff and run the organization.

Lynn put forward the idea of a retreat for board and staff members.

Further conversation about the details of financing with David expressing the importance of having a manager for the District. Kai mentioned that the Orcas Island CCC Grant has \$18,000 allotted for administration.

Conversation moved to some of the individual jobs performed by current staff with Matt stating that he will have to direct some of his time to rewriting the VSP grant, completing what Mike had started.

Carson expressed wish about a “Snapshot” of District finances. Lynn agreed and stated that the decisions should wait until determination of available funding has been completed. Vicki emphasized the administration dollars in each grant being the key. The range from 10%—25%

Team 3 Leadership/Task Reassignment Sub-Committee.

David, Matt and Carson discussed the Executive Director position and day to day management of the Director. Carson promoted the idea that the Boards position is to:

- 1) Support staff in day to day operations to keep things going.
- 2) Come to a resolution sooner than later – 1-3 weeks about an Interim Director.

Donna Wuthnow’s interest in an Interim Director was discussed, however, it was agreed that first the District should have a Job Description. The position has changed in scope with the hiring of the Financial Manager. The position will have to be posted.

Bruce advised the Board to keep in mind that:

- It would take the individual 2-3 weeks just to learn some of the tasks of an Executive Director.

- An Interim Director would then have to apply for the permanent position, or if not hired it may alienate that person leading to another training period for the new Director.

Conversation continue about the pros and cons of hiring an Interim Director vs. a Full time Director. The importance of having someone in the leadership position was emphasized again with a medium to long-term outlook. Lynn stated the District should not have conversations with any individuals prior to the development of the job description and developing a job description.

Vicki expressed the next steps in decision making:

- Time frame when the Board will be able to make the decision.
- The scope of the position: Full time/part time, interim/permanent.

David recommended that the District take advantage of a unique opportunity to hire someone who is qualified. Looking at funding available for hiring a Director is not the correct path. A qualified Director will arrange for sufficient funding. Deanna reiterated the importance of reallocating time back to staff and stated that timing of the decision is very important.

Vicki proposed a meeting in 2 weeks to come up with a plan with 2 components:

- Restoring staff hours – how much administration funding is available.
- After staff hours are restored how much funding is available to hire an Executive Director.

Lynn stated that the next meeting should have an Executive Session of 45 minutes.

Vicki stated concern with the cost of full medical benefits offered for staff working part time. Erin mentioned that the grants invoicing should cover the benefits. Tony said that an executive decision was made to bill grants at the 1/1/20 rates. The Comp Rates had increased substantially when staff hours were cut but the medical insurance premium rates remained stable. Invoicing at a higher Comp Rate might have an impact on the initial grant budget. Tony explained that the Comp Rate is composed of the hourly pay along with employers share of healthcare, retirement, payroll tax and other benefit costs.

Vicki complemented the staff for being optimistic and skilled; Erin did a great job with YCC and Kai has many new grants. The District has a million dollar budget. She also mentioned that despite all of the challenges each member and staff person needs to continue to represent the District in an upbeat and positive way.

There was some discussion about Kai's position within the District to which Kai replied that he is looking to clarify his role, but there is no need to rush the conversation at the moment.

In the next meeting in 2 weeks the following items will be discussed:

- 1) Changes in staffing hours.
- 2) Financial capacity of the District to cover additional hours as well as the cost of an Interim/Permanent Director.
- 3) Program reports evaluating available administration funding within the various grants.

Public Comments: None.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:36 am.

Next Regular Meeting Wednesday September 23rd 10am – 12 noon with a 45-minute Executive Session.