**SAN JUAN ISLANDS CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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

**August 23, 2022**

**Location:** Online via Zoom and 530 Guard Street, Friday Harbor

**In Attendance**

**Supervisors:** Vicki Heater (absent), Lynn Bahrych, David Bill,

Carson Sprenger

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

Linda Lyshall (absent)

**Staff:** Paul Andersson, Tony Fyrqvist, Pauline Chiquet

**Partners:** Jean Fike, WSCC Puget Sound Regional Manager; Alan Chapman, WACD NW Region Representative (absent); Robin Buckingham, Resource Conservationist National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Mount Vernon Field Office (absent); Ryan Baye, WACD Director of Member and Legislative Services (absent).

**Public:** None

**MEETING SUMMARY – Final**

David Bill convened the regular meeting held via Zoom at 10:00 am.

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Pauline Chiquet introduced herself as the new Conservation Farm Planner for the District and briefly discussed her experience as a NRCS certified Farm Planner with the Whatcom Conservation District as well as her other farming education, particularly at the Organic Farm School in Clinton, WA. The board members introduced themselves to Pauline with their background information.

1. **Agenda Approval:**

The Agenda was approved by consensus. No changes were presented.

1. **June 28th and July 8th Meeting Minutes Approval:**

Carson made a motion to approve both the 6/28/22 and 7/8/22 Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Lynn and carried without discussion.

1. **Financial Officers Report:**

The Financial Manager gave the following summary of the District’s financial position, continuing to confirm financial stability:

7/31/22 Balance Sheet

The 7/31/22 bank deposit balances were not substantially discrepant from the 6/30/22 balances. The only major change was a transfer of an additional $20,000 into the Reserve Fund.

Total deposit account balances were are follows:

6/30/22 7/31/22

* Banner Bank Operating $267,732.11 $241,366.27
* Liberty Bank Reserve Fund $ 80,000.00 $100,000.00

The current Banner Bank operating account deposit balance as of the Board Meeting date on 8/23/22 had dropped by $21,535.18 to $219,831.09, primarily reflecting the following annually, or intermittently, occurring charges clearing through the account:

$10,925.00 Enduris Liability Insurance Payment

$ 3,488.89 WACD Annual Dues

$ 7,500.00 Orcas Highlands Cost Share Payment (under DNR Grant)

$ 3,615.50 Community Land Trust Cost Share Payment (under DNR Grant)

$25,529.39 TOTAL

Total month end receivables at 7/31/22 amounted to $117,054.13; while the receivables at the Board Meeting Date of 8/23/22 were $57,678.93 with the primary outstanding receivable being WSCC-Implementation of $14,687.50.

7/31/22 Statement of Revenue & Expense

The following significant “Ordinary Income” items were highlighted:

* Assessment Income of $573.44
  + While this amount was small in July, SJC Treasurer’s Office has provided the District with a spreadsheet of 18,561 parcels of which 1,749 are currently exempted from the special District assessment.
  + The District will re-evaluate the exempt parcels and identify ones that should not be exempt.
  + The updated report is due to the Treasurer by 9/30/22.
* Implementation Income of $14,687.50 consisting of the $11,750.00 in salaries and benefits, and $2,937.50 consisting of the applicable 25% indirect income.
  + The target monthly implementation is $9,818.58 (Annual $117,823/12). The District was over the target primarily due to funding the training time of the new employees.
* NNRG Income of $3,118.50 was under a new Northwest Natural Resource Group Risk Management Education grant of $7,648.00. The source of the federal grant funding was USDA. This Grant was obtained by the District Forest Health Manager and includes planning and publicizing a forest risk workshop in the San Juan Islands, along with participating and delivering the curriculum, providing 12 follow up site-visits and participating in 3 on-line “fireside chats” with forestland owners. The original amount was $5,600.00 but it was increased by $2,048.00 to $7,648.00
* Reflecting the fact that YCC program was running at full capacity during July the following two grants were invoiced to cover labor costs:
  + $9,525.97 RCO-NCLI
  + $12,315.13 YCC Income consisting mainly of BLM grant invoicing

The larger “Ordinary Expense” items were explained as follows:

* $18,416.48 Consultation included amounts third parties covered within grant contracts and recovered via grant invoicing:
  + $3,255.00 to Satya Curcio Photo – WSCC Food Support System Grant
  + $7,500.00 to Sharon Kinley – Lummi Guardians Grant
  + $1,540.43 to WWU – Career Connect Grant
  + $4,806.05 to WWU – Commerce Grant
  + $297.00 to Satchel Pieples - RCO SRFB Eelgrass Grant
  + $974.80 to Yuki Wilmerding – RCO SRFB Eelgrass Grant
* $3,488.89 under Dues and Subscriptions was the payment of Annual Dues to WACD.
* $10,925 Insurance was the annual premium payment to Enduris for District Liability and Vehicle insurance.
* $7,500 Cost Share Disbursement was to Orcas Highlands Assn which was recovered under the DNR grant.

As stated during the previous Board Meeting, the income amounts shown represented invoiced amounts less the indirect income which is now tracked separately under Other Income. Tracking this amount will aid the District with grant writing and planning, as well as budgeting.

In summary, during July 2022 the District recorded a deficit $35,008.89 – during June 2022 the deficit was $13,555.14. However, this represents normal District operating cycle as in April 2022 the District recorded a surplus of $114,208.67.

The YTD January through July 2022 surplus amounted to $20,014.39.

Credit Card Detail:

The credit card detail reports for both June and July 2022 displayed mostly standard operating and recurring charges. Total credit card expenses during July were relatively low at $1,437.64.

Bank Reconciliation Report

The Bank Reconciliation Report was not discussed. It is prepared by R&R Accounting and is in compliance with all District and SAO guidelines.

Adjusting Journal Entries Report:

This report is also prepared by R&R Accounting and would reveal any unusual transactions, and it constitutes an essential part of the District’s double control of finances.

A motion was made by Lynn to approve the financial packages for both June 2022 and July 2022 consisting of:

* The Financial Statements
* Journal Entries
* Credit Card Detail
* Bank Reconciliation

The motion was seconded by Carson and carried.

Grant Progress and Pipeline Reports:

There was a discussion of the substantial amount of work completed by District staff to apply for two Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grants:

* San Juan Islands Eelgrass Recovery – Phase 2 for $136,000
* Garrison Creek Watershed Riparian Zones for $141,000

The applications received initial clearance, but as the process was very competitive this year with funding emphasis on waterfront property acquisitions the District applications were not funded.

However, the District was able to obtain:

* Salmon Recovery Funding Grant from WSCC for $200,000 for Garrison Bay Riparian Restoration with spending to be completed by June 30, 2023.

Future new funding requests will be prepared for:

* Salmon recovery and restoration
* Career connect
* Eelgrass
* YCC
* Forestry

Reserve Account Balance

An additional $20,000 was transferred to the Reserve Account during July increasing the balance to $100,000.

1. **Old Business**

Board Supervisor appointment

The board supervisor search continues and a number of ideal candidates have declined due to time constraints.

The unfilled position has 2 years remaining of the term.

At this point there was also a brief discussion about the potential establishment of “Conservation Campus” at the former location of States Inn Ranch along with supporting environmental education.

District Cost Share funding for Board Members was also discussed. It is allowed under District Policy and State Guidelines. Employee Cost Share funding is not allowed.

Staffing updates

* The District has a new Conservation Farm Planner who will be the Ag Lead for the District working primarily with Farm Planning.
* Our new Natural Resource Project Manager will work on Cost Share, Riparian Projects and Farm Tours.
* Our existing Natural Resource Planner will emphasize VSP, Forest Planning and Forest Technical Assistance.
* Our existing Forest Health Manager is in charge of the ICC program, forestry related projects and education.
* Our YCC Program Coordinator will continue to work with YCC along with other tasks such as Island Marble Butterfly and District event planning.
* The retired Senior Natural Resource Planner has returned to work 2 days/week primarily to develop Individual Stewardship Plans (ISPs) under the VSP Grant.
* Another retired Planner is also assisting staff intermittently with Cost Share projects.

Countywide assessment fee updates

The District is in communication with the County Manager about possibly eliminating the exemptions in the County Ordinance 13-2019 for low income seniors and for properties with values less than $500.00 with a new ordinance to be passed by County Council to improve alignment of the assessment with RCW 89.08.400 and RCW 89.08.405.

1. **New Business**

Salmon Recovery Funding Grant from WSCC for Garrison Creek Restoration Project – Motion to accept $200,000 funding package

The District has received $200,000 in new funding (23-03-SRF) for riparian restoration project with landowners along Garrison Creek within the critical Garrison Creek Watershed on San Juan Island. This was part of the $10 million Salmon Recovery Funding received by WSCC from Washington State operating budget.

The award is allocated as follows:

* $40,000 Technical Assistance
* $160,000 Project Funding

The effective date of funding is 7/1/22 and the funds must be expended by 6/30/23.

The overhead rate is to be 25%.

Carson made a motion to approve the new funding with a second by Lynn. The motion passed.

SJICD 75th Anniversary Planning Discussion

Invitations have been sent to over 250 agency partners, and the District is expanding the list of invitees.

On Wednesday 8/24/22 staff members along with a board member will visit the San Juan Historical Museum grounds on 405 Price to inspect the premises.

Items to obtain for the event include:

* Gifts/door prices
* Appetizers
* Historical show pieces
* Microphone/PA system
* Tents
* Locally produced farm products – “Tasting Table”
* Sparkling cider
* Environmentally friendly glassware
* Already have 75 small kale plants to offer to participants

A historical soil testing kit will be donated to the District.

Discussion about goals for the event included;

* Increasing community awareness of the District.
* Educating the community about the benefits provided by the District to the community – being a resource for the community.
* Highlight District programs:
  + Agriculture
  + Forestry
  + Youth – YCC
  + ICC
  + Habitat – such as Island Marble Butterfly, Eelgrass, Orca Recovery
  + Information provided through District outreach through the website, Facebook, programs
* Historical information via a “Storyboard”:
  + Local – in the Islands, and even the local dust storms in the Eastern Okanagan region of Washington State
  + National – Dust Bowl
* Engage current and past YCC members and YCC parents
* Another idea was to try to find work or seeds planted 75 years ago and demonstrating the work which will carry for the next 75 years.
* Guest presenters from various District programs.

1. **Staff and Program Reports**

Staff and Program Reports document attached.

Along with attached report, the following items were briefly discussed:

* Booth at San Juan County Fair, which was located at the Green Village. It was a successful event for the District with YCC engaging in trash pickup and was managed and primarily worked by the YCC Program Coordinator.
* Farm Tours – number of farm participants on each island is down from last year.
* ICC:
  + Has 4 returning crew members joining with the new members.
  + 3 past ICC crew members have formed a new riparian restoration business.
  + Will be dividing crews between San Juan Island and Orcas Island.
  + Is looking for a van as parking several vehicles at trail heads is not environmentally conscious or efficient method of transportation.
  + 1-2 Masters Degree staff members will not be performing field work while 8-10 members are engaged in field work.
* VSP:
  + Proactive monitoring of stream and wetland activity will be enhanced.
  + VSP survey will be released with baseline prior to 2011 vs now.
  + Incentives will be provided for agricultural producers to take a survey (possible Food Hub credit).
  + 10-year report due in 2025.
  + District has hired an intern with technical GIS background.

1. **Subcommittee Reports -**

Forest health Collaborative (FHC) – did not meet. But briefly discussed:

* Forestry Cost Share funding spent under the DNR Grant
* Broadening scope of the committee
* Applying for new grants

Policy – did not meet.

1. **Upcoming Trainings/Webinars/Events**

Staff members are signed up on USDA AgLearn and working on NRCS Planner Certifications.

SJICD 75th Anniversary Event – September 9, 4-7pm

San Juan Islands Farm Tours

* San Juan Island: September 23-25
* Orcas Island: September 30-October 2
* Lopez Island: October 7-9

1. **Idea Pot**

While no specific new ideas were discussed there was general conversation about an eelgrass study completed in Sweden by Eduardo Infantes from University of Gothenburg (he is a colleague of Dr. Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria from UW Labs who works with the District on our RCO Eelgrass grant) who discovered that there is evidence that the historical overfishing of large predator fish such as cod in the North Sea has resulted in a chain reaction increasing the number of smaller predatory fish, which reduced the presence of algae-grazing animals increasing the amount of fast-growing algae mats which have a negative impact on eelgrass. This also increased the occurrence of beach crabs eating eelgrass seeds and destroying plants further contributing to the vegetation changes that have taken place along the Swedish west coast.

1. **Partner Reports**

Jean Fike, WSCC Puget Sound Regional Manager, provided updates on:

* WSCC is currently working on 17 decision packages consisting of funding requests to the Governor and Legislature.
* District photo contest is open until September 14, 2022. It is highly encouraged to take as many pictures as possible with pictures of projects including landowners and staff. Pictures provided to Commission can also convey information about the valuable work performed by District to political decision makers in a convenient and expedient format.
* WSCC September 2022 Regular Business Meeting will be at Tokeland, WA:
  + Wednesday, September 21: A conservation district tour and interaction dinner will be hosted by the Pacific Conservation District.
  + Thursday, September 22: The WSCC regular business meeting will be held in-person with an online option to participate.
* Sustainable Farms and Fields guidelines have been approved and a new person is in process of being hired.
* The new WSCC Executive Director continues to make rounds to various districts and is familiarizing himself with the laws and practices of Conservation in Washington State.

The District has been receiving regular email updates from the Mount Vernon Field Office of NRCS, particularly on the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

There was a discussion about NRCS being able to assist landowners with Federal paperwork, and possibly grant writing and event planning.

1. **Public Comments**

None

1. **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned by David Bill at 12:00 Noon.

**Next Regular Monthly Meeting: Tuesday, September 27, 2022, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.**