**SAN JUAN ISLANDS CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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

**November 24, 2021**

**Location:** Zoom Meeting

**In Attendance**

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

Carson Sprenger, Angie Freeman Shephard (absent)

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

Linda Lyshall (absent)

**Staff:** Paul Andersson, Tony Fyrqvist, Cathi Winings

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

**Public:** None

**MEETING SUMMARY – Final**

Vicki Heater convened the regular meeting held via Zoom at 10:00 am.

**Welcome and Introductions:**

A brief discussion was held during the introductions regarding individuals from Waldron attending EMT training on San Juan Island and the benefit it will bring to the Island.

1. **Agenda Approval:**

David initially made a motion to approve the Agenda, but the agenda ended up being approved by consensus. There was no discussion.

1. **October 26th Meeting Minutes Approval:**

Lynn moved to approve the October 26th Regular Meeting Minutes and was seconded by David. The motion carried without discussion.

1. **Financial Officers Report:**

The Financial Manager commenced his report by providing the following summary of the October 31, 2021 Financial Statements:

10/31/21 Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet continued to be emphasized as an indicator of District Financial Health as the Bank Deposit balance displays actual funds having been collected through invoicing, compared with the Statement of Revenue & Expense which only shows what has been invoiced and not necessarily collected under the District’s Accrual Basis of Accounting.

* The total Deposit account balances at 10/31/21 amounted to $240,281.01 which was slightly (by $18,237.77) below the $258,518.78 balance recorded on 9/30/21. The District continues to be on a stable financial path.
* The actual liquidity position of the District is determined by deducting the prepaid grant proceeds shown on the Grant Tracking Spreadsheet from the bank balances:
  + $240,281.01 Bank Balances
  + <$66,798.10> Prepaid CCC Grant Proceeds
  + < $65.76> Prepaid Seacology Grant Proceeds
  + $173,417.15 DISTRICT LIQUID FUNDS (compared to $175,442.25 at

9/30/21 – only a $2,025.10 reduction)

* As the deposit balances on the Financial Statements are from the previous month end – lagging almost a month behind – the Board is presented with the current balances as an early liquidity indictor to alert the Board to any warning signals, which at the moment are nonexistent as the 11/24/21 balance in the Banner Bank Operating account was $300,162.28 after the transfer of an additional $20,000 into the Reserve Account at Liberty Bank on 11/9/21.
* The total Reserve Account Balance at 11/24/21 was $40,000.
* However, it was mentioned that the 11/24/21 account balance included the $55,653.46 received in Cost Share funding for Blacktail, Bass and Beef, LLC which has been paid out but the check has not yet cleared the account.
* The Board was provided with a graphical representation of the District Deposit Account balances between 1/1/19 and 10/31/21 highlighting the growth in liquidity, particularly since December of 2019 (Graph Addendum). In future Board meetings we will continue to highlight financial performance with selected graphs.
* The Accounts Receivable of $143,434.93 reflect the high volume of invoicing for October 2021 work.

10/31/21 Statement of Revenue & Expense

Signifying the high volume of activity District sent out 27 invoices for October 2021 work. The usual number of monthly invoices has ranged between 9 and 18.

Total Revenues amounted to $215,641.33 (compared with $79,994.43 at the end of September) of which some of the larger invoices consisted of:

* $55,653.46 NEP Cost Share.
* $27,126.90 YCC Invoicing including:
  + $12,500 Land Bank
  + $6,000 Noxious Weed
  + $3,500 Preservation Trust
* $19,526.50 CCC income including invoicing for:
  + $5,292.00 Land Bank work on SJI
  + $7,680.75 Land Bank work on Orcas
  + $6,553.75 Public Works
* $16,311.27 CCC-OICF Depletion
  + This included the $8,000 paid for the 1998 Toyota Tacoma vehicle
* $18,826.57 Career Connect Grant Invoice.

A note was also made of the following invoices/income sources:

* $22,686.51 Assessment income received which represented the 2nd half of County Property Taxes.
* $10,623.52 Implementation Invoice, with total Jul-Oct 21 invoicing amounting to $37,099.08. This time period represents 1/3 of the Fiscal Year and 31% of the total Implementation Grant funding of $117,823 stating that the District is following the designated course.

Comments were made to explain the following Expense items:

* $8,000.00 Capital Purchase was for the 1998 Toyota Tacoma.
* $866.31 under Auto Repairs and Maintenance included the $763.49 vehicle Sales Tax and Registration fee.
* $5,848.21 under Grant Services included fencing expenditures for IMB Lopez and IMB Orcas.
* $1,877.00 under Licenses and Permits included District SAM Registration fee. This was a double billing which will be again removed in November 2021.
* Crew Supplies $1,375.50, Equipment & Supplies $2,834.96 and Project Supplies $2,273.51 all related to the substantial CCC and YCC equipment purchasing.
* $2,772.28 under Consultation covers mainly the payment to Dr. Sandy Wylie-Echeverria for work under the RCO Eelgrass grant.

In summary, during October 2021 the District recorded a Surplus of $129,734.38, compared with the Deficit of $16,110.80 during September 2021.

In compliance with applicable state laws, regulations and policies SAO will conduct a standard Audit of the District covering the years ending 12/31/19 and 12/31/20. The cost of the Audit is expected to be $8,500 and it will be completed in January 2022. As requested, the District has provided SAO with a substantial amount financial information.

Credit Card Details Report for October 2021

Due to YCC and CCC equipment purchases and expenditures related to the IMB grant fencing expenditures credit card purchasing volume continued to be higher than average.

Total Purchases during the month amounted to $9,752.28, but due to the excess payment of $5,000.00 made during the previous cycle the total amount paid in October amounted to $4,752.28.

David made a motion to approve the financial package consisting of:

* The Financial Statements
* Credit Card Detail
* Bank Reconciliation

The motion was seconded by Lynn. The motion was approved.

1. **Old Business**

Employee Handbook – Action – Approval of updated Version (Attached):

Staff had spent some time revising and cleaning up the language in the Employee Handbook:

* Pay Scale was added in March 2021. This is now in compliance with SAO recommendation.
* References to BOS were removed.
* Adherence to Federal, State and Local laws and policies are identified.
* Staff will be provided with the Handbook and they will sign the appropriate acknowledgment.

Lynn made a motion to approve the Employee Handbook as presented, David seconded and the motion was passed.

Board self-evaluation – Discussion to determine retreat date and logistics.

The January Board Meeting date was discussed as suitable for a Board Retreat:

* Hosted by Paul Andersson on Orcas.
* The District will prepare a Board Retreat Agenda.
* Will discuss long range plans: 1 yr and 5 yr plans.
* Goal to have a new Supervisor.
* Angie Freeman Shephard has submitted her resignation to the Board.

Discussion continued about finding a new Board Member with suitable qualifications to be appointed to the Board. Two of the five Members need to be landowners in San Juan County.

Other conversation topics included:

* Inviting people who might have interested in joining the District.
* Posting the position on District website.
* Encouraging people with diverse backgrounds.
* Fundraising experience would be an important skill for the new Supervisor.
* Finding a person who can work effectively with the existing Board members.

1. **New Business**

NFPA Structure Ignition Assessment Grant – Action to accept grant funds from WSCC in the amount of $3,300 - Attached

David made a motion to approve the WSCC NFPA Hazard Mitigation Grant for $3,300 which provides funding for 10 home ignition zone assessments with funding expiring on 2/28/22. The motion was seconded by Lynn.

The motion passed.

WACD Annual Meeting 11/29 – Discussion of Resolutions and voting.

<https://hub.wadistricts.org/annual/2021meetings/business/#resolutions>

All Board members will receive a vote along with an email.

Some of the important items will include the Elections Process to be included on the general ballot.

The importance of attending the meeting was emphasized.

Lynn and Vicki are planning to participate in the Business meeting.

Will try to find out if voting by proxy will be allowed – or if an associate can be appointed to vote on behalf of the board member.

There is no time to discuss all resolutions within a regular board meeting.

1. **Staff and Program Reports – Attached**

Cathi Winings - Resource Conservation Planner for the District – provided the Board with comprehensive program updates on the Voluntary Stewardship Program and the Regional Forestry Program:

Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP):

* Five-year report completed in December 2020 – initial goals and benchmarks were not met.
* Discussed Adaptive Management Plan. The State Advisory Committee unanimously recommended passing to the WSCC Executive Director..
* San Juan County will continue to participate VSP.
* Currently:
  + Developing database and GIS integration.
  + Working on outreach strategy.
  + Recruiting new VSP participants with outreach materials.
  + Providing individual Stewardship Plans at an average rate of 1 per month.
  + Adding new field monitoring protocols as part of each new ISP.
* Upcoming:
  + Update to SJC Council on 12/7/21.
  + Work Group quarterly meeting on 12/15/21.
  + Press release promoting VSP in local papers.
  + Send outreach letters and finalize survey (10-minute).
  + Design database and start data input.
  + GIS Analysis for targeted outreach to livestock owners.

The challenges presented by the VSP program were turned to a success story by District staff. SJICD was the only district which stated that the goals were not met resulting in the more functional Adaptive Management Plan.

Puget Sound Conservation Districts (PSCD) Regional Forestry Program:

* 9 Conservation Districts participate in the program.
* The purpose is to support private forest landowners by providing forest stewardship services, technical guidance and education.
* The ecological goals include:
  + Reduce forest land conversion.
  + Restore forest-related ecosystem functions.
  + Improve fish and wildlife habitat.
  + Protect water quality.
  + Reduce stormwater runoff.
* A map of 1,513 parcels of 5-200 acres was created for San Juan County. The privately owned parcels were withing 200’ of shorelines and 200’ of streams. The parcels included ones owned by Preservation Trust but not the ones owned by the Land Bank. (Copy attached).
* Developing a marketing toolkit:
  + Website based.
  + Social media campaign.
  + Postcards.
  + Factsheets.
  + Stewardship calendar “Task & Tips Checklist”.
* The upcoming activities include:
  + Updating website with program information and resource links.
  + Ongoing planning and technical assistance.
  + Site visits with DNR forester Matt Provencher in January 2021.
  + Cathi enrolled in an 8 week course on how to write forest plans.
  + The grant with 0.5 FTE funding ends in November 2022, more funding possible.

Board conversation regarding forest plans highlighted the fact that the forest ecology in San Juan County is very different from the mainland. Forests tend to grow slower in the County. The main focus of the program is to reduce forest land conversion.

It was also mentioned that forests in the County are overstocked. Shaw Island has not had a significant forest fire in over 100 years. However, one of the main obstacles to pre commercial thinning has been the cost with a limited market to sell, resulting in accumulation of log racks.

1. **Subcommittee Updates -**

Forest Health Collaborative (FHC) – Attached

Covered under Program Reports Attachment.

The District has received funding from DNR in the amount of $169,9512 for “Shovel Ready” projects and $25,000 for Coordination. Currently crews are busy working; and the 3 “Shovel Ready” projects include:

* Neck Point Rod on Shaw Island.
* Mountain Road on Waldron Island
* Turtleback Preserve on Orcas Island

There was a mention of incorporating a Performance Bond into contracts with landowners.

Also, there was a brief conversation about the importance of composting in San Juan County and making it a top priority. The County has a need for additional composting facilities. The County has a new Solid Waste manager who has confirmed the importance of composting.

The District will be incorporating new composting suggestions within future Idea Pots.

Policy – none

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) - Attached

The Minutes of the Subcommittee Zoom meeting of 11/18/21 are enclosed.

Board discussion covered the adoption of a “Native Lands Acknowledgment Statement” within District operations. This would include an indigenous lands acknowledgment statement that can be read preceding public meetings and be posted to the website.

The overall importance of searching for ways to cooperate with local tribes was emphasized within the discussion.

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

Discussed the upcoming WSU SJIC Ag Summit for 2022 which will be held on March 1 on Lopez Island.

Bruce and Matt are involved with the District participation which will include:

* Workshops and presentations.
* No-Till Drill information.
* Information on VSP.
* Forestry component.

WACD Annual Meeting November 29

The WACD Banquet will be held on 11/29/21 with the actual Annual Business Meeting taking place on 11/30/21.

Alan gave an overall presentation of the following discussion points:

* Resolutions.
* Bylaws.
* Committee reports - with emphasis on reports from the Bylaw, DEI and Tribal Committees.

As all resolutions have budgetary implication it is important to recognize the priorities.

Other subjects discussed included:

* Extending the term of Vice President to 2 years.
* Virtual participation in meetings.
* Payment of member dues by districts.
* Sustainable funding committee.

Lynn and Vicki will be attending the Business Meeting.

There was extensive discussion about the Letter from North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD) to All Washington State Conservation District Board Members and Managers dated November 22, 2021 (Copy enclosed).

In the letter NYCD addresses their grievances with WACD and state that they have chosen not to pay the 2021 WACD dues. This led to a brief comment about the difference in philosophies between the Conservation Districts on the East Side of the State vs. the West Side.

1. **Idea Pot**

Discussed the following subjects:

* Natural Resources Planning in light of or the recent mudslide at the property of an Associate Supervisor. This would include disaster preparation due to
  + Power outage.
  + Flooding.
  + Snow.
  + Climate change.

Further emphasis was placed on supporting the establishment of a local weather station and collection of county wide rainfall data to enhance ability to prepare for drought and excessive rainfall conditions.

It was mentioned that while 5 inches of rain was recorded on a private rain gauge during the recent rainstorm and adjacent pond level rose by 16 inches. Many of the local ponds were constructed many years ago without adequate spillways to accommodate excessive water flow. This led into further conversation about infrastructure and construction of adequate water storage.

There was also brief continuation of the conversation about a “Conservation Campus” at the former States Inn Ranch. University of Washington Department of Physics has been searching for a suitable location for seminars. This, along with Western Washington University’s quest for a location for remote campus learning retains the States Inn Ranch in the conversation.

It was mentioned that the property should even be enhanced to accommodate larger meetings.

It was mentioned that on 12/7/21 at 2:00PM ICC Students will conduct their Final Presentations via Zoom.

1. **Public Comments**

None.

1. **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:00PM.

**Next General Meeting: Tuesday, December 28, 2021.**

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