

POLK SWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 14, 2024 - 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Recording and attachments available on request

 Draft
 X Approved

CALL BOARD MEETING TO ORDER: Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:00PM at the Polk SWCD Office, 580 Main St, Suite A, Dallas, Oregon. Introductions were then made.

DIRECTORS:	STAFF:	GUESTS:	ABSENT:
Michael (Mike) Wilson, Chair	Kevin Porter	Tom Finnigan	
Chad Woods, Vice Chair	Marc Bell-Zoom	Joe Saul	
John (Jock) Dalton, Treasurer	Morgan Neil	Karen Saul	
Pryor Garnett, Secretary	Hayley Iverson		
Lindsay McClary-Zoom	Beth Thiel-Zoom		
Donna Champeau			
Eden Olsen			

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comment.

REVISION OF AGENDA

No additions or revisions were made to the agenda.

CORRECTION OF DECEMBER 13, 2023 MINUTES

Mike Wilson stated that this correction to the December 13th, 2023 Minutes was missed in the January meeting. He noted that the Motion following the Executive Session needed to be corrected to reflect what was discussed.

The previous Motion stated: *Jock Dalton made a Motion to approve the discussion that took place in Executive Session. Donna Champeau Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously.*

The corrected Motion states: *Jock Dalton made a Motion to approve a 2% salary increase for Kevin Porter. Donna Champeau Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously.*

Pryor Garnett made a Motion to correct the December 13th, 2023 minutes as presented. Chad Woods Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mike Wilson pulled the January 10th, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

Pryor Garnett made a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Eden Olsen Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously. Items in the Consent Agenda included the Staff Reports.

Mike Wilson stated that the January 10th, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes needed to be corrected. He stated that the Motion regarding the committee member appointments needed to be corrected to Board Officers. Pryor Garnett stated that he would like to see the Officers listed as well.

Jock Dalton made a Motion to approve the January 10th, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes with the stated correction. Pryor Garnett Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT

Kevin Porter presented his District Manager Report to the Board. He stated that the audit was filed with the Secretary of State and fees have been paid, which allowed the District to complete the Annual Report. He stated that the Annual Meeting was held for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to satisfy requirements. He noted that in the future the Annual Meeting will be part of a District event. He stated that the Winter Native Plant Sale was a success and there will be a breakdown of it in the March Board Meeting. He noted that the lease on the District's current office space is held by NRCS and they have no control over renewal, as it is handled by the USDA FPAC. He stated that other NRCS field offices have not been heard about their wants to change locations. He reviewed some options for the District moving forward with the current location and a potential move. He encouraged the Board to think about this over the next couple months, as budget season is approaching. He noted that the District is tight on space in the current office. There was discussion regarding the current budget and how the District could allow for paying rent. There was discussion regarding NRCS staffing increases which would take the remaining available workstations. He noted that the Ag Census was released this week and reviewed that with the Board. He stated that the District hosted the District Managers meeting this month at the office. He stated that Beth Thiel hosted a growers meeting at Salt Creek with Derrick Godwin. He encouraged the Directors to read the OWEB 20 year Capacity Grant Report and reviewed the information in that report. Pryor Garnett stated that he attended the Salt Creek meeting and gave kudos to Beth Thiel and Derrick Godwin on their presentation for the meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee:

Jock Dalton reviewed the District Financial Reports with the Board. He noted that the Finance Committee met and reviewed the money coming in and going out. He stated that the District has been discussing how to get better interest rates. Chad Woods noted that the LGIP has moved up to a 5% interest rate and noted that it is in a lot better shape than it was in 2008.

Chad Woods made a Motion to remove the \$500,000.00 limitation on the LGIP account with the caveat that it be checked monthly. Jock Dalton Seconded. Discussion: There was discussion regarding where the LGIP account limit is stated and the history of why the limit was created. Pryor Garnett recommended a change to the Policy Manual to delete the limitation on the LGIP account. Chad Woods amended his Motion to include deleting the LGIP account limitation in the Policy Manual. Jock Dalton Seconded. There was discussion regarding whether this topic had been discussed at the Finance Committee meeting. There was discussion regarding the CD and Money Market Accounts. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Chad Woods stated that there is currently \$400,000.00 in Citizens Bank that isn't making money. Chad Woods made a Motion to allow the Treasurer and Kevin Porter to move the money that is currently in the CD and Money Market Accounts at Citizens Bank to the LGIP Account as they deem appropriate. Jock Dalton Seconded. Discussion: There was discussion regarding how these funds could be tracked, as they are for Smithfield Oaks and Cornerstone, and therefore need to be tracked separately. Mike Wilson noted that he would like to see the Finance Committee discussing these issues and then bringing a recommendation to the Board. Pryor Garnett voiced concerns regarding possible consequences and would like to see this referred back to the Finance Committee. Lindsay McClary noted that she supports this matter going back to the Finance Committee and when there is discussion regarding the funds for Smithfield Oaks and Cornerstone, she would like to attend those meetings as she is the Chair of the Property Committee. Chad Woods withdrew his Motion. There was further discussion regarding interest rates on accounts.

Property Committee:

Lindsay McClary presented an update on the Smithfield Oaks Land Management Plan and access easement update to the Board. She noted that the Committee met on January 30th and reviewed the BPA suggested edits to the LMP. She noted that the suggested edits were reasonable and straightforward and will be changed and sent back to BPA for approval. She stated that she and Kevin Porter met with the Local Law Group regarding the access easement for Smithfield Oaks and reviewed the next steps that will be taken. She noted that the February Committee meeting will be skipped and the next one will be in March. Chad Woods recommended that the plat map be pulled for Smithfield Oaks as well, as they can show different information. Kevin Porter stated that BPA has determined that there is currently no public access to Smithfield Oaks. Mike Wilson questioned if it would be possible to have public access to the property in the future. Lindsay McClary stated that is a goal for the property in the future and that legal action will be necessary to complete that goal. She reviewed what public access could look like in the future and BPA's recommendation on that issue.

Personnel Committee:

Donna Champeau presented a report of the annual staff/District Manager review process to the Board. She noted that the Committee met on January 18th and discussed the annual reviews and the pieces that will be included in the future. She stated that in the future there will be staff and partner reviews for the District Manager. She stated that discussion on that topic will continue at the next Committee meeting and that she would like additional Board input on which partners and community members should be approached for that review. She stated that the Committee also discussed a bonus for the District Manager and there was discussion on what defines a bonus. There was further discussion about how bonuses for staff could be implemented and how they were done in the past.

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Wilson reviewed the ODA Board Training with the Board. He noted that Eric Nesbaum came to do two trainings with the Board and it was great to have him here to walk the Board through those trainings. Lindsay McClary questioned if there would be any further trainings and requested copies of the PowerPoints. Kevin Porter stated that those were the only trainings that Eric Nesbaum had at this time. He stated that the next training will be the Ethics Commission training and doesn't know how that will be handled at this time. Send PowerPoints to Board members. Eden Olsen stated that as a new Board member she is always open to more training.

Mike Wilson reviewed the Local Work Group Meeting with the Board. Kevin Porter reviewed the survey topics and results with the Board. He noted that it didn't have the reach they had hoped for due to the Fall issue of Cultivating not going out to as many people as expected. There was discussion regarding future survey topics. Jock noted that with the Small Woodland Committee, they do tours every month and they are very well attended and typically fill up. Morgan Neil noted that the District is planning to have the next Local Work Group Meeting in Zone 3. Tom Finnigan stated that this was the best LWG meeting he had attended. Mike Wilson stated that he would like to see more landowners at the next meeting.

Kevin Porter reviewed the Annual Work Plan with the Board. He stated that he has been frustrated with the Annual Work Plan process over the last few weeks. His goal is to bring something to the Board that is a better representation of how staff spend time, than what has been presented in the past. In working on it he didn't feel like it would be a clear representation of how time is spent. He reviewed a proposed format for the Annual Work Plan. He stated that he conferred with other District Managers and shared a proposed format and reviewed the process that he would be taking to complete the Annual Work Plan in this format. He noted that doing the Annual Work Plan in this way will make it an easy transition to the budget. Chad noted that in his 20 years on the Board this is the best Annual Work Plan he has seen proposed. Kevin Porter also stated that this gives an internal billing rate and external billing rate, how the district is paying

for things and how grants would be paying for things. Chad Woods stated that he would like to see the priorities set by the Local Work Group meeting be reflected in this Annual Work Plan. There was discussion regarding when the Annual Work Plan needed to be approved. Kevin Porter noted that having the help and support of other District Managers has been incredibly helpful.

Kevin Porter and Beth Thiel reviewed the Salt Creek Focus Area with the Board. Kevin Porter stated that the District was approached by the Water Quality Department with ODA to be one of the first to implement a Strategic Implementation Area. He stated that the current focus area is mercury. He reviewed a map of the area highlighting water quality. He stated that they would like to change the SIA to tell a story of agriculture to determine water quality and reviewed how that process would take place. There was discussion about how compliance would be implemented and what a successful project would look like. He noted that he needs input from the Board regarding whether they are ok with changing the focus area. He noted that the current focus area is funded by the current scope of work and that would still be billable under a general scope of work but that the SIA would provide its own funding for this project. He reviewed the breakdown of funds provided with this project. There was discussion regarding the differences between the current focus area and an SIA. He noted that the current focus area ends in March of 2025 and that is when the SIA would begin. He asked the Board if they would like to see more of what staff are currently working on or if they would like to see staff focus more on the SIA. Beth Thiel stated that there has been conversation with the Greater Yamhill Watershed Council to partner with them on this project. She stated that in the past SIAs did improve compliance but it didn't improve water quality and this new program would seek out landowners that are wanting to improve these issues. She stated that there is a hope that in the end compliance will not be necessary. Chad Woods stated that he would like the District to stay in a problem solver status. There was discussion on when ODA would need an answer. Kevin Porter stated by early March and that a vote is not currently needed by the Board, he just needs input from the Board on the direction they would like to move in. Pryor Garnett stated that he feels this would be a good fit. He is a little concerned about goal setting and compliance. He stated that he would like to see the Board encourage staff to continue this work. Jock Dalton stated that he would like it to be made clear that the District will help farmers comply but does not want to make them meet ODA compliance. There is a Board consensus to continue moving forward with this matter.

Meeting adjourned @ 8:16 pm by Mike Wilson.

Respectfully submitted,

Hayley Iverson

Administrative Assistant