

POLK SWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 10, 2024 - 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Recording and attachments available on request

 Draft
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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	Eric Nusbaum	Pryor Garnett, Secretary
Chad Woods, Vice Chair	Marc Bell-Zoom	Bill Wainwright	
John (Jock) Dalton, Treasurer-Zoom	Morgan Neil	Tom Finnigan	
Lindsay McClary	Beth Thiel-Zoom		
Donna Champeau	Hayley Iverson		
Eden Olsen			

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mike Wilson noted that a letter was submitted from Bill Wainwright and may need to be added as an agenda item for a future meeting.

REVISION OF AGENDA

Donna Champeau stated that she would like to add a report from the Personnel Committee to the Agenda.

Kevin Porter stated for the record that Jason Dunkin joined the meeting via Zoom.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chad Woods made a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Lindsay McClary Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously. Items in the Consent Agenda include the December 13, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes and staff reports.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT

Kevin Porter presented his report to the Board. He stated that the District’s capacity grant report was submitted a week and a half early. He reviewed other grant reporting that is coming due and what the status on those are. He noted that Morgan Neil has been working hard on preparing for the Local Work Group Meeting and encouraged the Directors to attend and to invite landowners to attend the meeting. He also stated that Marc Bell got the application in for the ODFW grant. He noted that Beth Thiel is continuing to work with Derek Godwin on more water quality monitoring and what the future of that program might look like. He stated that staff is going out to plant new trees along Rickreall Creek where they were removed to add woody debris. Mike Wilson questioned whether Beth Thiel has been in contact with Matt Crawford on the Salt Creek project and Kevin Porter confirmed that she has been. Mike Wilson stated that Matt Crawford was a previous Polk SWCD Board Director and had wanted to see this project happen.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Property Committee:

Lindsay McClary stated that the Committee last met on the last business day of the year. She stated that the Cornerstone property has a grant application in that would provide a large chunk of money and allow for more projects there. She gave an update on the management plan with BPA on Smithfield Oaks and stated that it is looking good. She also noted that the committee is still working with the Local Law Group on the access issue.

Finance Committee:

Jock Dalton gave an update on the financials for the District and noted that nothing looked out of the ordinary. He noted that the property tax income is almost complete and those funds are in the LGIP account with a good return. He noted that the WaFd CDs have been renewed and that the committee is looking into other options for growing the District's funds and noted that the funds in Citizens Bank aren't growing as much as they should be. There was discussion about the District's options for investing funds. Chad Woods stated that he has visited with several banks and that Umpqua Bank seems to be a good option for the District. Chad Woods made a Motion to authorize the Treasurer to open a CD or savings account at Umpqua Bank in the amount of up to \$250,000.00 for the District. Eden Olsen Seconded. Chad Woods noted that the Treasurer needs to be the person opening the account. Motion Passed Unanimously. Chad Woods noted that there are currently only two Board members that are authorized signers for the District and would like to see the four officers be made signers. Chad Woods made a Motion to authorize the four current District officers to be made signers on the District's bank accounts. Chad Woods noted that there is currently a previous Board member who is a signer on the District's accounts. Motion Passed Unanimously. Jock Dalton noted that he has been the fiduciary for many years now and to keep a good deal on the District's insurance, there needs to be a fiduciary. Chad Woods made a Motion for Jock Dalton to remain the fiduciary for the District. Donna Champeau Seconded. Mike Wilson requested clarification on the Motion. Chad Woods stated that with Jock Dalton being the Treasurer and opening new accounts for the District, it would be cleaner to have a Motion stating that he will remain the fiduciary for the District. Kevin Porter stated that the committee has recommended that the District's Property/Casualty Insurance be renewed in the amount of \$6,666.00. This invoice is over the amount set for the District Manager's spending and needs Board approval to be paid. Chad Woods Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously. Chad Woods recommended that the District Manager have discretionary spending up to a \$10,000 limit, as the prices of everything has increased. Jock Dalton made a Motion to allow the District Manager to have a discretionary spending limit of up to \$10,000.00. Chad Woods Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously. Eden Olsen questioned why the District's physical assets weren't in the financial documents. Chad Woods noted that he has never seen that in the financials. Mike Wilson stated that the Finance Committee should look into that. Jock Dalton stated that the committee will work on it. Mike Wilson thanked Kevin Porter for including the budget to actual and requested a format change so that it is easier to read. Kevin Porter stated that this report is longer because it was for the whole quarter.

Personnel Committee:

Donna Champeau stated that at the last Board meeting, a COLA increase for all employees and a merit increase for Kevin Porter was approved but a start date was not determined. Donna Champeau made a Motion to have the COLA increase start January 24th, 2024, and Kevin Porter's merit increase to start December 1st, 2023. Chad Woods Seconded. Chad Woods questioned if merit increases would be July 1 moving forward. Donna Champeau said yes. Motion Passed Unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Wilson reviewed the nomination and election of Board Officers with the Board. He noted that this is the first meeting of the year and this is when these changes take place. Kevin Porter shared the existing list of Committee Members. Donna Champeau made a Motion to keep the Board Officers as they currently are. Eden Olsen Seconded. Donna Champeau noted that there was a good change over the last year and everyone got their feet wet and she would like that work to continue. Chad Woods stated that it would be good for the newer Board members to learn these positions for one more year. Mike Wilson noted that he spoke with Pryor Garnett earlier and he stated he would like to continue as is. The Board Officers are: Mike Wilson – Chair, Chad Woods – Vice-Chair, Jock Dalton – Treasurer, Pryor Garnett – Secretary. Motion Passed Unanimously. Lindsay made a Motion to close the nominations for committee members. Donna Champeau Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously. Mike Wilson reviewed the committee members. Eden Olsen was added to the Financial Committee. Mike Wilson requested that the Board think about adding

another person to the Policy Committee. Chad Woods reviewed the roles of the small grant committee. Beth Thiel stated that she would like to be on the water quality and small grants committees.

Kevin Porter reviewed the cost and distribution of Cultivating with the Board. He stated that last month he sang the praises of Cultivating but at the time there were changes being made that the District wasn't aware of. He noted that Cultivating was supposed to be in the IO's Polk Plus program. The fall issue of Cultivating was run through Polk Plus and it created a lot of traffic for the office. However, the new owners of the IO have decided to discontinue the Polk Plus program and the District was not informed. The last batch only went out to 3,000 people. There was a lot of information in the current issue that the District was really excited about reaching more people and that didn't happen. He noted that it was very frustrating to anticipate a large distribution and then having it not happen after they had seen a good response from it. He read a statement from Alicia Hutchison with OSU for the record. He stated that staff is trying to find answers on how to continue to get Cultivating out to more people. Currently Eagle Press in Salem prints Cultivating and inserts it into the IO for distribution. He got a quote from Eagle Press and they will continue to print it and will pick up distribution for the District which would have a greater reach than IO had. He noted that they wouldn't be able to reach Sheridan, Willamina, or Amity but that Eagle Press would work with the District's mailing list. Chad Woods stated that if there is spill over into Yamhill County that it wouldn't be a problem. Kevin Porter noted that if the District could reach 36,000 people that that would be awesome. He noted that the cost is split with OSU. He noted that he is putting this information out for the Board to discuss. He noted that even if the District only did one Cultivating printing through Eagle Press during the current fiscal year, it would go over budget. Chad Woods noted that there are funds that could be used and he has received a lot of good feedback about Cultivating. Donna Champeau questioned what the Extension Office's budget would be and she would like to see an evaluation of the impact. Lindsay McClary questioned if the quote was for 1 year or one printing. Kevin Porter stated that it was for one printing. Lindsay McClary stated that this would increase the amount to \$25,000 per year. Eden Olsen questioned how Polk Plus and the IO was selected for distribution. Kevin Porter reviewed that process and noted that it didn't reach West Salem. There was discussion regarding prior advertising that was used to cut costs. Kevin Porter noted that getting rid of advertising allowed more information to be included in Cultivating. He noted that Alicia Hutchison has been working with the current publisher of IO but he oversees many newspapers and isn't in the area often. He reviewed the next steps staff will be taking.

Lindsay McClary reviewed moving the time of the Polk SWCD Board meetings with the Board. She noted that a survey was sent out but there wasn't full response from the Board. She stated that as Pryor Garnett is absent she wouldn't feel comfortable making a decision. She recommended that unless someone has an objection that the Board stay the current course and revisit it every year in January. Donna Champeau stated that she would like to see more seasonal options and maybe in the summer months do earlier meetings and in the winter go back to the later time. Kevin Porter noted that there are other Districts that do this. He stated that as staff it would make it tremendously easier to have it during the day or at the end of the work day. He noted that moving the meeting to the office makes it easier as well. Eden Olsen noted that she would like to see more options for days of the week. Mike Wilson stated that he could see it being easier for staff to have the meeting at the end of the day. Tom Finnigan recommended that a survey go out with the dates and times that don't work. Lindsay McClary stated that if staff wants to continue work on moving the meeting time that she would continue to be open to it. Eden Olsen requested that staff continue to survey for a new time.

Kevin Porter reviewed the Budget Calendar and Budget Officer with the Board. Mike Wilson requested that everyone review the calendar before a vote. Kevin Porter reviewed the changes that he made to the calendar from last year. He stated that he would like to see the Annual Work Plan approved at the March Board meeting to kick start the budget process. Chad Woods made a Motion to approve the 2024-2025 Budget Calendar. Lindsay McClary Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously. Chad Woods nominated Kevin

Porter to be the Budget Officer. Jock Dalton Seconded. Chad Woods stated that he has been happy working with Kevin Porter and Hayley Iverson on the Budget and feels very comfortable with Kevin Porter being the Budget Officer. Mike Wilson closed nominations. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Mike Wilson reviewed the Associate Directors with the Board. He stated that the Board has an opportunity to appoint Associate Directors. Chad Woods gave clarification on the Directors Emeritus and the Associate Director roles. Mike Wilson noted that the District can add anyone as an Associate Director. Kevin Porter stated that being an Associate Director can open up opportunities for people to become Directors. Mike Wilson stated that Tom Finnigan would like to be an Associate Director. Tom Finnigan reviewed his history in Polk County and work history with the Board. He stated that he was the District Conservationist with NRCS at the Dallas Field Office. Mike Wilson opened the meeting for discussion. Tom Finnigan noted that he has been wanting to become an Associate Director for a few years but wanted to give a buffer between him being District Conservationist and being an Associate Director. Chad Woods made a Motion to appoint Tom Finnigan as an Associate Director. Lindsay McClary Seconded. Motion Passed Unanimously. Chad Woods stated that the Board can invite someone who isn't a Board member, Associate Board member, or staff to be part of a committee.

Eric Nusbaum, ODA, presented an ODA Board Training regarding duties of the Board with the Board. He stated that there are new laws for open meetings and reviewed those changes. He noted that Board Directors will need to complete a yearly open meeting law training.

Meeting adjourned @ 8:15 pm by Mike Wilson.

Respectfully submitted,

Hayley Iverson

Administrative Assistant