

**Washington Association of Conservation Districts**  
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel - Olympia  
January 28, 2019

- **Motion:** Javier Lopez moved to add a PMC Manager Report agenda item and strike the New Area Director and Finance Committee Report agenda items from the agenda. Second by Doug Rushton. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Larry Davis moved to approve the November board meeting minutes as presented. Second by John Keatley. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Amy McKay moved to approve the 2019 Executive Office Work Plan. Second by Javier Lopez. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Dean Longrie moved to nominate Wade Troutman for the NACD Hall of Distinction. Second by John McLean. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Doug Rushton moved to adopt a resolution honoring Eric Rannestad for his work on the WACD website. Second by Sarah Richards. Motion carried, with Renee Hadley abstaining.

**Washington Association of Conservation Districts**  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel - Olympia  
January 28, 2019

Members Present

Jeanette Dorner, President (Pierce CD)  
Javier Lopez, Vice President (South Yakima CD)  
Larry Davis, Secretary (Whatcom CD)  
Wendy Knopp, Treasurer (Spokane CD)  
Doug Rushton, National Director (Thurston CD)  
Mark Craven, Past President (Snohomish CD)  
Sarah Richards, Northwest Area Director (Whidbey Island CD)  
Theresa Sygitowicz, Northwest Area Director (Whatcom CD)  
Dean Longrie, Southwest Area Director (Clark CD)  
John Keatley, Southwest Area Director (Cowlitz CD)  
John Preston, North Central Area Director (Grant County CD)  
John McLean, North Central Area Director (Foster Creek CD)  
Cindy Reed, South Central Area Director (North Yakima CD)  
John Floyd, Northeast Area Director (Pend Oreille CD)  
Amy McKay, Southeast Area Director (Whitman CD)  
Renee Hadley, WADE President (Walla Walla County CD)

Others Present

Patricia Hickey, WACD Executive Director  
Ryan Baye, Legislative & Membership Assistant  
Joe Williams, NRCS Area Conservationist  
Kirk Robinson, SCC Interim Executive Director  
Jim Baye, Lincoln County Conservation District  
Jeff Schibel, Lincoln County Conservation District  
George Stuivenga, Pend Oreille Conservation District

President Jeanette Dorner called the meeting to order at 9:02 and welcomed the Officers, Area Directors, and guests.

Approving Agenda

**Vice President Javier Lopez moved to adopt the meeting's agenda with the following changes: adding a PMC Managers Report agenda item while striking the New Area Director and Finance Committee Report agenda items.** Second by National Director Doug Rushton. Motion carried.

Approving the Previous Meeting Minutes

Secretary Larry Davis reviewed the minutes as prepared by staff, having not been at the November Board meeting. **Larry Davis moved to approve the minutes from the November 2018 Board meeting as presented.** Second by John Keatley. Motion carried.

### Executive Office Report

Executive Director Patricia Hickey reported the outcome of her meetings up to that point of the legislative session, focusing on the WACD's budget priorities and the Soil Health Initiative. That project had been jointly worked on between the Conservation Commission, Washington State University, and the Washington Department of Agriculture but conservation districts were not funded in the Governor's budget.

Commission Interim Director Kirk Robinson shared the Commission recognized the decision was the Governor's to make, but that WACD was in a different position. Patricia shared additional information regarding how the next steps in the process and the current challenges. She answered additional questions on current legislation and the Conservation Commission's budget as proposed by the Governor.

Patricia also gave a report on the financial outcome of the 2018 Annual Conference and the initial results from the post-conference survey. Sarah Richards asked about electronic voting and remotely connecting people into the Annual Meeting and conference events. Patricia informed the board about the opposition to absentee or proxy voting from supervisors who attend the conference, and how the Association would need to approve such a change. Doug Rushton shared comments regarding potential future forestry events and the conference and John Keatley asked that security be considered in any future electronic voting system.

### Treasurer's Report

Patricia delivered a Treasurer's report on behalf of Wendy Knopp, who was unable to attend. She highlighted budget overages in the banking charges line-item due to the PMC accepting credit cards for their purchases as well as WACD hosting the NACD Regional Conference. She also mentioned the financial outcomes of the Annual Conference did not meet projections due to increased expenses for deliverables from the contract with the Commission.

There were requests by Sarah Richards and Larry Davis to ensure everyone had the same set of financial reports for future board meetings. Doug Rushton commented how much better this was compared to years' past and to recognize there is usually lag time in sharing information.

### PMC Financial/ Manager Report

PMC Manager Jim Brown called in from the Plant Material Center in Bow and spoke briefly to the financial report as presented to the Board. He summarized that the PMC is ahead on their sales projections but the investment account was behind in their goals due to recent economic events. He also listed some additional expenses like the audit and an increase in the minimum wage would affect the final outcome.

Jim answered questions regarding leftover packaging materials from the previous year, planned upgrades for the facility, and the new tractor purchase. He made sure to point out that this time of the year is when the PMC cash flow is at its lowest. He is also sending weekly updates to the Executive Committee and has shared with the Finance Committee that the government shutdown is reflecting plant sales to CDs. Javier Lopez expressed his appreciation for those updates to feel more engaged with the PMC and asked about John Knox.

### WACD Legislative Strategy

Legislative and Membership Assistant Ryan Baye discussed two bills being worked on by WACD and others at this point in session: HB 1187 put forward by the AgForestry Class to streamline CD fish habitat project approval and HB 1426 to codify authorization for conservation districts sharing engineering staff.

Dean Longrie asked that WACD look at who is authorized as recipients of CD funding based off a situation in Clark CD. Kirk Robinson agreed that would be one to plan for the 2020 session.

Kirk Robinson shared some of the work done by the Conservation Commission without Ron Shultz and expressed interest in the WACD's new Friday legislative conference calls.

*There was a recess from 10:30 to 10:45*

### WACD Legislative Days

Patricia Hickey gave a recap of the previous day with the number of attendees and number of appointments CDs made with legislators.

John Keatley shared his district had positive meetings with their 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> district legislators and invited them out on project field trips and the Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Annual Meetings. He felt the interactions outside of session were a lot more effective than a 15-minute meeting.

Cindy Reed's district had met with all their state representatives before session. Had heard from others that a Representative believed CDs did not need any money because of NRCS's financial status and her belief the legislator needed to be educated but was unable to secure a meeting.

Javier Lopez felt every year he attended Legislative Days was better and is now on year three. He had a suggestion that more packets be made for next year for the districts.

Theresa Sygitowicz agreed the packets were five stars and would have been proud to take them to DC. She thanked WACD staff for their diligence in getting legislative appointments scheduled for Whatcom CD. She also suggested writing thank you notes to all the legislators everyone met with.

Amy McKay echoed Theresa's comment regarding thank you notes. She shared it was her second year attending and felt a lot more informed this time around. She joined some of Pierce CD's visits and shared the outcomes from those meetings.

Sarah Richards informed the board one of their legislators would not take the legislative packet and only wanted electronic resources and reading material.

Javier Lopez recommended everyone attend meetings with legislators from other districts and he found them to be really valuable.

### 2019 Association Priorities

Jeanette Dorner put to the consideration of the board a draft 2019 work plan prepared by staff and in consultation with the Executive Committee.

John Keatley commented on one of the goals and how the association spends a lot of time focused on resolutions. He would like to see status reports every quarter or six months on the execution of those resolutions.

Theresa Sygitowicz had brought up at the last meeting of the Puget Sound Caucus the goal of CD funding and how the funding level seemed to decrease from the beginning to the end of a legislative session.

Jeanette Dorner agreed with Theresa on that particular problem and hoped that could be partially rectified with the new legislative conference calls and getting more information out about the timeline of budgets.

Larry Davis said one of his goals during his tenure as Secretary was to address the issue John Keatley raised.

**Amy McKay moved to approve the priorities and goals. Second by Javier Lopez.**

Patricia Hickey believed some of the details were too exact and asked the board to focus on the goals as part of their decision.

Dean Longrie spoke about the importance of working together during the legislative session and how challenging that can be. He highlighted the absence of Ron Shultz and that with new leadership there will be additional struggles. He asked Patricia and Jeanette to think about it.

Jeanette Dorner shared she looked at the list of priorities with Dean's point in mind and could not find a way to directly tie this conversation about strategic unity into the work plan. But that she was aware of what Dean was addressing.

Amy McKay asked if the goals would have an identified "responsible person"? And if the Executive Committee would be the ones making those determinations. Jeanette Dorner answered to both questions in the affirmative.

Doug Rushton added his belief that the board needed a report back on the progress of the goals during the course of the year.

Renee Hadley suggested using the new website as a document storage site and its potential for reporting purposes.

Sarah Richards commented that the Communications Committee will be developing a strategic plan for the Association, which could include what Renee referenced.

Theresa Sygitowicz offered suggestions on future legislative marketing material.

**Motion carried.**

### 2019 Board Meeting Schedule

Larry Davis briefly spoke to reasonings for the dates and locations proposed to the board for their remaining 2019 meetings: June 25<sup>th</sup> in Bow; September 17<sup>th</sup> in Ellensburg; and December 2<sup>nd</sup> in Tacoma.

**Dean Longrie moved to adopt the proposed board meeting schedule. Second by Theresa Sygitowicz. Motion carried.**

### New WACD Website

Patricia Hickey demonstrated the new WACD website and spoke to its development process with work done by WACD staff and through a contract with Walla Walla County CD. as well as the future projects she had planned.

Doug Rushton and Theresa Sygitowicz offered suggestions for future website work.

Amy McKay and Larry Davis complimented the new site.

Javier Lopez asked if the intern at Walla Walla County CD could be kept on a retainer after the contract ended? Renee Hadley answered there had been some discussions, but the intern has future obligations to take into consideration.

### Partner Reports

Kirk Robinson spoke to his work as Interim Executive Director and the hiring of Puget Sound Regional Manager Alison Halpern as the Commission's new Policy Assistant.

Joe Williams shared with the board that despite the government shutdown effecting the Department of Agriculture, NRCS was still working. He also mentioned RCPP write-ups and that Nick Vera had been detailed to DC and partnership work would be transferred to another NRCS staff person.

Renee Hadley announced the WADE conference would not include a leadership track this year.

Larry Davis gave background on his idea to nominate Wade Troutman for the NACD Hall of Distinction and surprise him at the NACD Annual Conference the following week. He spoke to how much Wade had done for Washington state and national conservation work.

**John McLean moved to nominate Wade Troutman for the NACD Hall of Distinction. Second by Dean Longrie. Motion carried.**

Doug Rushton wanted to thank Walla Walla County CD's intern for his work on the new WACD website with a resolution. **Doug Rushton moved the board adopt the following resolution:**

Whereas WACD had a need to communicate with the public and its partners, and  
Whereas Eric Rannestad engaged his skills to assist WACD in upgrading its website, and  
Whereas at the WACD Board meeting of January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019 the initial "roll out" of the website was premiered, and  
Whereas the WACD needs to continue its website communication efforts,

Therefore, be it resolved that WACD Officers and Directors hold Eric's efforts in high esteem and appreciate his efforts.

Resolved this 29<sup>th</sup> Day of January, 2019 by WACD President, Jeanette Dorner.

**The resolution was seconded by Sarah Richards. Motion carried with an abstention by Renee Hadley**

#### Area Director Reports

John Keatley and Dean Longrie reported for the Southwest Area. They were glad all CDs in their area attended considering the other issues at play for some. Lewis CD is working on VSP and Chehalis Basin Issues. There is a concern among Cowlitz County co-operators about their commissioners choosing to do VSP in-house. Clark CD will be interviewing for a second person in their office as a ¾ time resource technician position.

Sarah Richards and Theresa Sygitowicz reported for the Northwest Area. They announced Karen Bishop would be resigning from her role as Whidbey Island CD District Manager and there were four finalists being considered. Whatcom CD would be hosting classes on Agriculture BMP's. They also reported on the previous evening's Puget Sound Caucus meeting and the work toward a common theme around "Better Ground".

Cindy Reed reported for the South Central Area. North Yakima CD was having problems with the Department of Fish and Wildlife's permitting process. Eastern Klickitat CD and Central Klickitat CD were working for a reappropriation for a conservation easement and were working with Senator Honeyford to include the funds in the Commission's budget.

Amy McKay reported for the Southeast Area. She was actively seeking a second director and had spoken with several individuals suggested by Ray Ledgerwood. She appreciated getting CD updates from Walla Walla County and was excited about Pine Creek CD's new program for precision agriculture projects. Whitman CD was focused on a pond restoration project in LaCrosse.

John Preston and John McLean reported for the North Central Area. Cascadia CD was wrapping up some creek restoration projects. Foster Creek CD was working on VSP and habitat conservation plans. Grant County CD was dealing with algae blooms in Moses Lake.

John Floyd reported for the Northeast Area. There was a proposed smelter in the area that was dividing the community. He praised the work of Stevens County CD staff Dana Bowers and her education programs. He was excited for a WSU intern coming to the area in the next year.

#### Officer Reports

Doug Rushton would be attending the NACD Annual Conference the following week and working to advance the resolutions from WACD's Annual Conference.

Larry Davis was focused on the six topics he had listed in his memo before being selected Secretary.

Javier Lopez took a lot away from the good governance training at the WACD Conference and wanted to bring a working model to WACD's government structure.

Jeanette Dorner was spending her time on the new commitments as President with the Tuesday Partnership Calls and sitting on the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:21.