

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Board of Directors March Work Session Minutes

Remote Connection through Zoom

May 17, 2021

Members Remotely Present

Jeanette Dorner, President (Pierce CD)
Amy McKay, Secretary (Whitman CD)
Dave Fenn, Treasurer (Lewis CD)
Doug Rushton, National Director (Thurston CD)
Mark Craven, Past President (Snohomish CD)
Alan Chapman, 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)
Barbara Bailey, South Central Area Director (Underwood CD)
Jeff Schibel, Northeast Area Director (Lincoln County CD)
Mary Collins, Southeast Area Director (Palouse CD)
Bill Blake, WADE President (Skagit CD)

Others Remotely Present

Tom Salzer, WACD Executive Director
Jim Brown, WACD PMC Nursery Manager
Jacquie Gauthier, WACD PMC Sales Manager (Incoming)
Ryan Baye, WACD Legislative & Membership Lead
Carol Smith, WSCC Executive Director
Larry Davis, Whatcom CD Supervisor

President Jeanette Dorner called the meeting to order at 6:05 and introduced new PMC Sales Manager Jacquie Gauthier to the Board members present.

Area Director Reports

John Keatley discussed the Southwest events and invited Tom Salzer to Cowlitz and Wahkiakum's joint meeting in June. Dave Fenn, Doug Rushton, and Dean Longrie contributed information from their local districts.

Alan Chapman reported the continued churn of district managers in the Northwest Area and the struggle to find qualified and quality candidates.

Jeff Schibel described the very dry conditions in the Northeast Area. He shared upcoming events and major funding received by districts.

Special Committee Reports

Tom Salzer and Mark Craven reported on the slow progress of the Joint Committee on Elections between WACD and WSCC but that the group was coalescing.

Tom also shared the Special Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion would start meeting before the end of the month, that a facilitator had been hired, and they were working with WACD to finalize an agenda. He answered questions about the committee's timeline and area representation.

Standing Committee Reports

Larry Davis spoke on behalf of the Tribal Relations Committee as their co-Chair, discussing a recent survey done by the Committee of conservation districts and tribal natural resource departments and the recommendations generated by that survey. He answered questions about incorporating WADE as a partner, what some of the measurable outcomes might be, and his continued service as co-chair as an associate supervisor.

Dave Fenn presented some of the work done by the Finance Committee, outside of their budget work: COLA recommendations, recommending a new financial review schedule, using WACD reserves, and reviewing WACD medical benefits for employees among other items.

FY22 Budget Development

Tom Salzer presented the draft Executive Office budget; Jim Brown presented the draft PMC budget. Tom described his approach to budget development and why the draft budget was not balanced. There was a discussion on expenses and what was important for WACD to include in the budget.

Legislative Wrap Up

Ryan Baye looked back on the legislative session and the three WACD goals set by the Board: increased CTA funding, wildfire recovery funding, and supporting the conservation commission's budget. Tom Salzer added his thoughts about being proactive before the next legislative session on some topics.

NACD Fly-In

Ryan Baye reported on the Congressional meetings held in April and May with the Washington State Conservation Partnership. Doug Rushton reported on meetings with federal agency decision-makers. John McLean shared the details of an upcoming meeting with Rep. Newhouse on behalf of CDs in his area.

Time Capsule

Bill Blake proposed the concept of installing a time capsule at the PMC, to be opened when WACD's 99-year lease ended on the property. He answered questions and offered some suggestions of items to include that might encompass the year 2020.

Executive Director Evaluation Process

Jeanette Dorner outlined her proposed process for evaluating WACD's Executive Director, including surveying the board members with technical assistance from Ryan Baye.

Future Board Meetings

Ryan Baye asked for reflections on the new monthly board meeting schedule and potential tweaks to the meeting agendas. He shared his desire to increase discussion and dialogue with levity and to make the meetings more enjoyable. There was discussion about focusing on a single area during a meeting rather than getting snippets of every area.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20.