

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Summary of Motions

March 23, 2026

- **Motion:** Craig Nelson moved to accept the draft agenda with the addition of “Reimbursement Waiver” under the WACD Financials section. Second by John W. Floyd. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Jeff Schibel moved to adopt the consent agenda. Second by Craig Nelson. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Alan Chapman moved to adopt the Treasurer’s Report. Second by Cyndi Schaeffer. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Jeff Schibel moved to grant an exemption to the 30-day limit for reimbursement requests to Amy McKay and Heather Smith for their attendance at the NACD Annual Conference. Second by Cindy Reed. Motion carried with abstentions by Amy McKay and Heathe Smith

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WACD Executive Office – Olympia, WA

Remote Connection through Zoom

March 23, 2026

Board Meeting Minutes

Members Present

Amy McKay, President (Whitman CD)
Jeff Schibel, Vice President (Lincoln County CD)
Elizabeth Bella, Secretary (Underwood CD)
Cyndi Schaeffer, Treasurer (Snohomish CD)
Heather Smith, National Director (Grays Harbor CD)
Alan Chapman, Northwest Area Director (Whatcom CD)
Bruce McDonald, Southwest Area Director (Lewis CD)
Leak Perkel, Southwest Area Director (Clark CD)
John Preston, North Central Area Director (Columbia Basin CD)
John McLean, North Central Area Director (Foster Creek CD)
Cindy Reed, South Central Area Director (North Yakima CD)
John W. Floyd, Northeast Area Director (Pend Oreille CD)
Mary Collins, Southeast Area Director (Palouse CD)
Craig Nelson, Washington Association of District Employees (Okanogan CD)

Others Present

Tom Salzer, WACD Executive Director

Heather Wendt, WACD Deputy Director
John Knox, WACD Director of Nursery Operations
Ryan Baye, WACD Director of Legislative & Membership Services
Becca Hebron, Foster Creek CD District Manager
Kristina Ribellia, Columbia Basin CD Executive Director
Kris Neely, Spokane CD Associate Supervisor

President McKay called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Ryan Baye conducted a roll call of the members present to confirm a quorum.

Public Comment Period

No one from the public wished to speak during the comment period.

Board Agenda

Craig Nelson moved to accept the draft agenda with the addition of “Reimbursement Waiver” under the WACD Financials section. Second by John W. Floyd. Motion carried.

Area Focus

Becca Hebron shared the success of Foster Creek’s Annual Meeting in February, with additional history from the Pearl Hill Fire and the loss of shrub steppe habitat. Becca also shared the importance of the ENABLE Conservation Act to Foster Creek CD, with one of their supervisors traveling to Washington, DC.

Craig Nelson welcomed everyone to Okanogan CD’s April 29 Annual Celebration. He shared information about the event, and answered questions the upcoming Washington State Envirothon Competition in Okanogan County and the increased presence of wolves in the county.

Kristina Ribellia presented highlights from the Columbia Basin Conservation District’s 2025 Impact Report. She including information about John Preston’s fifty years of service as a supervisor and the district’s new Heritage Garden and Salmon Safe programs.

Area Director Introduction

Leah Perkel shared background information about herself working for a local manufacturing company in Clark County as a second year Supervisor with Clark CD.

Consent Agenda

Jeff Schibel moved to adopt the consent agenda. Second by Craig Nelson. Motion carried.

WACD Financials

Cyndi Schaeffer presented on the February financials, with a notice to the board that the reduction in expected sales at the Plant Materials center might mean there would not be available funding to support the Executive Office. Alan Chapman moved to adopt the Treasurer’s Report. Second by Cyndi Schaeffer. Motion carried.

Reimbursement Waiver

Ryan Baye requested that the board adopt a waiver to the 30-day limit for reimbursement, as Heather Smith missed the deadline to submit the paperwork after attending the NACD Annual Conference. Amy McKay shared that she had missed the deadline too, and needed a waiver to the 30-day time limit. There was additional discussion about the current time limit set in policy and the roles and responsibilities between WACD staff and board members. Jeff Schibel moved to grant an exemption to the 30-day limit for reimbursement requests to Amy McKay and Heather Smith for their attendance at the NACD Annual Conference. Second by Cindy Reed. Motion carried with abstentions by Amy McKay and Heather Smith. Tom Salzer informed the board that staff would develop potential policy language changes around the reimbursement process at the next board meeting.

WACD Operations

John Knox shared that conditions at the Plant Materials Center were very wet and it was impacting operations. There was a big trailer headed to Spokane CD next week for the conservation district's plant sale. John shared there had also been a recent tour of the facility by Nelson Treehouses, a TV show about building treehouses.

Tom Salzer updated the board on the progress of the Ways & Means Committee, and detailed how that group was looking into the resolution process and the issues raised at the February meeting.

WACD Committees

Heather Wendt reported on the Sustainable Funding Committee and their examination of different potential tax models, with the next step being to consult and scope the project to get a better sense of the potential work. She answered questions about the funding goals of the committee, the conversations around partnering with other organizations, and the potential paradigm change of independence from other state agency priorities.

WACD Advocacy

Ryan Baye recapped the results from the legislative session on policy and funding changes, and the reduction to the Sustainable Farms & Fields Programs and increase to the Forest Health Funding starting July 1. There was a short discussion about the 2026 election bill and work to be done in the interim before the 2027 session.

Announcements

Elizabeth Bella announced she had won her election at Underwood CD for a term as Supervisor.

Jeff Schibel announced two Washington State Conservation Commission employees had given notice the previous week.

Heather Smith announced she was also the unofficial winner of her election at Grays Harbor CD.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 PM.