

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Summary of Motions

June 15, 2026

- **Motion:** Steve Matsen moved to adopt the meeting agenda with the suggested changes. Second by John Preston. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Jeff Schibel moved to approve the items included in the consent agenda. Second by John Preston. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** John Preston moved to approve the April & May Financials Reports. Second by John McLean. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Cindy Reed moved to add John Knox as a signatory to the Edward Jones account. Second by Alan Chapman. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Craig Nelson moved to authorize a WACD amicus brief and authorize staff to institute WACD's Legal Assistance Fund should it appear this court case presents a potential statewide impact. Second by John McLean. Motion carried.
- **Motion:** Mike Mumford moved to approve the proposed budget with a 2.8% COLA. Second by Craig Nelson. Motion carried on a voice vote.
- **Motion:** Craig Nelson moved to approve moving forward with the Phase 2 proposal from Uncommon Bridges, subject to raising the necessary funds. Second by Leah Perkel. Motion carried with an abstention by Mike Mumford.
- **Motion:** Bruce McDonald moved to authorize the proposed 2027 elections bill. Second by Cindy Reed. Motion carried.

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WACD Executive Office – Olympia, WA

Remote Connection through Zoom

June 15, 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)

Mike Mumford, Past President (Pend Orielle CD)

Alan Chapman, Northwest Area Director (Whatcom CD)
Bruce McDonald, Southwest Area Director (Lewis CD)
Leah 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)
Steve Matsen, South Central Area Director (Eastern Klickitat 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
Lori McLaughlin, WACD Financial Accounting and HR Administrator
Kris Neely, Spokane CD Associate Supervisor
Keith Griswold, USDA-NRSC Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

President Amy McKay called the meeting to order at 5:31. Ryan Baye conducted a roll call to confirm a quorum was present.

Agenda

Heather Wendt asked for two additions to the draft agenda: "Approval of the April Financial Report" under WACD Financials and "Legal Fees to file Amicus Brief" under WACD Operations. Steve Matsen moved to adopt the meeting agenda with the suggested changes. Second by John Preston. Motion carried.

Introduction of WADE President

Craig Nelson informed the board that Alison Crawley from Walla Walla County Conservation District was elected WADE Co-President at last week's WADE Conference. Craig moved to the Past President position and was subbing for Sarah and Alison tonight.

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

Consent Agenda

Jeff Schibel moved to approve the items included in the consent agenda. Second by John Preston. Motion carried.

WACD Financials

Treasurer Cyndi Schaeffer reported on the May Financial Report, highlighting that there were no past due accounts beyond 90 days and forecasted how WACD expected to close out the financial year for both revenue and expenses. John Preston moved to approve the April & May Financials Reports, Second by John McLean. Motion carried.

Heather Wendt briefed the board on the need to John Knox as a signatory to the Edward Jones account, with John taking over Nursery Operations from Jim Brown. Cindy Reed moved to add John Knox as a signatory to the Edward Jones account. Second by Alan Chapman. Motion carried.

Cyndi Schaeffer shared an update of the Finance Committee's plans to review the performance of the Investment Account.

WACD Operations

John Knox shared that seeding was done at the nursery, with a transition in focusing on the growing period and upcoming harvest. WACD PMC staff was working on inventory and mapping, as well as booking contracts. He discussed the PMC's role as a plant broker for the occasional client and the exploration of partnerships with USDA-NRCS and how the PMC could assist wildfire replanting projects.

Keith Griswold was invited to share information about USDA-NRCS programs. He answered questions about the "Joint Chiefs Funds" of USDA-NRCS and the U.S. Forest Service, conservation and agricultural easements, and the hiring of district conservationists for vacant positions.

Ryan Baye presented at the WADE Conference as the WACD staff representative. Amy McKay, Cyndi Schaeffer, and Craig Nelson shared their WADE Conference experiences as well.

Ryan Baye briefed the board on the court case in Clallam County challenging the legality of RCW 89.08.405 and CD rates and charges. He sought authorization from the board for WACD to write an amicus brief in support of the Clallam County and Clallam Conservation District. He also sought authorization to activate the Legal Assistance Fund for Statewide Issues. He answered questions about the timeline of the case, the background of the previous legal challenge in Mason County, and how the Legal Assistance Fund would work. Craig Nelson moved to authorize a WACD amicus brief and authorize staff to institute WACD's Legal Assistance Fund should it appear this court case presents a potential statewide impact. Second by John McLean. Motion carried.

WACD FY27 Budget

Heather Wendt presented the financial assumptions in the budget as an introduction to the conversation. Tom Salzer gave a presentation on the proposed budget, the percentage of the budget that was staff salary and compensation, and the argument in favor of the proposed Cost-of-Living Adjustment. Tom and Heather answered questions about the proposed COLA, the WACD current reserves, WACD's retirement benefits, and history of the WACD PMC generating funds for the organization. Mike Mumford moved to approve the proposed budget with a 2.8% COLA. Second by Craig Nelson. Motion carried on a voice vote.

WACD Governance

Ryan Baye briefed the board on the progress of the adopted resolutions, specifically the resolutions on CREP and the paramount duty of the Conservation Commission. There was a conversation about the May SCC Meeting, the structure of the Commission's Strategic Planning Session, and the questionnaire sent out ahead of time.

Amy McKay shared Brad Bortner was interested in the National Director position, and that Amy planned to appoint him to the vacancy.

WACD Committees

Ryan Baye reported that the Shellfish Practices Work Group had their first meeting and were hoping to incorporate industry representatives.

Heather Wendt reviewed the Phase 2 Sustainable Funding proposal from Uncommon Bridges and a potential timeline. She answered questions about the work being done by Western Washington University, how and when a future decision would be made after the work was done, and potential engagement with legislators. Craig Nelson moved to approve moving forward with the Phase 2 proposal from Uncommon Bridges, subject to raising the necessary funds. Second by Leah Perkel. Motion carried with an abstention by Mike Mumford.

Heather Wendt presented a Ways & Means Committee proposal on the WACD Resolutions process, and the process done by the Montana Association of Conservation Districts. There was a conversation about the ability to extend potential deadlines, the impact on districts that don't meet during some of the summer months, and the need to make the association more effective.

Action on Elections Bill

Ryan Baye proposed an elections bill for the 2027 legislative session based on the Joint Committee on Elections recommendations and previous legislative proposals. Bruce McDonald moved to authorize the proposed 2027 elections bill. Second by Cindy Reed. Motion carried.

Summer Interim Operations

Ryan Baye reminded the board of the planned break in their meeting schedule, with no planned meeting in July or August. He informed them of the staff's plan to send out a monthly report.

Announcements

Ryan Baye announced his engagement.

Steve Matson announced negotiations with Rainmaker were continuing and he expected a contract to be signed very soon.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.