



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

**Board of Directors Meeting
Monday • November 30, 2015
Salon I • DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton Spokane City Center
Spokane, WA**

MOTIONS

- Motion by Eddie Johnson to approve both the minutes and the financial reports as presented; motion received a second; motion passed with one abstention (Doug Rushton, new SW Area Director, due to the fact that he was not present as a board member at the Sept. meeting).
- A motion was made by Dean Longrie to accept the Bylaws Committee report, including proposed bylaws revisions, and send the report on to the membership for consideration. Motion received a second and passed.
- A motion was made by Michael Crowder, to approve the committee assignments of resolutions; motion received a second; motion passed.
- A motion was made by John Preston to approve revised WACD Policy # 2012-007(R2) as presented; motion received a second; motion passed.
- A motion was made by Dave Guenther to change the proposed June 2016 board meeting date to June 21 to avoid a potential conflict with the NRCS Tribal training session. Motion received a second; motion passed.
- A motion was made by Dean Longrie to approve the 2016 Board Meeting Dates (as amended); motion received a second; motion passed.
- A motion was made by Karen Bishop to direct that staff email to WACD board members a brief synopsis of each Executive Committee conference call, and to post a follow-up information table to the WACD website. Motion received a second; motion passed.
- A motion was made by Dave Guenther that the Executive Committee move forward, consistent with guidance from the Board of Directors, and bring recommendations on best options for the Plant Materials Center (PMC), such as LLC or Trust, to the board at its February meeting. Motion received a second; motion passed.

- A motion was made by Dave Guenther that the WACD Executive Director work with NRCS to prepare an agreement for a planned tribal training session in June, 2016, and to distribute a draft to the WACD Board of Directors in advance of the February, 2016 Board meeting for action at that meeting. Motion received a second; motion passed.
- A motion was made by Eddie Johnson to adjourn the meeting; motion received a second; motion passed.

Board of Directors Present

Alan Stromberger, President
 Mark Craven, Vice-President
 David Guenther, Past President
 Wendy Pare, Secretary-Treasurer
 Michael Crowder, National Director
 Jeff Ellingsen, NW Area Director
 Dick Ryon, NW Area Director
 Doug Rushton, SW Area Director
 Dean Longrie, SW Area Director

John Preston, NC Area Director
 Gail Thornton, SC Area Director
 Mark Moore, SC Area Director
 Eddie Johnson, NE Area Director
 Tom Miller, NE Area Director
 Jerry Hendrickson, SE Area Director
 Karen Bishop, WADE President

Board Members Not Present

John McLean, NC Area Director
 (VACANT, SE Area Director)

Others in attendance for all or part of the meeting

Mark Clark, WSCC
 Larry Davis, Whatcom CD
 Monte Marti, Snohomish CD
 Tanna Engdahl, Clark CD
 John Baugher, Clark CD
 David L. Hall, Thurston CD
 Steve DiJulio, Foster Pepper

Roylene Rides at the Door, NRCS
 Ryan Mello, Pierce CD
 Lynn Engdahl, Clark CD
 Tracy Eriksen, Palouse Rock Lake CD
 Roger Wristen, Cascadia CD
 Jim Jesernig, WACD Consultant

WACD Staff Present

Dave Vogel, Executive Director
 Nan Laughton, Administrative Coordinator

President Alan Stromberger called the business meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. There were introductions around the room.

WACD Business

9/22/2015 Draft Board Meeting Minutes – Dave Vogel pointed out the addition, as requested, to the minutes on the bottom of page 4 of statements made by Tom Miller and himself about possible applicability of the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) to activities of the Executive Committee.

October 2015 Financial Report – Wendy reported that 5 conservation districts have not paid their WACD dues. They must do so by tomorrow morning (December 1) to be eligible to vote at the December 2nd WACD business meeting. Wendy also discussed the effect of the Public Records Act lawsuit settlement on the WACD budget. Regarding the PMC situation with the IRS and Edward Jones, she stated that Jim Brown, PMC Farm Manager, is working to set up a conference call between the PMC and representatives with the IRS and Edward Jones to discuss options to resolve the issue.

Motion by Eddie Johnson to approve both the minutes and the financial reports as presented; motion received a second; motion passed with one abstention (Doug Rushton, new SW Area Director, due to the fact that he was not present as a board member at the Sept. meeting).

Nominating Committee Report – Dave Guenther, Chair

Dave Guenther, Nominating Committee Chair, reported that the nominating committee met by conference call to interview candidates for WACD President, Vice-President, National Director and the two candidates for the Conservation Commission's eastern regional seat. The officer candidates are Mark Craven for President, Tom Miller for Vice-President, and Michael Crowder for National Director. So far, there are no candidates for the Secretary-Treasurer position. Larry Davis, Whatcom CD, asked what actions must be taken if no one runs for the Secretary-Treasurer position. Chair Guenther replied that if no one steps up to run (and is elected), then the seat will be vacant and it will be the responsibility of the WACD Board of Directors to appoint a supervisor to the seat.

Dave G. noted that Wendy Pare has agreed to assist WACD further for a period of time if no one steps up; however, she must have an end date if that happens. She has also agreed to assist/train the next treasurer to help him/her become acquainted with the WACD budget and finance process.

Bylaws Committee Report – David Guenther, Chair

Dave G. stated that there are four bylaws-related resolutions assigned to the Bylaws Committee as well as the Committee's proposed changes to the WACD Bylaws. A bylaws revisions document has been emailed to the membership and copies are also available at the registration desk. Dave Vogel explained that if passed, (any of) the four assigned resolutions would take effect in the form of bylaws revisions at the 2016 WACD Annual Meeting. However, changes proposed today to the bylaws, if adopted by the members at Wednesday's Business Meeting, would take effect immediately.

Dave Vogel referred to clarifications proposed to Part VIII, *Executive Committee* in the Bylaws document. As a point of explanation, he stated that as long as the Executive Committee operates at the direction of the Board of Directors, and does not take "action" as defined in statute, then its activities are not covered by the Open Public Meetings Act. The same is true for other WACD Committees. Dave noted that Foster Pepper, WACD legal counsel, assisted in preparation of these proposed bylaws revisions, to ensure that WACD properly addresses this and other issues raised in the PRA lawsuit settlement.

A motion was made by Dean Longrie to accept the Bylaws Committee report, including proposed bylaws revisions, and send the report on to the membership for consideration. Motion received a second and passed.

Assignment of 2015 Area Resolutions to Committee

Dave V. referred to the resolutions committee assignments document in their meeting packet and briefly reviewed the assignments. A motion was made by Michael Crowder, to approve the committee assignments of resolutions; motion received a second; motion passed.

WACD Policies

Dave V. referred to WACD Policy #2012-007(R2) in their meeting materials. He noted the revisions to Part 1, Committee Structure, Executive Committee. These revisions clarify the role of the Executive Committee to administer the business affairs of the Association as directed by the Board of Directors. Revision to Part 2 covers the Bylaws Committee under the committee procedures and operating policy when processing resolutions, and clarifies action on resolutions reported to the general assembly of the Association. A motion was made by John Preston to approve revised WACD Policy # 2012-007(R2) as presented; motion received a second; motion passed.

Dave V. took a moment to express thanks to Tom McKern for agreeing to serve again this year as Parliamentarian at the WACD committee meetings and Business Meeting.

2016 Proposed BoD Meeting Dates

Dave V. referred board members to the schedule of proposed 2016 board of director meeting dates found in their meeting packets. It was noted that two typos needed correction, namely correct the spelling of Blaine and the annual meeting year.

A motion was made by Dave Guenther to change the June, 2016 board meeting date to June 21 to avoid a potential conflict with the NRCS Tribal training session. Motion received a second; motion passed.

A motion was made by Dean Longrie to approve the 2016 Board Meeting Dates (as amended); motion received a second; motion passed.

WACD Legislative Budget Strategy

Dave Vogel and Jim Jesernig described the developing WACD strategy for long-term district funding, together with supervisor elections options (and how these are related). WACD's emphasis continues to begin with a "protect the base; build the base" strategy, that is, protecting against reductions in state operating and capital budget funding while seeking to secure increases in both categories based on conservation services needs and demand from landowners and producers. The strategy recognizes the importance of district supervisors educating their legislators about promises made and promises kept – districts getting results on-time and on-budget with conservation appropriations – and showing legislators and the Governor's office how the demand for district services continues to expand, using specific examples (livestock, stormwater, forest health, etc.) around which a "build the base" increase in funding can be constructed. Several powerful opportunities may exist in these examples upon which to

aggressively “build the base” beginning with the 2017 biennial budget. This will be a critical part of taking the WACD strategy beyond a “protect the base” approach.

The WACD strategy also looks opportunistically at initiatives such as “Big Water” or others relating to water quality, flood control or stormwater, as posing potential for inclusion of significant funding for conservation districts and for collaboration with new partners. Also, continuation of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) provides opportunities to demonstrate landowner need and increased demands for services by districts.

Mr. Jesernig made a presentation about which legislators are specifically expected to be in position to affect decisions about the budget in 2017, and illustrated the “assignments” to be made of districts for contact with these legislators to secure support. (This material was further discussed during the Business Meeting.) District supervisors must be willing to secure a “sign-on” from these legislators for a future budget bill. If district supervisors are unwilling or ineffective in securing this action by legislators, then the WACD campaign will not succeed.

District supervisors will need to make some decisions on the WACD strategy during Wednesday’s Business Meeting and at the 2016 WACD Legislative Days event in February.

Jim advised that, despite departure of a key legislator, supervisor elections reform is expected to continue to play a role in future state budget negotiations – especially if WACD pursues significant funding increases. Supervisors should not expect that WACD commitments in election reform would automatically bear concomitant increases in district funding. Funding increases may demand election concessions; election concessions may not necessarily result in funding increases. The connection between funding and election issues will need to be carefully considered.

Ron Schultz, WSCC, noted that this session (a supplemental budget session) is not the time to go for a bill on new, long-term funding. It is time to build a strategy and a message, show legislators where the needs are, and begin a discussion of ideas on revenue. We will also need to bring in other partners and build coalitions of support.

Jim and Dave Vogel pointed out that it is not our (districts’) need, but rather the landowner’s need, that must be emphasized. We will need the strong support and heavy lifting by our affiliate partners - Farm Bureau, Cattlemen, CAPOW, Wheat Growers, etc., who are our customers and the beneficiaries of what we do.

Dave Vogel also noted that WACD must recognize what districts really care about and what each will be willing to advocate for as part of our campaign. We can no longer ask districts to support and expend effort and precious contact time for a generic budget message for items that the district may not need or care about. Everyone must be willing to work for operating and capital funding that will support the “build the base” approach.

Executive Committee Reporting Procedures

Dave Vogel reported that a brief synopsis of the Executive Committee conference calls has been going out to WACD board members, while the officers track ongoing activities via a brief follow-up table. The follow-up table can now be posted to the WACD website, which makes that information accessible by all districts and members of the general public. Dave asked the board members to decide how they would like this information to be shared. Dean Longrie stated that posting the information on the WACD website allows anyone who wants to know an easy way to find it. Karen Bishop felt that the information should be sent directly to board members and posted to the NACD website so that all have access. Mark Moore agreed on sending the synopsis directly to the board, but added that it should be kept brief. Mark Craven asked if it could be sent to individual supervisors if they want it. Dave V. replied that posting the information to the WACD website would give everyone access to the information. Wade Troutman added that a note should be sent out to all conservation districts reminding supervisors and staff to contact their respective Area Director for information. Jerry Hendrickson agreed, stating that this would put the responsibility back on to the Area Directors as the conduit for information sharing.

A motion was made by Karen Bishop to direct that staff email to WACD board members a brief synopsis of each Executive Committee conference call, and to post a follow-up information table to the WACD website. Motion received a second; motion passed.

Executive Session

At 2:02 p.m., President Alan Stromberger announced that the meeting would enter into executive session for the purpose of hearing from legal counsel on the WACD Legal Assistance Fund and the PMC as LLC/Trust. Mr. Stromberger announced that the executive session will run for thirty minutes. At 2:32 p.m., President Stromberger resumed the general session and announced to the public that the executive session would be extended by 15 minutes. After the executive session (as extended) concluded and the meeting was back in general session, a motion was made by Dave Guenther that the Executive Committee move forward, consistent with guidance from the Board of Directors, and bring recommendations on best options for the Plant Materials Center (PMC), such as LLC or Trust, to the board at its February meeting. Motion received a second; motion passed.

Partner Reports

WADE – Karen Bishop, WADE President

- 2016 WADE Training will be held June 13-15 at Sleeping Lady in Leavenworth. WA.
- Have added back a water and climate track and hoping to bring back a forestry track.
- Thank you to WSCC for \$20K for WADE training scholarships for conservation district supervisors and staff.
- Still working on identifying WADE representative for appointment by WACD to the PMC Administrative Committee.

WSCC – Mark Clark, Director

- Still assessing fire damage (waiting to hear from the Feds).
 - Received \$10M in EQIP funding, but \$20M was needed.
 - Working to simplify and improve the process for landowners to apply for and get assistance.

- Deb Becker resigned her position with WSCC for a position with another employer; she will be dearly missed.
- In the process of hiring for the WSCC VSP position.
- Working on new cooperative agreements with districts for technical assistance, which is resulting in multi-year agreements with some.

NRCS – Roylene Rides at the Door, State Conservationist

- Building on a 5-core partnership with the goal of strengthening the partnership.
- Requested \$4M in EWP and \$6M in EQIP funds for fire recovery, but received very little funding from that request; have enough dollars (\$500K) to get sign-ups started; other states received more funding even though Washington had the most privately-owned acres burned.
- At this point, not concerned that there will be a federal government shutdown.
- Received 175 whole farm plan requests.
- Two programs were not reauthorized in the new Farm Bill and will be repealed, one of those being the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), and all contracts must be completed and closed out in two years.
- Client Gateway, which enables farmers and ranchers to request conservation assistance online, is up and running.

Tribal Outreach Taskforce Training Opportunity

Tanna Engdahl, Chair of the WACD Tribal Outreach Task Force (TOTF), and Roylene Rides at the Door talked about an opportunity for WACD and the TOTF to partner with NRCS on an NRCS tribal training session being planned for June 27-July 1, 2016 at Kiana Lodge in Poulsbo, WA. Roylene extended an invitation to WACD to enter into an agreement with NRCS (100% NRCS funding) to work together on the session.

Based on a conceptual understanding of the role for WACD, Dave Guenther moved that the WACD Executive Director work with NRCS to prepare an agreement for a planned tribal training session in June, 2016, and distribute a draft to the WACD Board of Directors in advance of the February, 2016 Board meeting for action at that meeting. Motion received a second; motion passed.

Adjournment

Dean Longrie thanked out-going President Alan Stromberger for his dedication and leadership as President the past two years. Everyone joined in with a round of applause.

A motion was made by Eddie Johnson to adjourn the meeting; motion received a second; motion passed. The meeting was declared adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Nan Laughton
 WACD Administrative Coordinator
 Recording Secretary