

Washington Association of Conservation Districts
Special Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
WACD Executive Office - Olympia
May 2, 2019

Members Present

Jeanette Dorner, President (Pierce CD)
Javier Lopez, Vice President (South Yakima 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)
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)
Amy McKay, Southeast Area Director (Whitman CD)
Jason Schlee, Southeast Area Director (Asotin County CD)
Renee Hadley, WADE President (Walla Walla County CD)

Others Present

Patricia Hickey, WACD Executive Director
Ryan Baye, Legislative & Membership Assistant
Brynn Brady, WACD Contract Lobbyist

President Jeanette Dorner called the meeting to order at 6:31. She thanked everyone for attending on such short notice and made a technical request to limit the background noise for those on the conference line by putting yourself on mute when not wanting to speak.

Roll Call

Legislative & Membership Assistant Ryan Baye conducted a roll call and confirmed a quorum was present.

Update on Final Results of the 2019 Legislative Session

Jeanette prefaced this agenda item that she thought WACD and conservation districts did really well and that she was proud of the results that were seen.

Executive Director Patricia Hickey shared how early the planning of this legislative session started and how large a group were involved in that process. She outlined how WACD would check hold weekly calls with the WACD Long Term Funding Work Group as well as with the legislative team of the conservation partnership. Patricia also met with almost all of the

legislators on the House and Senate's natural resource policy committees and most of the legislators on fiscal committees as well. She relayed she had nothing but great conversations about the budget and WACD's priorities with Representatives and Senators. WACD staff was constantly outreaching to legislators and getting CDs engaged to help with that as well. Patricia was really impressed with how engaged and responses the districts were, and how WACD tried to always draft suggested language for folks to make communicating with their legislators as easy as possible.

Patricia also reported on how the legislative team did their best when the Operating and Capital Budgets came out in the House and Senate, and the short deadlines to try convincing legislators to offer amendments to add funding back in for Conservation Commission programs. In the House, Rep. Steele from the 12th District offered an amendment adding CTA into the Operating Budget that was voted down on a party line vote in the Appropriations Committee, but a lower figure was added into the budget later passed by the House. She identified Democratic legislators to work with in the interim.

In the Senate, Patricia reported a bipartisan push for the Commission's Shellfish and Natural Resource Investments. She highlighted how everyone pulled through despite very limited time. She felt really positive and heard multiple times during WACD Legislative Days that districts felt their legislators really valued their local conservation districts.

Brynn Brady added additional information regarding the last couple days of session and conducted a slight budget breakdown. There was concern debate around the school levy lift would push everything into special session but the vote to adjourn occurred at five minutes to midnight. There will be a \$52.1 billion budget with approximately \$2 billion of that being tax increases. Brynn also listed several of the taxes that will go into effect.

Brynn also reiterated the operating and capital budget wins for conservation districts and how significant they were during a session with very expensive other legislative priorities. She stressed how significant it was to create a new program for CTA, since that money will be an assumed budget item forward. Brynn agreed how the work this year was a win, and how engaging with legislators was very important. She had nothing but positive meetings when talking about conservation districts and WACD. She pivoted to interim planning, requesting districts with new legislators invite them on project tours and how to build on this year's successes for the next biennium.

Jeanette thanked Patricia and Brynn for their work, and without any questions from the Board explained the phone number for the executive session.

Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (f) & (g):

The Board of Directors went into Executive Session from 7:01 to 8:03.

Ryan Baye took role to ensure a quorum was still present.

Jeanette thanked everyone for handling the technology challenges during the meeting.

Process for this year's performance evaluation of the WACD Executive

Jeanette made sure the board had seen her memo of her proposed process and reminded that the evaluation forms are not the final versions, just example documents.

Javier Lopez moved to approve the proposed process as sent to the Board with the exception of any adjustments suggested by potential legal counsel. Second by Sarah Richards.

Doug Rushton offered a friendly amendment to clarify in the motion what date the proposal was sent and its title so it is very clear what is referenced. The amendment was accepted by Javier and Sarah and now reads:

Javier Lopez moved to approve the proposed process as sent to the Board on May 1st in a memo titled "Proposal for WACD Director Performance Evaluation process May – June 2019" with the exception of any adjustments suggested by potential legal counsel. Second by Sarah Richards.

John Keatley asked if Jeanette planned to send information out to all the supervisors and district managers so there is one message sent to the association rather than being relayed by Area Directors? He felt one communique would be appropriate.

Doug supported that, believing it would give people a heads up.

Javier agree that it should be one unified voice. Would charge the area directors to go out and solidify that voice.

Sarah asked for clarification of what Javier meant.

Javier replied that he meant that Area Directors could check in with either the board chair and/or the district managers in their area. And maybe going to one of their meetings in the near future.

John Keatley shared that some Directors won't be able to go to all their CDs' board meetings in a timely fashion, would ask Jeanette language to the communique encouraging folks to contact their area directors.

Jeanette shared her belief that folks going out to board meetings that they are representing, and a phone call to the chair and/or manager to check in is also valuable and appropriate. She has been working on clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the area directors, but that was a different conversation for another meeting.

She also was considering an email with a cover letter explaining the process and an attached survey for those wanting to take part in the performance evaluation.

Sarah asked what the timeline was for this communique if input was still needed for the content of the survey and expressed that it would be a very difficult timeline.

Jeanette agreed and offered to send something out in the next couple days and this survey later later.

Amy McKay agreed it was a good idea and let people know what is coming down the pipe.

John McLean asked that every supervisor and district should receive a copy of the evaluation form.

Unanimous vote on the motion.

Jeanette asked board members to send her a message if you want to serve on the performance evaluation committee. She couldn't promise membership since the committee size needed to be less than a quorum of the board, but would try to keep everyone who asks in mind. She also welcomed questions or suggestions in the next couple days if people had time to look at the example survey and also suggesting who the survey should be sent to.

John McLean asked about including partners in the survey.

Jeanette agreed there would be a partnership survey and explained how last year the Executive Committee did different surveys for CD supervisors and managers, close partners, and WACD staff.

Doug thanked Jeanette for the work done on this, that is seen is an iceberg effect.

John Keatley asked if there was an intent to talk with legislative committee chairs.

Jeanette replied that would part of the feedback for the committee to consider.

Jeanette asked everyone to wish Past President Mark Craven a happy birthday a day early.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23.