

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
NORTH SANTIAM WATERSHED COUNCIL**

The Board of Directors met on March 11, 2021 via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Suzette Boudreaux. The NSWC mission was read, and introductions followed.

Directors Present: Suzette Boudreaux (Little North Fork Subbasin Representative - President); Brad Nanke (City of Salem Representative - Secretary); Jan Irene Miller (Lower North Santiam Representative, Past President); John Caruso (Marion County Representative - Treasurer); Kathy Bridges (At-Large); Woody Jackson (Breitenbush Subbasin Representative)
Brent Stevenson (Irrigation District – Vice President) - Absent

NSWC Staff Present: Rebecca McCoun, Executive Director

Technical Advisors: Brandin Hilbrant (City of Salem); Deb Paul (Linn SWCD), Lawrence Schwabe (Grand Ronde Tribe)

General Members & Guests Present: Amy Borba

Announcements

Discussion about a chicken farming operation near the river.

Board Business

Approval of draft January 2021 Minutes

Motion by Kathy Bridges to approve the February 2021 minutes; second by John Caruso. Motion passed unanimously.

Grand Ronde Tribe LOS Request

Lawrence Schwabe presented the request for a Letter of Support for 80 acres of riverfront property just below Chahalpam. There is one mile of riverfront and one mile along Hatch Channel. This is a good rearing habitat for both listed and non-listed species. It is all riparian habitat and is all in the floodplain. They want to do some native planting to shade out invasive weeds and do some invasive treatment as well. Motion by Suzette to approve the LOS; second by Brad. Motion passed unanimously. They will do a presentation on their work this spring or summer.

Employee Hire Process

Brent, Rebecca, Woody, and Suzette will interview candidates (5). Rebecca will send out a Doodle Poll and draft questions. Motion by Suzette to have Rebecca and Ad-hoc committee settle on the finalists and present to the full board for a decision; second by Brad. Motion passed unanimously.

Employee Handbook

Reviewed modifications made by Rebecca. Discussion on PTO vs sick/vacation leave. Rebecca will send modifications for this section with other WC practices.

Committees Discussion

Suzette had simplified the committee structure to an Executive Committee and a joint Finance/Fund-raising Committee. Discussion on fund-raising efforts and efforts with United Way. After further discussion by the board regarding the reasoning behind only having two committees a vote was put forth. A motion by Suzette to have two committees: An Executive Committee and a joint Finance/Fund-raising Committee; second by Brad. Motion passed with Kathy voting “nay”, but after further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Suzette for Rebecca to be able to hire staff as appropriate; second by Brad. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Update

Rebecca presented the Executive Director Update (see Attachment 1)

Brad made a motion to approve the draft budget; seconded by Jan Irene. Motion passed unanimously.

Amy Borba will start next Monday.

New Items

Other Business

Woody inquired as to whether we have bare-root plants ordered for next year. Rebecca indicated that we have some on order, but full orders need to be in by June. We are looking at free plant event next year with BEF.

Adjournment & Next Meeting Date

The meeting was adjourned by President Boudreaux at 7:45 p.m.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 8, 2021.

Signature _____ Date: _____

Attachment 1

North Santiam Watershed Council

Executive Director Update

March 11, 2021

City of Salem Post Wildfire Funding

Funding native grass seed and plant material

City has approved allowing funds to be spent beyond 6-30-21 as long as the intent is the same to help prevent erosion and protect water.

OWEB 2021-2023 Council Support Grant

Submitted our 2021-2023 Council Support Grant application 3/10/21.

Funding amount has not yet been determined. We used the last cycles funding amount of \$122,900 to create budget. I used our adopted 2021-2022 budget to create the request amount by category. We will have an opportunity to update this in June/July 2021.

United Way Proposed Budget

Fund 1 full time person, 1 part time person, assist funding ED position, cover employee costs (computer, software, phone, etc.).

New Shared OWEB Grants Awarded

Regional OWEB Beaver Technical Assistance and Stakeholder Engagement Grants were awarded:

Technical Assistance Grant

Application Description Major declines in beaver populations and dams in the 18th and 19th centuries caused extraordinary damage to watershed ecosystems, including aquatic habitats. This damage has been compounded by a host of other anthropogenic impacts, including development and worsening climate conditions. Restoring beaver populations and habitats where appropriate, implementing mitigation strategies where conflict occurs, and mimicking dam-building activities can help address legacy impacts while providing a cascade of ecosystem benefits to prepare against future disturbance. Overwhelming support exists among researchers, agencies, and restoration/conservation organizations to develop a social-ecological road map for promoting beaver and their dams. In response, Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) and the Luckiamute (LWC), Mary's River (MWRC), and North Santiam Watershed Councils (NSWC) have formed the Mid-Willamette Beaver Partnership (MWBP) to leverage that support through paired Technical Assistance (TA) and Stakeholder Engagement (SE) proposals. These basins, covering parts of Marion, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, and Polk counties, are host to ESA-listed Chinook and winter steelhead and a wide array of beaver-dependent

fish and wildlife species. **The TA grant would support: 1) fine-scale beaver habitat assessment and prioritization of key locations for restoration through the Beaver Restoration Assessment Tool (BRAT) and extensive field verification; 2) development of beaver management plans and restoration and conservation strategies for at least two reaches for each watershed council that integrates results from the assessment, SE project, and feedback from regional experts; 3) sharing results and process with partners, stakeholders and other restoration practitioners to advance beaver-focused restoration efforts across Oregon. Project partners beyond the MWBP include Utah State University (USU), NOAA, ODFW, USFWS, BLM and USFS.**

Stakeholder Engagement Grant

Application Description Major declines in beaver populations and dams in the 18th and 19th centuries caused extraordinary damage to watershed ecosystems, including aquatic habitats. This damage has been compounded by a host of other anthropogenic impacts, including development and worsening climate conditions. Restoring beaver populations and habitats where appropriate, implementing mitigation strategies where conflict occurs, and mimicking dam-building activities can help address legacy impacts while providing a cascade of ecosystem benefits to prepare against future disturbance. Overwhelming support exists among researchers, agencies, and restoration/conservation organizations to develop a socio-ecological road map for promoting beaver and their dams. In response, Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) and the Luckiamute (LWC), Mary's River (MWRC), and North Santiam Watershed Councils (NSWC) have formed the Mid-Willamette Beaver Partnership (MWBP) to leverage that support through paired Technical Assistance (TA) and Stakeholder Engagement (SE) proposals. These basins, covering parts of Marion, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, and Polk counties, are host to ESA-listed Chinook salmon and winter steelhead and a wide array of beaver-dependent fish and wildlife species. **The SE grant would support: 1) in-depth opinion research about beavers through a survey, interviews, and focus groups to learn from various stakeholder perspectives; 2) development of a "beaver response" protocol and audience-specific messaging, materials, and an engagement plan based on input from the research phase; 3) implementation of the Phase I engagement plan to recruit landowners in priority geographies identified through the TA process; and 4) sharing results and lessons with partners, stakeholders, and other restoration practitioners to advance beaver-focused restoration efforts across Oregon. Additional project partners include ODFW, NOAA, USFWS, BLM, USFS, OSU Extension, Freshwaters Illustrated, and Benton County.**

Equity Diversity & Inclusion – Mid Valley River Connections

Luckiamute WC contracted Maria Wright to help the 5 councils with DEI work. A subcommittee has been created to help guide the process. Over the next year we will work with Maria to explore EDI.

Sent out scope of work to board today.

Planting Season & Events

Held planting event on 2/20/21 and on 3/6/21 & 3/7/21. Getting last batches of plants out Friday & Saturday.

Kira Waldman with BEF drafted a nice article highlighting the event. She came out and interviewed landowners, took photos and helped with the plant distribution.

We had amazing volunteers from Marion SWCD staff, Luckiamute Watershed landowners, Locals: Woody, Grady McMahan, Brandin Hilbrandt.

Jim Quirring, Shawn Morford, Amy Borba, John Caruso, and Woody Jackson helped on March 6 & 7th.

Woody Jackson took left over trees up to Gates Bridge E. Will find homes for those he doesn't use.

When complete we will have distributed approx. 39k plants to over 130 landowners.

Up Next: Native Grass Seed Distribution – next few weeks.

Public Presentations:

I provided a presentation on the post wildfire efforts today 3/11/21 for the Mid-Willamette Valley Sustainability Networking Lunch group.