

SPOKANE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
4422 E 8th Ave, Spokane Valley, WA 99212
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Attendees

Supervisors in person: Vice Chair Tom Miller, Treasurer Jaki Shrauger, Wendy Knopp

Absent: Chair Randy James

Associate Supervisors: Sara Schlake and Scott Noble

SCD Staff: Vicki Carter, Cori Turntine, Hilary Gonzalez, Jess Brown, Garth Davis, Walt Edelen, Amber Ramirez, Ben Petersen, Matt Stewart, Jeff Cunningham

Visitors: Stephanie Zurenko, citizen of Spokane County and Jerry Scheele (attending by phone)

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was a hybrid of on-site and remote attendees using the Microsoft Teams app to connect the participants.

Vice Chair Tom Miller called the meeting to order at 4:00PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes/Treasurer's Report

Acceptance of Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda was previously distributed. The board accepted the Consent Agenda items consisting of:

- April 9, 2024, Board Agenda
- Mar 12, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- April 2024 Payables Report

Motion Knopp/Shrauger to accept the Consent Agenda, including the April payables Report for \$89,687.25. Motion carried.

New Business/Linkage to Community

Public Comments: None

Governance Culture

Garth Davis presented Amber Ramirez with a Quarry Stewardship Award for her hard work and accomplishments with the SCD. Ramirez has accepted a position with the City of Spokane's Urban Forestry Department to manage their \$6M US Forest Service grant.

Ty Meyer shared that the district was presented with the Pisces Award from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Center for Infrastructure Financing Authorities at a recent conference in Washington DC. Meyer shared that the SCD was nominated for our work with the Farmed Smart Certification and Direct Seed Loan Program by the Washington State Department of Ecology; the district was one of the five entities who were chosen to receive this prestigious award.

WSCC Report:

Baden was unable to attend; however, Carter reported on the recent WSCC district manager's meeting in Yakima, in which new funding and programming under the commission's jurisdiction were discussed. In addition, annual planning, goals, and long-range planning were topics of interest.

Financial Report:

Turntine discussed the State Auditor's Office financial intelligence tool (FIT Tool) that was a topic at the WSCC management meeting. This month's SAO newsletter highlighted conservation districts in conjunction with the financial intelligence tool, so Turntine wanted the board to be familiar with the information included within the tool.

Turntine reviewed the district's budget position as of the end of March, with the total revenue reported as \$1.6M and expenditures at \$2.0M. This month's expenditures included tree sale expenses, a large contract payment, several loans being issued, and equipment purchases. We have nearly \$600,000 in grant vouchers outstanding, and overall, our budget position for 2024 is still on track.

Spring Board Tune-up Schedule

The scheduled board tune-up session that had been scheduled for April was cancelled. It was noted that the annual board planning session is scheduled for August 6th, and after discussion, decided that this will remain the single planning session.

Director's Report

Carter reported that tenant improvements have begun in the Aspen building. Carter is working on office space leases for Broadlink (3), the WSCC (4), and Four Roots (2), which leaves two offices available for lease.

Capital Campaigning for the SHMK continues. The budget and build out for the SHMK was reviewed line by line and items were removed to keep costs down for the build out, which is estimated at \$3.4M. Carter reports that our legal counsel is working on a contract with Four Roots for managing the SHMK and revenue share.

Carter noted that she and Turntine met with Joe Davis from Enduris, our insurance provider, regarding visitors and liability on the SCD Campus. We were assured that all employees are covered under the district's policy, and waivers are being provided by Davis to be used in the future if needed.

Carter reported that the riparian planting structure, which was proposed to be built on the top of the property, will instead be moving down to the main part of the Campus. The Spokane Valley Fire Department had requested a hardening of the road, a turnaround, widening of the gate, five parking spots, and more, which would limit our planting space and give the area a commercial retail look that we want to avoid.

Carter shared that she is expecting a letter this month detailing the \$975K WA Commerce grant awarded to the district for fire recovery efforts. Once we have this, we can move forward with disbursement. Davis, program manager of our Forestry department, shared that he has been keeping a list of landowners affected.

Election Update

Turntine announced that Wendy Knopp is the official winner of the SCD's 2024 board supervisor election. Ballots were counted by the Spokane County Auditor's office, and the results will be finalized at the WSCC's May meeting.

The resolution number AD 040924 was read in full and explained. In summary, the resolution states that the WSCC acknowledges the resignation of SCD board member Jerry Scheele, and that after conducting interviews of four candidates, have appointed Randy James to fill the unexpired,

appointed term previously held by Jerry Scheele. In turn, the SCD acknowledges the vacancy of the elected position previously held by Randy James, appointing Tom Miller and Wendy Knopp as the interview committee to fill this vacancy. Interviews are to be held between May 17th – 23rd, with Miller and Knopp making their recommendation of an appointed board supervisor to the board at the regularly scheduled June 11th board meeting.

Motion Shrauger/Knopp to adopt resolution number AD 040924. Motion carried.

The proposed Electronic Signature policy was disbursed to the board, reviewed, and discussed.

Motion Knopp/Shrauger to approve the Electronic Signature policy as written. Motion carried.

The proposed Award and Recognition policy was disbursed to the board and reviewed, discussed, and amended.

Motion Schrauger/Knopp to accept the Award and Recognition policy as amended. Motion carried.

The updated Direct Seed loan application was disbursed to the board. The loan application was reviewed and discussed. Notable changes included a revision to the board signatures authorized and required. Previously, applications for loans in excess of \$100,000 or loan portfolios more than \$300,000 required signature by the board chair. It was recommended that this approval be limited to loans in excess of \$100,000. It was also recommended that the board position that sits on the loan committee be an authorized signer on loan applications and all loan documents.

Motion Knopp/Shrauger to approve the modified changes to the Spokane Conservation District's loan application as presented.

Staff Reports

Turntine provided a few highlights from the operations department, noting that the district is wrapping up our biennial asset inventory. Additionally, Turntine, Cunningham, and Ross put together a procurement and bidding presentation for SCD staff, and an employee with the Pend Oreille CD. Turntine is also creating a Smartsheet for grant onboarding to streamline the information, reporting, and more.

Davis provided a Forestry department update, sharing that the team has been busy with the Tree Sale, and that the Firewise campaign has kicked off, resulting in a renewed interest in the community.

Gonzalez shared that over the last month she has been working on several projects, including the Firewise marketing campaign, the natural resources apprenticeship program flyer and its promotion, tree sale, Production Ag Farm & Field Days, and social media to showcase our water resources projects. Gonzalez noted that the seventh season of the Rocks to Roots podcast has been launched with several exciting guests, and that the Expo 50th Anniversary begins May 4th.

Meyer announced information about the upcoming Regenerative Ag Farm Tours, featuring Ray Archuleta and Alejandro Carillo. The tour is starting in Madras, OR on June 11th, continuing to

Pilot Rock, OR June 12th, then on to Royal City, WA June 13th, concluding with a two-day conference in Colton, WA.

Edelen reported that three long-term seasonal employees have been hired for the water resources department. Interviews will be continuing over the next couple of weeks for short-term seasonal employees. He shares that over \$3M dollars' worth of projects will be awarded to the water resources team this season.

Close of Meeting

Correspondence & Announcements

Meyer shares the Washington State EPA Region 10 would like to hold a ceremony to honor our Pisces Award, tentatively scheduled for October in Wenatchee.

Carter is working with the Washington State Conservation Commission on lease agreements to be able to move their office spaces to the Aspen building.

Carter has been invited to be a keynote speaker and hold a breakout session for the Montana Association of Conservation Districts at their conference in Great Falls on November 19-21st.

Knopp updated the board on the most recent loan committee meeting, identifying action items SCD is working on.

Reading of the Motions

Brown read the motions.

Motion Knopp/Shrauger to accept the Consent Agenda, including the April payables Report for \$89,687.25. Motion carried.

Motion Shrauger/Knopp to adopt Resolution Number 040924. Motion carried.

Motion Knopp/Shrauger to approve the Electronic Signature Policy as written.

Motion Schrauger/Knopp to accept the Award and Recognition policy as amended.

Motion Knopp/Shrauger to approve the modified changes to the Spokane Conservation District's loan application as presented.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.
Respectfully submitted by Jess Brown.

Tom Miller, Vice Chair

Jaki Shrauger, Treasurer