

SPOKANE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
4422 E 8th Ave, Spokane Valley, WA 99212
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, October 10, 2023

Attendees

Supervisors in person: Chair Randy James, Tom Miller, Jaki Shrauger

Attending by phone: Jerry Scheele, Wendy Knopp

Absent: None

Associate Supervisors: None

SCD Staff: Vicki Carter, Cori Turntine, Hilary Sepulveda, Jess Brown, Jeff Cunningham, Garth Davis, Amber Ramirez

Visitors: Sara Schlake, Rain Forest Alliance, and Scott Noble, Friend of the Quarry, who attended via Microsoft Teams

Opening of Meeting

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

Chair Randy James called the meeting to order at 04:00pm 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:

- August 15, 2023, Board Agenda
- July 11, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- July 2023 Treasurer's Report
- August 2023 Payables Report

Motion Knopp/Miller to accept the Consent Agenda, including the September Payables Report for \$306,694.55. Motion carried.

Shrauger verified that the financial accounts matched the bank statements.

New Business/Linkage to Community

Public Comments: None

Governance Culture

WSCC Report: None

Financial Report:

Turntine initiated the first draft of the budget proposal for 2024 which will evolve over the next couple of months. She has been working with department managers to determine grant activity and anticipated staffing and vehicle needs for 2024. The proposal included leases in the Aspen building and adjusted figures of basic expenses like fuel, insurance, and Campus development. Turntine removed grants and other funding, such as equipment sales, that will not be applicable in 2024. The next budget proposal will be shared with the Board in November, with the final 2024 iteration proposed in December.

For our current budget position, Turntine highlighted interest earnings on our money market account were nearly ten thousand dollars in September. She also noted that two million dollars was shifted into a 17-month CD earning five and a half percent in interest.

Director's Report

Carter shared that in the month of September the district held three open houses, inviting elected officials and the public to tour the campus and learn about our programs, including the Scale House Market and Kitchen permanent farmer's market. There was a great turnout and support at each open house.

Carter provided an update on the event center, sharing that the space fitting and construction drawings have been completed by the architect firm, and plans have been turned over to a construction contractor to provide an estimate on the build out.

The SCD Strategic Summit was held on Sept 20th and 21st to reevaluate the campus masterplan and future goals. Partners, the public, and elected officials were invited to the two-day event.

The conservation district, in affiliation with the American Farmland Trust, hosted a Veteran Women of the Land conference at the end of September. Access to land, overcoming obstacles, self-care, and human dynamics were some of the topics that were addressed, which were well-received.

Carter shared that the branding and logo for the Scale House Market and Kitchen is complete. Sponsorship packages are being curated to support the district's efforts in raising one million dollars in capital funds from local corporations, food suppliers, and community members.

The district received the results of the Department of Retirement Services (DRS) compliance audit, initially intended to be only a learning audit. They determined that two employees from the VOTF program are eligible for DRS benefits due to their employee type classification, and DRS is requesting a substantial payback from both the employees and district, dating from their first day of employment. The district has sixty days to dispute the audit findings, which Carter intends to do, based on the differing funding sources and employee positions when the VOTF program began.

Staff Reports

Cunningham noted that The Nest had two uncovered window wells that were a safety hazard, so a company was resourced to weld window well grates to address this concern.

Sepulveda shared that Farm and Food Symposium is underway and programming has been finalized. She shared that she and Meyer previewed the film, "Common Ground" and they would like to include this in the conference and are working with producers for permission.

She noted that the logo for the Scale House Market and Kitchen has been finalized and is pleased with the strong, community-minded logo and will be working on creating collateral marketing materials.

Davis provided a forestry department update, stating that the month of September was filled with post-fire assessments, connecting those in need with resources that are available now, and compiling data to be used in the future. Landowners affected by the Oregon and Gray Fires have received twenty pounds of seed from DNR for erosion control. Davis stressed that the forestry department will be conducting post-fire assessments from the Oregon and Gray fires over the next year and that a long-term strategy is needed as some landowners are still reeling from the loss of their homes and are not ready to tackle rehabilitating their land. Carter would like she and Davis to collaborate on assistance plans, both present and long-term, as she has a meeting with Senator Schoessler on October 27th to discuss funding packages.

Brown reported that she and Turntine attended a record keeping workshop at Eastern Washington University hosted by the Washington State Archives department on September 14th. She also stated that she will be assisting with CPDS data management, and cross training in grant vouchering.

Turntine shared that we recently had a loan committee meeting and expressed that many great ideas came from the meeting, including a new way to report loans to the board, establishing a modest loan origination fee, and going live with DocuSign, which will expedite our process and keep sensitive information more secure.

Chair James asked Scott Noble and Sara Schlake if they would like to become Associate Supervisors of the Spokane Conservation District. Noble and Schlake both concurred and a motion was made to recognize their status.

Motion Miller/Shrauger to acknowledge Sarah Schlake and Scott Noble as Associate Supervisors.
Motion carried.

Close of Meeting

Correspondence & Announcements

The Small Business Development Center is holding their open house and ribbon cutting ceremony on Oct 26th beginning at 3:30pm and we are encouraged to attend in support of our long-term tenants.

The NE Area Meeting is scheduled for October 18th in Pend Oreille; please let Carter know if you intend on attending for registration purposes.

Carter shared that the WACD Meeting is November 28-30th in Wenatchee and asked the Board to let her know if any members plan to attend.

The district's Farm and Food Symposium will be held on November 15-16th at CenterPlace in Spokane Valley. Tickets are anticipated to sell out, and all Supervisors are welcome to attend.

Reading of the Motions

Brown read the motions.

Motion Knopp/Miller to accept the Consent Agenda, including the September Payables Report for \$306,694.55. Motion carried.

Motion Miller/Shrauger to acknowledge Sarah Schlake and Scott Noble as Associate Supervisors. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Brown.

Randy James, Chair

Tom Miller, Vice Chair