



Soil and Water Conservation Commission Minutes

DATE	LOCATION	START TIME	END TIME
November 2, 2022	Agate Beach Inn, 2019 North Coast Hwy, Newport, OR 97365	1:30 PM	4:30 PM

CHAIR	COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT	ABSENT
Barbara Boyer	Al Hrynyshyn, Jerry Ward, Stan Dean, Tim Kern, Ken Bailey, and Jim Bob Collins (via Teams)	None

Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Staff Present

Marganne Allen, Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)/Water Quality Manager; Eric Nusbaum, SWCD Operations Specialist; Karin Stutzman, SWCD Program Lead; Sandi Hiatt, SWCD Grants Administrator; Jim Johnson, Land Use/Water Planning Coordinator; Rob Hibbs, Water Quality Specialist; Renita McNaughtan, SWCD/Water Quality Administrative Specialist

Advisors Present

Jan Lee, Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD)

Visitors

Whitney Collins Baker Valley SWCDs District Manager; PK Melethil Clackamas Associate Director; Dean Moberg Tualatin SWCD Director; Mike Guebert East Multnomah SWCD Director; Kathy Wheeler SWCD; Chris Farrar Director Clatsop SWCD; Pauline Executive Director SWCD; Tom Straughan Umatilla County SWCD Director; Joan Zuber Clackamas SWCD Director : Morgan Neil Outreach Coord Polk SWCD; Nancy Hamilton Executive Director East Multnomah SWCD; Pryor Garnett Polk SWCD Director; Cassie Wheeler SWCD; Holly Crosson Executive Director Benton SWCD; John Bell; Terri Preeg Riggsby West Multnomah SWCD Director

Welcome and Introductions

The regular quarterly meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm by Chair Barbara Boyer on November 2, 2022.

Re-appoint Incumbent SWCC Member – Jim Bob Collins

Marganne Allen recognized the reappointment and continued service of Jim Bob Collins.

SWCC History of Director Eligibility – Stan Dean

Stan Dean presented a history of the SWCD director eligibility. He presented four options for the commission to consider in moving forward:

- Option 1. Status Quo – do nothing.
- Option 2. Eliminate land-based requirements for any positions. Retain zones to represent different areas within the boundaries of the districts. Retain two at-large directors.
- Option 3. Same as Option 2 but only applied to select SWCDs.
- Option 4. Flexibility for all Districts:

- Districts have a choice of several different director eligibility options.
- Retain zones and at-large

Public Comment

Robin Vora, director Deschutes SWCD –his opinion of director eligibility is unfair when his district is full of irrigation districts...

Whitney Collins, Baker County SWCDs, opposed to changing anything as well as opening the statute. Current statute is open to interpretation; opening the statute would require hiring an attorney.

Chris Farrar, Clatsop SWCD Director – agrees with Robin Vora’s comments. Process needs to be opened. All SWCDs should have the same selection process and not vary. More issues than large farms. Most developing farms have been small farms; many less than five acres and are specialty farms.

P K Melethil – stipends are made to directors but not to associate directors. Take a position that all directors should be treated the same.

Terri Priggs-Griggsby – represents board of West Multnomah SWCD – survey that went out to collect information of opinions was confusing, and the results may not have been as accurate as they should have been. Difficult to find people that are eligible and able to serve. Already boards with long-standing vacancies. Taxation without representation – all the districts use public dollars. Add an option that is very simple – live in the zone where are you running for a position.

Joan Zuber, director, Clackamas SWCD – people who serve on board who do not own 10 acres. It should be kept the way it is.

Dean Moberg, Tualatin SWCD director –his opinion – in favor of doing away with the 10-acre requirements.

Mike Guebert, East Multnomah director– his opinion - small districts have troubles finding people to run as well. Own 9.82 acres but managed over 200 acres.

Jan Lee, speaking as a Board Member of OACD – survey was to be discussed with their district board members. Opposed to districts with tax bases treated differently than those without.

Ken Matson, director Klamath SWCD – leave it as it is. Do not think it is broken, especially in his county. However, he could be swayed to go with Option 3.

Pryor Garnett – director Polk SWCD – personal remarks – land-based requirements seem to require directors to have some experience. He thinks that directors should have some experience with soil and water.

Public Comment period ended. 2:32pm

Approval of Minutes

Draft minutes of the February 2022 work session meeting was presented for approval. A motion was made by Tim Kerns to approve the minutes of the February 2022 work session with no changes or corrections. Seconded by Jerry Ward. Motion passed unanimously. Draft minutes of the August 2022 work session meeting and quarterly meeting were presented for approval. A motion was made by Tim Kerns to approve the minutes of the August 2022 work session and quarterly meeting, with no changes or corrections. Seconded by Al Hrynshyn. Motion passed unanimously.

Commission Deliberation

Stan Dean noted that districts in his area is keeping the land based is an adequate proxy. Some indicate that let the districts determine what they want. He feels that the districts should be able to decide for themselves.

Al Hrynshyn thinks it should be all or nothing. If you own land, any size should be good.

Ken Bailey this is a no-win position. There shouldn’t be any requirements. Opposed to having each district decide on their own what they want to do. This is set up as an Oregon statute and all districts should be the same. If a change is going to be made, he would go with Option 1 as the safest option.

Jim Bob Collins – SWCDs don’t create rules, we work with conservation. You should be able to fill positions by attending meetings. Stay with Option 1 or run for an At Large position...

Tim Kerns – this issue is getting more complicated the longer we talk about it.

Jerry Ward – need to be sensitive to resident HOAs, ... represent various districts to the ODA. Would support Option 3. Leave it up to the individual district. Keep the zones.

Barbara Boyer – her thoughts are she believes strongly in land ownership, but if you sit on a Cherry Growers Commission, you must be a cherry grower, etc. Administratively?

Marganne Allen – more complex will be more administratively complexity.

Ken Bailey – didn't see a real consensus in the survey. The commission doesn't have consensus. His recommendation is Option 1. If anyone wants to go to the legislature, then we deal with what happens.

Stan Dean – opening it up to the legislature is a real concern. Do SWCDs belong in statute? Why do we need the government agencies? We need to be very careful. Recognize that if individual districts want to go to the legislature, the statute will be opened.

Jim Bob Collins – We don't have any power to make a ruling, we are just making a recommendation.

Marganne - bills to the legislature – POP - too late now, however. Or ask someone else to carry the bill, but it may be too late to do it now. The only way it could happen now is if a legislator wanted to use one of their (two) emergency bills to carry to the legislature. This is a recommendation only. It is at the discretion of the Director of the agency whether this would go forward.

Barbara Boyer – not hearing consensus at all. The more complicated we make it, and the confirmation at the dept level and the county clerk's level, we are going to start getting charged. There is optional that each district will be charged if it gets complicated. We have done the work that we were here to do unless she hears from her fellow commissioners we are at a stalemate.

Tim Kerns – report in the record that Stan reported if anyone wants to know what our position is.

Marganne Allen – wanted to present a scenario – hearing what is being said about a consensus – what if somebody drops a bill?

Chair Boyer – took a roll call of the commission members:

Ken Bailey – **Option 2.**

Stan Dean – Flexibility option for districts. Option 4 too complicated; **somewhere between Option 3 & 4.**

Jerry Ward – originally stated support of Option 3 but would support **Option 1** now.

Jim Bob Collins – Option 3 is reasonable but going with **Option 1.**

Al Hrynshyn – **Option 3**, with districts able to make self-determination.

Tim Kerns – really torn, somewhere between Option 3 and 4; but sticking with **Option 1** for now.

Barbara Boyer – Option 3 with land-based requirements going away, the land requirement would take care of itself. If legislation is dropped, the Parking Lot is going to be done. Wondering about partners and funding options. **Option 1** for now.

Commission Action

Barbara Boyer no action to be taken today. Encourage anyone here to put together a work group. Whitney Collins liked that idea and said we need to be unified for when the statute does get opened. Chair Boyer thanked her fellow commissioners for the work they did and appreciated the outreach that they did.

SWCC Member Reports

Tim Kerns had nothing to report.

Ken Bailey reported cherry harvest was half the usual crop. Wheat was a big crop. A dry and warm summer; getting enough rain to last awhile.

Stan Dean reported looking for district manager for Klamath and Illinois Valley. Jackson SWCD recruiting for district manager with Randy White retiring.

Jerry Ward reported West Multnomah SWCD relocated to near Marine Park. Attended Clatsop board meeting via Zoom. Karin Stutzman was there and offered her help and the district was very appreciative of her offer.

Jim Bob Collins reported hiring again for a district manager (Wheeler SWCD). Monument is looking for new staff as well.

Al Hrynshyn reported still working with Holiday Farm fire recovery and coming up with a grant program.

Barbara Boyer reported that the Paid Leave Oregon is complicated and will affect staff at the districts and having an employee relations meeting to explain how it will affect everyone. Tim Kern's family in Baker City Herald "Drench to Drought." Tim will send out the link for us to share with everyone.

Schedule Meeting Dates for 2023

February 8 & 9 – Clackamas SWCD

May 10 & 11 - TBD

August 9 & 10 - TBD

November - TBD

Newsletter Topics

Director Eligibility – tabled, no consensus

OACD

Call for Upcoming Meeting Agenda Items

Parking Lot

Karin's suggestion

Budget GRB?

Election Reports

Meeting Adjourned at 4:10 PM.