

**Marion Soil and Water Conservation District
Budget Committee Meeting**

Location: Marion SWCD Conference Room
338 Hawthorne Ave NE - Salem, OR 97301
Date: May 21, 2018
Time: 7:15 PM to 9:52 PM

Actions and follow-up items (notes) are italicized.

ATTENDANCE:

SWCD Directors Present	Citizen Committee Members Present
Scott Walker	Ken Palke
Doug Krahmer	Brent Stevenson
Tim Bielenberg	Rebecca McCoun
	John Meldrum
SWCD Directors Absent	Steve Starkey
Ken Hetsel	
Bob DeSantis	Citizen Committee Members Absent
Darin Olson	Bob Dettwyler
	Ralph Fisher
Staff	
Jane Keppinger, SWCD Budget Officer	Public
Tom Wilson, SWCD Administrative Assistant	Dave Budeau
	Mark Fields – Associate Director
	Charles Ortiz

CALLED TO ORDER: Previous chair McCoun called the Budget Committee meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

Introductions were made, and Administrative Assistant Wilson announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Elect Officer (Chair)

ACTION: Previous chair McCoun opened the floor for chair nominations. *Walker nominated Stevenson for budget committee chair, 2nd by Krahmer.* Keppinger noted that the elected chair would also need to chair the Budget Hearing which is scheduled for June 20, 2018 at 7 PM. *McCoun closed nominations. Stevenson was selected by a unanimous vote.*

Role of Budget Committee

Keppinger reviewed the purpose and outline of the meeting. The budget message will be presented, and the budget reviewed. Next, any public questions and comments will be heard. Then, the Committee will deliberate the budget. Finally, the proposed budget will be voted on, as well as the recommended taxation rate. She explained that if the budget is passed tonight, the

Budget Hearing will be held on June 20, 2018 at 7 PM to take public comment; the Board will then approve the final budget and the tax rate resolution.

Receive the Budget Message and Review the Budget

Keppinger presented the budget message, explained the history and background of the permanent tax rate, and the process she used to make the budget. She explained how she figured the estimated tax revenues for the next year. This year, she will ask for a flat rate instead of the \$.05/\$1000 assessed value.

Keppinger explained the three funds and led the committee through the budget section by section. She pointed out how the budget is set up and explained how and why any alterations were being made to last year's figures; budget areas that were shifted were noted. (*See Budget Message*).

Walker pointed out that the headers of the right-hand columns on pages 2 and 3 are incorrect (wrong dates) and should read (2017-18 adopted / 2017-18 projected / 2018-19 proposed).

Discussion regarding the role of Staff Crouse and how best to replace him upon his retirement next year.

Walker would like to see the District contract out some education duties. McCoun stated that the North Santiam WC uses the District's educational programs and she feels it is quite valuable.

Meldrum said that he felt the budget was very safe (conservative). He said the comparisons Keppinger gave were from budget to budget, and not actual to budget, and that the increases are larger (safer) when looked at that way. This was simply an observation and will be discussed later tonight.

Discussion regarding the LAP program and funding for other technical assistance programs as well as the timing of OWEB grant cycles.

Public Questions and Comments:

Dave Budeau pointed out a typo on page 2 regarding plant sale income (extra zero – should be \$14,000) and the numbers for estimated property taxes were inversed in the budget message.

2nd line of "Decreases Expected" page 2, had an extra 0, should be \$30,000.

Ortiz stated that he thinks the budget should allocate more to on the ground conservation and the carry over should be used as such. He wanted the District to find a way to spend the money to improve conservation practices. He stated the money is there and that is should be used to grow programs and retain staff. He said he felt this budget was a "travesty" in that it does not provide more for conservation programming.

At 8:43 PM Chair Stevenson called for a break. Meeting reconvened at 8:53 PM.

Deliberate the Budget

Walker is concerned adding a 1.0 FTE for Crouse's replacement. He would like to see it be a .33 or .25 FTE and have the budget to reflect that.

Bielenberg would like to see the District hire two new employees as there is much work to do.

Stevenson asked why the board isn't spending the money it has on staffing and restoration programs.

Discussion regarding technical assistance, the need for outreach, and the board's lack to build up staffing and programming.

Discussion regarding the potential problems of draining Detroit Reservoir and how the District might help the community.

Bielenberg stated that the District does not have to spend the money allocated in the budget, but it must be allocated to spend it.

Discussion regarding the role of the committee and whether to take the assessed amount or flat rate.

Ortiz asked to speak again, and Field suggested the public should have the right to comment on the budget again, as the discussion parameters have changed over the evening, and Stevenson allowed it. Ortiz suggested the Committee take the entire assessed value and asked where the Board would spend the money instead of on staff and programming.

Stevenson reminded the committee it needs to look at the bottom line number, not the FTE, but Walker said he wanted to discuss the FTE position anyway.

Discussion regarding budget law and transferring between funds.

Approve the Proposed Budget

ACTION: Meldrum moved to approve the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District 2018-2019 Budget as presented. The motion was 2nd by Bielenberg. Discussion: Walker stated he won't vote for it as the payroll number was not changed for him. Stevenson wanted to see the whole tax money at \$.05/1000 assessed. Discussion regarding board inaction. Vote Failed 7-1 (Walker NAY).

McCoun said this shows the known dysfunction of the board. Stevenson stated he thought Walker was holding the budget committee hostage. Meldrum said that he felt the budget committee had made it clear they wanted the budget to increase staffing and programming. Bielenberg expressed his view that taking the lower, flat rate shows accountability and that the committee had addressed public concern of excessive carry over.

Keppinger explained to Walker that the position will not only be shadowing Crouse to learn his position, but also working with other staff on different projects, and that the line item for wages is the same as adopted for 2017-18. She also proposed that Walker could help draft the work plan. This satisfied Walker's concern.

Walker moved to approve the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District 2018-2019 Budget as presented. The motion was 2nd by Krahmer. No Discussion. Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

Recommend Rate of Taxation

Keppinger stated that the district can ask for a maximum tax rate of \$.05/\$1000 assessed value, or a lower rate; an alternate option is the district could ask for a flat rate amount. She is asking for a flat rate of \$1,000,000 (one million).

ACTION:

Krahmer moved that the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Budget Committee approve the recommended amount of \$1,000,000 (one million) for the 2018-2019 Fiscal for operating purposes. The motion was 2nd by Meldrum. No Discussion. Motioned passed unanimously (8-0).

ADJOURN: Stevenson adjourned the Budget Committee meeting at 9:52 PM.

Next meeting: Budget Hearing-June 20, 2018 at 7:00 PM
Meeting Location: Marion SWCD – Conference Room
338 Hawthorne Ave NE
Salem, OR 97301-4607

Minutes submitted by: Tom Wilson, Administrative Assistant