



**Marion Soil and Water Conservation District**  
**Board of Directors September 7, 2022, Meeting Minutes**  
6:40 PM to 8:38 PM  
Facilitator: Chair Olson  
Recorded by: Brenda Sanchez

**Attendance**

Meeting offered in-person at our location in Stayton, OR, by video conference, and by telephone.

<b>Directors &amp; Record of Attendance</b>		<b>Associate Directors</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Guests</b>
At Large 1-Scott Walker	Present	Leland Hardy	Brenda Sanchez	Catherine Alexander
At Large 2-Terry Hsu	Absent			Julia Battle
Zone 1	Vacant			Peggy Hart
Zone 2-Kyle Ross	Absent			Stephanie Hazen
Zone 3-Darin Olson	Present			Dallas O'Bryan
Zone 4-Dave Budeau	Present			Ray Temple
Zone 5-Rochelle Koch	Present			

**Note:** All documents and materials displayed or referenced are retained in the Board of Directors Meeting file at the District.

**A. Olson Call to Order:** 6:40 PM

**B. Agenda Additions or Changes**

Added Catherine Alexander (Straub Outdoors) to the agenda. IMap was moved to the next Board meeting.

**C. Announcements**

None

**1. Public Comment**

Tonight's guests, each introduced themselves. Battle just moved to Oregon and has a petroleum, geologist background. Battle met Heath Keirstead (Staff) at a Salmon Watch training and was encouraged to follow up and attend a meeting to see if she was a good fit as an Associate Director. Peggy Hart is a long-time resident of Marion County and came as a guest of Director Walker to attend a Board meeting and meet everyone. Hart is also interested in serving as an Associate Director for the Marion SWCD. Stephanie Hazen is a retired veterinarian and pollinator enthusiast. She presented at our September "First

Friday” on Monarch Butterflies. Sanchez noted that tonight our First Friday series is receiving an award from the Natural Resource Conservation Service at the CONNECT Conference dinner. Ray Temple is a resident of Salem.

## **2. District Snapshot**

- Program Committee 9/21 (TBC) at 9:00 AM
- Admin Committee 9/16 at 8:30 AM
- Building Comm Meeting 9/19 at 1:00 PM
- Sanchez attended Special Districts Duties and Liabilities Training on 8/31/22 at the Chemeketa Viticulture Center in West Salem
  - Sanchez notes that our Public Records Request policy is probably out of date and needs revision
  - New Laws
    - All elected officials are now mandatory reporter of child abuse, elder abuse, or abuse of disabled person.
  - October BM training on Board Roles and Responsibilities
  - Sanchez attended training on Payroll Training in Mt. Angle, Paid Family Leave and Frances- new online reporting portal for Oregon Taxes.
  - Sanchez will be at the SDAO training in Salem on 9/15. Topics include Board Member Liability and Exposures, Promoting the District, and Building the Board-Manger Relationship.
  - Employment Law Basics 9/8
- CONNECT – Several staff are at CONNECT today in Seaside. The District is to get an award tonight from NRCS regarding the District’s First Friday program.
- Delani Herb resigned to take a position as a forester.
- Linda Lovett started August 29. We will be working over the next couple of months on training and assumption of financial and bookkeeping duties. We established a training schedule till the end of the year.
- Organic Hazelnut Tour 8/19
- First Friday – Stephanie Hazen on Monarch Butterflies. Well attended although. Next one is October 7 Pollinator subject: Going Beyond Flowers with Matthew Sheppard of the Xerces Society.
- OWEB small grant team is up and running again and we will be able to provide OWEB SG technical assistance to clients for the cost share program, starting potentially October
- The team toured Birdhaven on 8/18. A 200-acre property working to build wildlife habitat on property along the North Santiam River. The team enjoyed a short hike around the property with owner Jan Irene Miller, council member of the North Santiam Watershed Council, discussing wildlife habitat, plants, forest management, water quality, and birds.

- Heath completed the Salmon Watch volunteer training on August 25. Went well! We had a sign language interpreter for the event.
- We had to have the building office cleaned of the dead stinkbugs after the spray and we also had the exterior windows cleaned and window blinds.

### 3. Treasurers Report Ending July 31, 2022

Budeau began reporting on the Treasurer's Report ending July 31, 2022, he noted that on page 1 of the budget spreadsheet, Resource Description, that Line 30 is not correct. Taxes received during current fiscal year should be at or near zero dollars, because county tax assessments have not been issued. The \$3,196.77 in tax revenue is from previously levied taxes. They are separate items. Budeau explained he spoke with Sanchez prior to the meeting, and she will work Linda Lovett (Staff) to correct these items. Sanchez explained that these lines of the report have been a learning curve as well as figuring Line 1 "Cash on Hand".

Sanchez pointed out that ODA and OWEB made payments to the District in July and is reflected on Line 10 and 11. Sanchez explained that this is follow up from last month regarding the District's lack of receiving any grant payments.

Budeau went on to note that on page 2, Natural Resources, that the far-right column with the percentages was missing. The column is in the original spreadsheet, but it did not make the export to PDF. Sanchez says she will ensure future reports export to PDF fully.

Sanchez added that Line 12 (First Column) should read \$341,725.96. Susan Ortiz (Staff) had completed the Landowners Assistance Program (LAP) Report (located in the Board packet) and computed the actual after the 2021-2022 fiscal year LAP payments were totaled. Sanchez will update Line 12 in the report.

Koch asked about the 7/29/22 transaction under cleared transactions for \$79.24. Sanchez replied that is the US Bank service fee and will make sure to get that clearly identified in the next report.

**Action:** Walker motioned for the Board to **approve the Financial/Treasurers Report ending July 31, 2022.** 2<sup>nd</sup> by Olson. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (unanimously: Aye-4 (Walker, Olson, Koch, and Budeau), Opposed-0).

### 4. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Services

Not in attendance (on leave). No report.

## 5. Review of August 3, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes

Budeau noted that he submitted edits to Sanchez, and they were incorporated.

**Action:** Koch motioned for the Board to **approve the August 3, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes**. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Walker. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (unanimously: Aye-4 votes - Walker, Olson, Koch, and Budeau, Opposed-0 votes).

## 6. Straub Outdoors

Olson introduced Catherine Alexander, CEO, Board of Directors with Straub Outdoors. Alexander presented a slide show displaying the educational work they accomplished over the last two years during the constraints of COVID 19. They were challenged with either closing or finding another way such as taking Outdoor School on the road. In spring of 2022 they were able to bring back Outdoor School and served over 1,000 students from the Oregon coast to the Willamette Valley. They also noted that they obtained all their materials and gear from local sources that supports local jobs for young adults. Alexander went on to conclude that they also have established nature-based community programs. Alexander thanked the District for their support. Presentation is on file.

## 7. United States Geological Survey (USGS) Agreement-Streamflow Program

Sanchez explains that the USGS agreement to continue flow monitoring at two gauges (Abiqua at Silverton and Butte at Monitor) is up for renewal. At a prior Board meeting the Directors asked Sanchez to see if there were others interested in assisting with funding for the gauges and identify any users of the data gathered from the gauges. Sanchez went on to say that she contacted the Pudding River Watershed Council (PRWC), Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), and USGS to see if they have any need to continue with these sites and if so, would they like to help fund the gauges. PRWC said they did not use the gauges and would not be able to help fund, as well as ODA. USGS supports the cause but not financially. Sanchez then displayed the USGS webpage that hosts the Abiqua Creek at Silverton Gauge data. On the page in a yellow box, USGS applied a note suggesting that this gauge may be discontinued October of 2022 and if anyone is interested in funding data collection to contact USGS. They did this for both gauging sites.

Online links:

Abiqua: <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/monitoring-location/14200700/#parameterCode=00065&period=P7D>

Butte: <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/monitoring-location/14201500/#parameterCode=00065&period=P7D>

Discussion proceeded regarding the gauges and whether the District should continue with the Streamflow Program. Walker and Budeau both agreed the cost was high and the District could use the funds more effectively in other programs. Olson explained how long the program has been, how it started with seven gauges and over time the District has dropped them because of cost and lack of interested parties for support and funds.

**Action:** Walker motioned for the Board to **discontinue the Streamflow Program**. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Koch. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (unanimously: Aye-4 votes - Walker, Olson, Koch, and Budeau, Opposed-0 votes).

## **8. Associate Director Application – Angela Plowhead**

Sanchez explained that Angela Plowhead has applied for an Associate Director position with the Marion SWCD. The application was in the Director packet. Directors discussed Plowhead's application and how she has attended at least two board meetings.

**Action:** Walker motioned for the Board to **appoint Angela Plowhead as an Associate Director**. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Budeau. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (unanimously: Aye-4 votes - Walker, Olson, Koch, and Budeau, Opposed-0 votes).

## **9. Administrative Committee**

### **a) Urban Conservationist Position**

Sanchez displayed the proposed Urban Conservationist position description. Sanchez explained this position will enable the District to develop an urban program to carry out the District's mission in urban communities. Sanchez noted that both the City of Keizer and City of Salem reps have stated they look forward to the District hiring an urban conservationist to help connect their programs and work together. Discussion followed regarding the description and ways to incorporate a clearer duty description.

**Action:** Koch motioned for the Board to **approve the Urban Conservationist position**. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Budeau. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (unanimously: Aye-4 votes - Walker, Olson, Koch, and Budeau, Opposed-0 votes).

### **b) Grants Coordinator Position**

Sanchez explained that she wanted to follow up regarding the Grants Coordinator position discussed at an earlier Board meeting where it was decided to establish two positions; one to meet the needs of financial management and the other to meet the District's need for grant coordination. Sanchez explained that she took the 2015 Programs

Assistant (noting that it has not been revised since 2015) position description and updated and revised to reflect the duties of today. Sanchez removed the financial and human resources duties and updated the existing language in places to better reflect the job that it is today. With that completed, Sanchez stated that the position should be re-titled to Grants Coordinator as well as no change to the salary range. Delegation of Authority sets policy that the Board must approve revisions to existing position descriptions.

**Action:** Walker motioned for the Board to **approve the newly revised Grants Coordinator position (formerly Programs Assistant)**. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Budeau. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (unanimously: Aye-4 votes - Walker, Olson, Koch, and Budeau, Opposed-0 votes).

## **10. Benefit Waiver and Compensation**

Sanchez described that an employee waived their health benefit because they believe they may have been misinformed some years ago and is currently covering their own health care costs. The employee has asked Sanchez if there is a way to still be compensated since the District does not provide the health benefit coverage for them. Discussion among Directors and guests revolved around whether the District should compensate this employee. Discussion included how much would be a fair compensation, how it would be tracked in payroll, and whether a change in policy would be required. It was decided that Sanchez should contact Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industries and seek more information regarding this potential compensation. The subject was moved to the next Board meeting.

## **11. Program Committee**

### **a) Flat Rate Irrigation Practices**

Sanchez displayed the Flat Rate proposal recommended by the Program Committee. Olson stated that he was not particularly in favor of the flat rate idea for irrigation practices because of the variability in the price of sourced materials for micro irrigation. Under the Flat Rate, there is potential for individuals using products cheaper than what the flat rate is paying and would open a misuse of LAP funds. Walker stated that he also was not in favor of the flat rate, describing that flat rates can mask the true project cost and that the LAP program would no longer be a true match program, not a favorable use of taxpayer money. Budeau responded by stating that the Program Committee discussed the flat rate proposal and supported the idea because it streamlines the budgeting process for the applicant and is favored by staff by simplifying accounting processes within

the LAP. Budeau added the LAP Report found in the Board packet indicated twenty micro irrigation practices last fiscal year; the most common conservation practice among the 53 LAPs awarded last year. Budeau also noted the LAP Report estimated these 20 micro irrigation projects would save 315,732.940 gallons of water per year; enough water to fill 478 Olympic sized swimming pools or enough water to cover 962 acres with a foot of water. Debate continued but no action was taken.

## **12. Landowners Assistance Program**

### **a) Landowners Assistant Program (LAP) Report**

Sanchez noted that Ortiz had put together an end of the fiscal year 2021-2022 LAP report. There were no questions or comments.

### **b) Completed – Closed Projects**

Staff created a slideshow of completed projects. Presentation on file.

**Adjourn:** Chair Olson adjourned the meeting at 8:38 PM



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