



9/30/2024

***East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors **APPROVED** Meeting Minutes***

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

6:01pm- Call to Order

Zimmer-Stucky called to order the regular meeting of the EMSWCD Board of Directors at 6:01pm on Wednesday, September 4th, 2024, at the Mount Hood Community College in Gresham.

6:01pm- Introductions, Review/revise agenda, Review previous action items.

Zimmer-Stucky conducted introductions for the record. The following persons were present:

Board of Directors: Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky (At-Large 2 Director, Chair), Mike Guebert (Zone 3 Director, Vice-Chair), Laura Masterson (Zone 2 Director, Secretary) (virtual), Jim Carlson (At-Large 1 Director, Treasurer), Joe Rossi (Zone 1 Director)

Staff: Kelley Beamer (Executive Director), Dan Mitten (Chief of Finance & Operations), Heather Nelson Kent (Community Outreach & Engagement Program Supervisor), Julie DiLeone (Rural Lands Program Supervisor), Whitney Bailey (Senior Urban Conservationist), Monica McAllister (Community Connections Liaison), Chelsea White-Brainard (Senior Outreach and Engagement Coordinator), Asianna Fernandez (Executive Assistant)

Guests: Roy Iwai (Multnomah County Water Quality Program), Charles George (Mount Hood Community College), Rick Cowlshaw (Oregon Department of Agriculture)

Changes to the agenda:

Add OACD's and Hood River SWCD's request for support of Spanish Language Pesticide Education and Licensing in Oregon as Agenda Item 9.

6:02pm- Review/Approve June, July, and August 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion: Guebert moved to approve the June 17, 2024, July 1, 2024, and August 5, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes. Carlson 2nd. Motion passed unanimously (4-0, Masterson absent).

6:06pm- MHCC Dam Removal Presentation

Shearin shared a presentation about the Clean Water Retrofit Project at Mount Hood Community College and the timeline of the project from beginning to finish, including the DePave project, dam removal, and tree planting projects. MHCC is Gresham's biggest storm water runoff hotspot with about 57 acres of impervious surface. There were originally 26 projects identified when we first began working with MHCC. Started with the dirtiest and most populated parking lot on the campus, doing a DePave project with over 130 volunteers help, and adding in drywells and rain gardens for treatment for over 4 million gallons of stormwater. The next parking lot's project added 4 million gallons of treated stormwater and addressed chronic flooding problems. The next parking lot's project treats almost 777,000 gallons of stormwater too. Finally, we worked on adding tree trench drains in the last parking lot, with help from a big volunteer planting event with our staff and MHCC staff, faculty, and students. Next, we'll be working on adding pervious pavement in the last parking lot for extra drainage. The other project we've been working on is removing the Kelly Creek Dam on campus and creating a new layout for student and faculty enjoyment, and cooler, clean flowing water that can keep salmon alive and help them travel to the surrounding rivers/streams and finishing off the whole project!

6:01pm- Tour of MHCC, Kelly Creek Dam, etc.

Shearin led the group on a tour of the Mount Hood Community College parking lots that have been modified in this project, and the dam that will be worked on soon.



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7:04pm – Laura Masterson arrived via phone call.

7:05pm- Public Comment:

Iwai with Multnomah County Water Quality Program – updated the Board on the progress of the new Sandy River Watershed Council (SRWSC). The former Council was dissolved in 2021. With grant funds, they created a Community Needs Assessment Report (jubitz.org/SandyRiver), from multiple surveys and focus groups conducted to find out what different needs the community had, who they hadn't heard from before. Watershed Councils usually do restoration work, but not really anything culturally specific. The report shows that the community would like to see the council support Indigenous voices in leadership and management of the watershed, as well as support for recreational activities for Black, Latino, and Asian communities, creating an idea for an equity centered watershed council. With a second grant, they've been able to hire a facilitator for a new work group to create a community centered charter for the SRWSC. Following the charter's completion in December 2024 will be a community event to invite people to hear about this work as well as attract a new Board and create backing for the Multnomah County to recognize it as official watershed council. Once recognized, they'll go on to get the Oregon Water Management Water Capacity Grant in the Spring. To have a Board that looks like the folks of the community who live, work, and play in the community where the watershed is, is a new kind of approach to watershed management and leadership, that the Oregon watershed community is excited about.

George, the Associate Vice President of Facilities for Mount Hood Community College thanked the District, Board, and volunteers for helping MHCC achieve their dream of improving water quality health, from himself, staff, and the students.

Cowlshaw, the new Regional Water Quality Specialist for the Oregon Department of Agriculture, is looking forward to getting to know EMSWCD's Board, and learning about new members and partners. ODA is in the process of revisiting long-standing rules and thinking about them in ways of creating opportunities to engage with landowners, and approach landowners from an avenue of water quality instead of compliance.

Carlson left at 7:13pm.

White-Brainard, McAllister, Bailey, Iwai left at 7:13pm.

7:14pm- ED And L-Team Updates

Beamer's work the past couple of months has revolved around work planning, relationship building, and continuing to support internal staff on the District's goals. She has been out in the District, connecting with Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN), especially the Mount Hood chapter, with Columbia Slough Watershed Council, and with leaders at the Oregon Community Foundation. Staff are finishing up performance evaluations, to be done by the end of September. Tomorrow morning is our Big Creek info session, as an opportunity to do a Q&A with potential applicants and walk through the easement agreement and evaluation criteria (not required for applicants to attend). We've also been doing work sessions with staff around different projects to get closer to key goals. We submitted comments about the proposed Portland Tree Code, as the point of decision is planned for October with Portland City Council. Reminded the Board and staff that there is an internal protocol in the Board Handbook around staff conducting an internal risk analysis for submitting comments. One of her annual goals is to create a platform for identifying what EMSWCD's priorities are on policy positions in regional and statewide legislation.

Upcoming Key Dates:

9/5 10am Big Creek Work Session

9/12 – Beamer participating in a panel with 1000 Friends, OAN, and Farm Bureau to talk about the District's work around farmland protection.

9/17 evening Headwaters Farm Open House

10/14-16 OACD Conference for EDs and Board Members



Action Item: Fernandez to send the Portland Tree Code comment and the public comment evaluation matrix to the Board.

Mitten shared that the office renovations are finished, besides décor, which we have a small staff team working on. The FY 23-24 Books are closed and sent to the auditor, meaning we are now in audit session. Actualizing F&O Strategic Goals: evaluating 3-year spend vs. budget to show the where and why of underspending, policy development outwardly with legislative advocacy including meeting with legislators and leveraging our technologies to the best of our ability including the CRM and the new website. The timeframe for the CRM is multi-year and iterative. The timeframe for the website is to be finished and launched by May 2025.

Shearin shared that Urban Lands wrote and shared the letter for the Portland Urban Forestry Tree Code, including asking to get a heads up when they look into changing policies, and they have now invited her to participate in the City Council meeting soon. The District has applied for the Metro Capital Grant, and it's been approved! McAllister has been working with Play, Grow, Learn, doing walk and learns at Nadaka Park for their summer camps.

Zimmer-Stucky added that Shearin has helped get over \$1million in grants for clean water projects here at MHCC alone. It's a great example of working with partners and leveraging staff time to bring dollars into the community.

DiLeone July and August have been super busy at HWF. We've had to mow all the areas that we planted summer cover crops that weren't doing well, likely because the soil was too cold, and we've overseeded it with Sudan grass, which has resulted in great germination now. Some of the farmers' areas either had to be mowed, or the tops had to be mowed over to cut back seed heads, especially of the grass seed that were starting to come up. We're hoping to get ahead of that earlier next season by getting the crew out there earlier. The Weed Assessment Team did its first assessment, and each farmer was asked to assess their own plots. Walking Whale Farm is doing very well, as it's their first year on HWF. For the rest of them, they're doing pretty well, except for a couple of rows. One incoming farmer has not been on the farm in over three months now, so they are no longer part of the program and we'll be mowing their plot until the next round of incoming farmers. Jen Aaron is continuing her work in her trial area and continuing to explore the issue of deficiencies in the soil, because without the soil microbes, it won't get to how we want it to be. DiLeone invited the Board to spread the word about the HWF Open House. OSU Extension had a few farmers not show up for interviews, just due to summer not being a good time for farmers, so the staff member will resume in the end of September and try to schedule with more people. Baker has been very busy with cost share projects and recently awarded a cost share for a farmer's conversion to drip irrigation. He just finished a project with a HIP graduate and a rainwater harvesting project on an urban farm where they're watering from municipal water. There's also another rainwater harvesting project to be done on a farm, which we'll try to bring to the Board for approval for over \$50,000 in October.

Kent shared updates regarding the CO&E team, they've been working on creating comprehensive outreach plans for the internal programs that haven't had much help before including the Land Legacy Program (LLP) and HWF. The HIP Open House already has over 20 people registered, showing that we're already increasing results after our outreach, compared to last year without. With the LLP, we're going back to the conservation management plan survey participants to get feedback from them about what they'd see as valuable from the program, closing the loop with those participants who gave us great feedback. We're collaborating with other SWCDs and non-profits around succession planning resources to be accessible online. The District will be working with HOOPLA on our new website development. The team has been working on a style guide for the District for an overall look and feel of the communications. Pacheco has been doing a great job with our social media, especially responses to community and partner updates, as well as educational campaigns. She did a series on StreamCare recently and now she's doing one on soil health, and she's done one on the Board elections. For Grants, we have 23-26 full funded PIC contracts finalized from the 2024 cycle. We've awarded a few SPACE grants already and a few more have come in since then. We also have 20 sign-ups for the Big Creek info session tomorrow.



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7:41pm- Annual Meeting Date Resolution

Zimmer-Stucky The FY 24-25 Annual Meeting will be on December 2, 2024, at 6pm.

Motion Guebert moved to approve Resolution 2024-9-01 to establish the date of the FY 23-24 Annual Meeting. Rossi second. Motion passed unanimously (4-0, Carlson absent).

7:43pm- Creating Unity Among All Policies Associated with the Grants Programs

Kent Last April we brought up the process of unifying all the Grants policies and clarifying roles and responsibilities for Staff and Board. We did that for all of the policies including the new Equity Focused Strategic Opportunity Grants, but not the PIC grants program because she wanted to update the goals first. Today, we are bringing the final policy piece back to make it consistent with all of the other Grants policies. Like the other ones, it has 15 issue areas and what the goals, roles, and responsibilities are. Other than the goals, there aren't really any other significant changes to how it's been run since the previous cycles.

Motion Guebert moved to adopt the new PIC Grant policy as presented. Rossi second. Motion passed unanimously (4-0, Carlson absent).

7:47pm- Adding EMSWCD to Federal Special District Bill

Beamer The SDAO emails have been tracking this issue, that Special Districts are not defined in Federal legislation, meaning during COVID, when federal funds were being given out, special districts found that they could not access the funds. The National Special Districts Association has worked to put together legislation called the Bipartisan Special District Grant Accessibility Act that has already passed the House, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security, and Government Affairs this last July, and needs to go to the Senate next. She'd like for the District to add their name in support of this bill and approve Beamer as the authorizing District official for it. This also reinforces her professional goal of carrying federal investments in the work we do.

Zimmer-Stucky added that other districts like fire, water, irrigation, drainage, etc. are also affected by this.

Motion Guebert moved to approve EMSWCD's support of the Bipartisan Special District Grant Accessibility Act and authorize Beamer as the authorized District Official. Rossi second. Motion passed unanimously (4,0, Carlson absent).

Kent left at 7:48pm.

7:50pm- Request of Support from the Oregon Association of Conversation Districts and the Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District for providing equitable Spanish language specified education licensing in Oregon.

Zimmer-Stucky The ask if for the Board to support legislation around creating funds for ODA to hire two Spanish speaking FTEs to deliver in-person Spanish language education training throughout the state. **Beamer** added that our Spanish-speaking community is so important, especially in agriculture community and broader, and with how much we rely on Spanish speaking crews to help us with our weed management, Mount Hood SWCD found that it's so difficult to obtain a license to apply pesticides, as it's only offered in English. The House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources is offering this to be a bipartisan committee bill, going into the session.

Motion Guebert moved to approve EMSWCD's support of the bilingual pesticide safety education and training legislation and authorize Beamer as the District representative. Rossi second. Motion passed unanimously (4,0 Carlson absent).

7:53pm- Big Creek Farm Lot Line Adjustment Approval



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DiLeone When we had the property boundary surveyed, we found issues with the neighboring property to the West, which is owned by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ORFW). We'd like to resolve this issue before selling the property, and Shipkey has already talked to ORFW, who has agreed to this. On the Northwest end of the property, ORFW is going to give us .45 acres of flat farmable land where the farm road extends as well, and we would be transferring .95 acres of not farmable, forested, steep land to ORFW.

Motion Guebert moved to approve Resolution 2024-09-02 to adjust the Big Creek Lot line. Rossi second. Motion passed unanimously (4,0 Carlson absent).

7:56pm- Monthly Financial Reports

June 2024

Mitten Some of the June financials will change as it's currently still officially unaudited. The Balance Sheet shows healthy assets, 7.9% above where they were last year, with total assets of \$19.9 million. Very minimal liabilities, besides payroll liabilities, FSA, and minor credit card debt that gets paid off monthly. Current Liabilities are just over half a million dollars, with Equity balancing it out at almost \$20 million. This balance sheet will reflect the post audit adjusting journal entries and be reported out at the audit presentation at December's Annual Meeting. Overall, the Profit & Loss budget performance looks great and stable.

The Profit & Loss Budget Performance by Class for the Fiscal year shows that there is no overspend, but there are areas of underspend. Salaries and Benefits were mostly unspent for various reasons, Contracted Services were underspent due to the website redesign that didn't get put into play until this fiscal year and other grants that didn't get realized. Finally, Capital Outlay was underspent due to two forgone projects (interior stairwell at the District office and the Headwaters Farm office that hasn't been realized yet). The P&L by Class shows \$1.2 million unspent in General Fund, which is 20% of the General Fund appropriation. While there are several easy reasons for the underspend (not being awarded the USDA grant opportunity and the depreciation expense has not yet been applied), the underspend will be reduced to a level experienced over the last several years. We're going to be doing an analysis of this to figure out "why underspent" along with the exact "where we're underspent". He'd like to get down to a 5% unspent amount by the end of the year.

Zimmer-Stucky thanked Mitten for digging into the "why" of the underspend. She feels like the District has stabilized since the Pandemic and agrees that other priorities arose causing other projects to start though.

July 2024

Mitten As it is the first year of the FY, everything looks in line so far. Nothing to note.

8:07pm-Board Discussion

Rossi listened to the established ag community regarding our LLP, and they feel like they're missing out. He drafted a document regarding how they feel, with Director Carlson's assistance, and input from Larry Bailey. He got a few viewpoints, not incumbent of all farmers in the county. Maybe we can expand capacities for what we do, but sometimes we don't always have to acquire properties, but instead we can facilitate them instead. He suggested building a database of farmers who want properties and ag sellers who want to keep it in farmland. Ekstrom is a great example of someone who rents/leases land wherever he can to expand his business, keep the land from being developed, and replace the land he's losing to development. He's able to lease land from historic landowners so they don't have to sell it, but instead get a lease payment. He'd like to try to get feedback from staff if possible.

Zimmer-Stucky would like the Board to look it over first.

Action Item: Fernandez to scan Rossi's report and send it to the Board.

Action Item: Staff to work on getting Rossi tech support to log back into his District email.



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Rossi would like to tour the HWF soon with Beamer at one of the check-ins to see how the changes are going.

6:34pm- Announcements, Action Items, and Adjournment

Guebert will be out of town next Thursday through the following week, but back in time for the LLC meeting.

Shearin added that the Urban Lands team is in the midst of recruitment for their education and outreach position. They received 250+ applications.

Zimmer-Stucky thanked Shearin and the faculty at MHCC for hosting tonight's meeting and the tour.

Action Items:

- **Fernandez** to send the Portland Tree Code comment and the public comment evaluation matrix to the Board.
- **Fernandez** to scan Rossi's report and send it to the Board.
- **Staff** to work on getting Rossi tech support to log back into his District email.

Zimmer-Stucky adjourned the meeting at 8:15pm.