

Jefferson County SWCD Board Minutes ~ December 17, 2024

Jefferson County SWCD
625 SE Salmon Avenue ~ Suite 6
Redmond, OR 97756
541.699.3170

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 17, 2024 12:00 PM

Madras Airport Conference Room ~ Madras, Oregon and
Virtually Via Zoom – *Zoom did not function*

Members Present:

Board:

Scott Samsel (At Large 1)
Lloyd Forman (Zone 4)
Craig Weigand, Jr. (Zone 3)
Brad Klann (Zone 2)
Curt Locke (Zone 5)
Rob Galyen (At Large 2)

Staff:

Kate Haarberg ~ District Manager
Adam Haarberg
Ellen Hammond
Ally Steinmetz
Ryan Brunner
Amber Herman

Advisors:

NRCS ~ Lars & Dave attempted to Zoom but it malfunctioned
North Unit Irrigation District ~ Collin Cowsill
Steve Culman ~ COAREC
Mark Wunsch ~ Jeff County Commissioner

Community – Gary Richards – Will be new board member in Jan 2025

SUMMARY OF BOARD MOTIONS

Motion #1: Motion made by Brad Klann to approve the October 29, 2024 board minutes. Seconded by Scott Samsel. Motion carried unanimously.

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Motion #2: *Motion made by Craig Weigand to approve 2024 financial activity report as submitted. Seconded by Scott Samsel. Motion carried unanimously.*

Motion #3: *Motion made by Rob Galyen to approve the proposed bonuses with no adjustment for %of FTE (i.e. part time employees are not pro rated) Seconded by Scott Samsel. Motion carried unanimously.*

Motion #4: *Motion made by Craig Weigand to approve the wage increases. Scott Samsel Seconded. The motion passed with 5 Yays and Rob Galyen was a Nay.*

Call to Order:

The December 17, 2024 Jefferson County SWCD Board meeting was called to order by Chair Lloyd Forman at 12:00 PM with a quorum in place.

Approval of the October 29, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes:

The October 29, 2024 board minutes were emailed to the board before today's meeting for review.

Motion #1: *Motion made by Brad Klann to approve the October 29, 2024 board minutes. Seconded by Scott Samsel. Motion carried unanimously.*

Approval of the December 2024 Financial Activity Report: Kate Haarberg reviewed the status of all the active grants. She went through the Profit & Loss and the Balance Sheet. These documents were also emailed in advance to the Board for review.

Motion #2: *Motion made by Craig Weigand to approve 2024 financial activity report as submitted. Seconded by Scott Samsel. Motion carried unanimously.*

New Employee Amber Herman – Amber Herman joined the SWCD in November. She introduced herself to the Board of Directors and gave a brief background of her work prior to joining the Jeff SWCD. She also talked about the work she has been doing with NRCS and visits to project sites and meeting land owners.

“I have been working towards my level 1 certification for the NRCS. This will be an ongoing process and over the next few years I will be working up to my level 3 certification. I have been trying to get out into the field as much as possible to get to know folks and shadow my colleagues. Days spent in the field include juniper removal certification, brush management certification, timber inventory and more”.

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January 2025 Wage Recommendations

Rob Galyen asked that we rearrange the agenda to move up the discussion of wages & bonuses due to his need to depart the Board Meeting early. Board members were emailed the recommendations in advance of the meeting.

End of Year/Holiday Bonus

The Board was presented and approved the following bonus schedule for Dec 2024 Bonus:

0-1 year of service \$250

1-3 years of service \$500

3+ years of service \$750

7+ years of service \$1000

Motion #3: Motion made by Rob Galyen to approve the recommended bonuses with no adjustment for %of FTE (i.e. part time employees are not pro rated) Seconded by Scott Samsel. Motion carried unanimously.

Rob Galyen had concerns about the long term financial implications of the wage increases. Kate stressed that Ally & Ellen had not received wage increases since January of 2023 and that we were falling behind on cost-of-living and competition in the job market. Kate also mentioned that the wages are written into the grants in advance so it's important to have a compensation plan in place for 2025. While concerns were raised, the board did decide to move forward with the following wage increases effective January 1, 2025:

Ally Steinmetz - \$32.50/hour

Ellen Hammond – \$33.50/hour

Kate Haarberg - \$65,000 annual salary (\$31.25/hour)

Motion #4: Motion made by Craig Weigand to approve the wage increases. Scott Samsel Seconded. The motion passed with 5 Yays and Rob Galyen was a Nay.

Foley Complex Update – Adam Haarberg

- Adam showed some videos of the tree planting that happened at Foley Creek.

North Unit Irrigation District ~ Collin Cowsill

- Collin talked about Water Banking

BOARD Update ~ All Board members – Gary Richards (new board member in Jan 2025) invited the Board and meeting goers to a holiday event at the Madras homeless shelter.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

- The Board agreed to meet on Tuesday January 28th at 12:00 pm.

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- The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Due to meeting time constraints, the following program updates were provided via email:

Weed Program Update – Ryan Brunner

- Ryan’s Weed Advisory Board met on December 5th. Updates on spraying USFS in Oct & Nov with ODA, USFS, Crook County & Heart of Oregon are estimated at 300+ acres.
- Ryan (with Ellen’s help) completed writing a grant for ODA \$46,000.
- Ryan has plans to submit a grant to BLM. Ryan attended the Oregon Weed Symposium on Dec 10th & 11th.

Watershed Update – Ally Steinmetz

- MDWC organized a tour of Opal Springs in November for board members and partners. The tour was led by Deschutes Valley Water District and included the hydropower facility, fish passage project, and springs.
- MDWC recently completed a site visit with the OWEB review team for the technical assistance application submitted for Upper Willow Creek.
- MDWC completed tree planting on Campbell Creek as part of the Roberts SIA and Campbell Creek BDA grants.

Conservation Specialist & PSP Outreach – Ellen

A. Drought Resiliency

- Working with Michael Curri on Precision Farming pilot (broadband and remote sensors)
- RCPP proposal from DRC with NUID, Extension, and SWCD as partners NOT APPROVED.
- Introduced myself, SWCD, and Drought Plan to new COAREC staff
- Croplands, Ranchlands, and Public Outreach Workgroups met
 - Working with Ally to develop prioritization strategy for Ranchlands at landscape and project scales

B. SIA

- Ryan continues to collect WQ samples due to my injured knee.

C. Pesticides & Weed Grants

- PSP - Planning for brochure for specific user groups
- PSP will meet this winter to review data and decide what they want to do in 2025-27 grant proposal
- EPA Toxics – assist Ryan with tracking and reporting

E. Other

- Spending tons of time helping Ryan and Kate figure out the weed program
- Leroy Buck Small grant for buried mainline approved
- Submitted Small Grant for Jason Harris to enlarge pond at end of 64 Lateral.
- Partnership meeting with Wasco SWCD on Antelope watershed and outreach in Ashwood
- Tour of Hay Creek Ranch with SWCD and NRCS staff

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District Manager Update – Kate Haarberg

- Working on the annual audit
- New employee orientation Amber Herman
- Working with SDIS on annual insurance
- Weekly meetings with Karin Stutezman w/ ODA to assist with DM questions

NRCS Update ~ Amber Herman

Amber has been working under the mentorship of Lars Santana with NRCS. With her introduction she gave an update of what she has been working on with NRCS and getting up to speed on CRP and CREP.