



**Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD)
Board of Directors January 3, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

6:34 PM to 8:17 PM

Facilitator: Chair Olson

Recorded by: Brenda Sanchez

Directors & Record of Attendance		Associate Directors
At Large 1-Peggy Hart	Present	Angela Plowhead
At Large 2-Scott Walker	Present	Leland Hardy
Zone 1-Vacant	Vacant	Mark Fields
Zone 2-Vacant	Vacant	
Zone 3-Darin Olson (Chair)	Present	
Zone 4-Dave Budeau (Secretary-Treasurer)	Present	
Zone 5-Rochelle Koch (Vice-Chair)	Present	
Staff		Guests
Cesar Zamora		Catherine Alexander
Chelsea Blank		Greg Houle
Becky Pineda		Becca Shively
Brenda Sanchez		
Linda Lovett		

Note: All documents and materials displayed or referenced are retained in the Board of Directors Meeting file at the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (Marion SWCD or District).

A. Olson Call to Order: 6:34 PM

- a. Guests:
- Catherine Alexander-Straub Outdoors
 - Greg Houle-Sustainable Northwest
 - Becky Shively, Sustainable Northwest

B. Announcements - None

C. Agenda Additions or Changes

1. Elect a Chair
2. Education Committee member
3. CONNECT Conference

1. Public Comment

Alexander stopped in to say hello and to invite all to their annual meeting February 17, 2024; it is a potluck. Sanchez agrees to send emailed invites to Directors and staff.

2. Election for Officers

Koch (current Chair) nominates Darin Olson as Chair. There were no other nominations.

Action: Koch motioned for **Darin Olson to be Chair**, 2nd by Hart. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

3. District Snapshot.

Pineda shares that she has been working on the Oregon Department of Agriculture quarterly and year-end grant reporting. The Pudding River Focus Area is going to be assessed for bare ground and compared to the pre-assessment completed in 2021 to track progress in the Focus Area. Pineda shares that the Cover Crop Program enrolled twice as many acres then last year and there were a couple of new cooperators. Pineda conducted a Partner Meeting and partners attended to get information on our new Partner Grants. First Fridays are ongoing; Mud and Manure is up next. Pineda will be attending the Nutgrowers Association annual meeting. She is working with Heath Keirstead (Education and Communication Specialist) to develop a District brochure regarding District services and grant offerings. The Local Advisory Committee has been convened by ODA to review the District's work regarding the Ag Water Quality and meets January 24, 2024. Directors asked to have the Strategic Implementation Area (SIA) and the Focus Area work clarified by Pineda and then discussion ensued regarding the future of these projects.

Zamora shares that he has been working on the SIA monitoring and data has been returned from the lab. At this point the data shows that sediment inputs are higher upstream than downstream, suggesting that sediment is being captured somewhere in the channel before reaching the Pudding River. More to come. He adds that he has been working on the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (PSP) project, sampling for pesticides and meeting with our PSP advisory council to develop the strategic plan for outreach and the reduction of pesticides. Zamora has seen interest in the Partner Grant and working with them to apply. Olson asks if Zamora was sampling for nitrates, Zamora says 'no', they test for over 130 pesticide chemicals but no nitrates.

4. Treasurers Report November 2023

Budeau starts by stating that we started receiving levied tax funds in November for over a million dollars. Through November is about 42 percent of the current fiscal year and our year-to-date budget reflects that we are still well under budget across all programs. Walker asks for clarification on the grant table and what each category means and asks how much Conservation Assistance Grants (CAG) funds remain, Sanchez states that the amount reported in the November Treasurers Report does not reflect the amounts to be awarded from this last cycle and the CAG balance will be lower after the awards are sent out.

Action: Koch motioned for the Board to **accept the Treasurers Report for November 2023**, 2nd by Hart. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

5. December 6, 2023, Draft Board Meeting Minutes

Budeau explained that the December 6, 2023, Draft 1 minutes were sent back to Sanchez with his edits. Sanchez displayed Draft 1 with Budeau's edits for Director review and accepted the changes.

Action: Koch motioned for the Board to **accept the December 6, 2023, Board Meeting minutes**, 2nd by Hart. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

6. Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Audit Report

Lovett (Financial Administrator) started by saying that the auditor was going to join us but fell sick and could not attend, so Lovett will go over the audit report. Lovett went over the basic audit process. Lovett displayed the audit report. Overall, the results were a good audit, there were a few discrepancies in bookkeeping, but are amendable and we will work with the QuickBooks consultant to get those corrected. The financial statements were presented fairly, representing the District's financial position with the modified cash basis of accounting, there were no significant discrepancies or material weaknesses. Carry over \$1,613,000, total resources increased such as interest and tax income. Personnel services increased over the prior year, but we added staff and that accounts for the increase. Materials and services decreased by \$24,000. Capital Outlay was around \$503,000, largest asset is the building; \$20,000 less than previous year due to depreciations. (vehicles). Filing has been completed and in compliance.

Walker suggests that we look at a five-year projection. Sanchez responded that she will be developing a five-year budget that aligns with the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan.

Action: Walker motioned that the Board **received and accept the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Audit Report, 2nd** by Budeau. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

7. United States Department Agriculture Services (NRCS) Report.

No Report

8. Annual Meeting Resolution

Action: Koch motioned **before the board of directors for the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District resolution no. 2024-01-03; a resolution for establishing the timing of the Marion SWCD's annual meeting whereas, Oregon Revised Statute 568.582 states that by resolution of the board, by giving due notice, the board of directors shall call an annual meeting of the landowners in the district and present an annual report and audit: now therefore be it resolved that the annual meeting of the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District shall be held February 7, 2024, at the Willamette Heritage Center Dye House 1313 Mill St. se, Salem, OR and by video and teleconference. Be it further resolved that the Board of Directors of the Marion SWCD authorize the District Manager and staff to plan and execute all necessary tasks to plan and present the annual meeting.** 2nd by Budeau. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

9. Board Meeting Guidelines

Hart opened the discussion regarding the vote needed for these procedures asking, is it 2/3 vote? versus quorum? Olson states that the Board can make the decision on the vote needed for procedures. Directors then debated what the vote procedures should be in the guidelines, considering different scenarios of majority versus quorum.

Action: Budeau motioned for the Board to **approve the Board Meeting Guidelines amended with a procedural vote of a simple majority of at least a quorum present.** 2nd by Koch. Discussion, Walker discussed that they needed to clarify the guidelines more. Hart replies that it seems clear and the actions listed are well defined and that it would take a majority to affect the motion. Budeau agrees with Hart, Walker does not agree and feels the Board is incorrect in this motion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-4 [Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-1 [Walker]).

10. Western Oregon Cascadia Recovery Effort Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Chelsea Blank (Conservation Planner) began by introducing the RCPP. It was first discussed at the December Board meeting but the Board wanted more information to consider the RCPP. Blank has returned to share more information. Greg Houle of Sustainable Northwest (SNW) began by introducing the SNW, an organization that works with environment, community, and economy and supports access by rural communities. They work all over the Pacific Northwest and their main programs are clean energy, green markets, regenerative ranching, and water. SNW forest program is focused on wildfire mitigation and looking into prescribed burn projects. The RCPP is one of the programs we work with to assist with postfire restoration. SNW is based out of Portland but many staff are distributed throughout Oregon and Washington.

Blank displays an overview of roles and responsibilities that was provided to the Board. Blank summarizes the roles and responsibilities as lead partner with SNW such as site assessments, landowner engagement, and assisting with connecting individuals with the RCPP, NRCS and Farm Services of America available funds. Blank displays a table illustrating RCPP Technical Assistance contribution by the District, pointing out that the District can invoice the RCPP at 95 percent of each \$1.05 the District has contributed, also noting we can go back to August 2022 and invoice over the \$210,000 the District has already contributed to the fire area. Hart asked to clarify what the cap is on District invoicing. Houle states that there is \$1.5 million budgeted for partner contribution, when that is gone there are no more funds for partners.

Walker asks what our partner contribution is. Blank clarified that it is the \$210,000 making that the eligible invoiceable amount to date.

Action: Budeau motioned for the Board **to authorize the Marion SWCD to partner with Sustainable Northwest in the Western Oregon Cascadia Recovery Effort Regional Conservation Partnership Program**, 2nd by Hart. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

11. Employee Pay Raise & Regular Employee Status

Sanchez displays the Personnel Action form requesting that the Board approve Cesar Zamora as a full-time regular status employee having accomplished his six-month introductory period and approving a one-step pay increase due to receiving an exceeds expectations or higher on his Performance Evaluation.

Action: Koch motioned for the Board to approve Cesar Zamora as a full-time regular status employee and a one-step increase in salary, 2nd by Hart. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

12. New Items

Sanchez explains that the Chair and I want to add to the Board meeting agenda every other month an agenda item for “New Items”. This will be a time to introduce new ideas and business to gain feedback from the Board. Hart wanted to make sure that this stays as a listening session and not a time to make decisions regarding new ideas.

13. Appoint Education Committee Member

Olson states that the Education and Outreach Committee needs another member as Walker has declined committee membership. Upon her volunteering, Olson appoints Hart to the Education and Outreach Committee.

Walker asks if the USDA policy regarding approval of their projects by the District Board has been sent to the Administration Committee? Hart replies that the Administrative Committee has been going through all policies and recommending updates etc. to policy. Hart ensures that the USDA project approval has been discussed and is part of the policy work listed for work. Sanchez explained that the policy work will be presented to the Board in March.

Sanchez describes the CONNECT conference in April 2024 and is looking to see if any Directors or Associate Directors would like to attend. Olson asks how lodging is handled. Sanchez replies that she could reserve a room and the District will cover or you could reserve and pay and submit for reimbursement. Sanchez explains that lodging, mileage, conference fee and per diem are included. Walker recommends that people should go, he has gone before and it was worth the trip.

Adjourn: Chair Olson adjourned the meeting at 8:17 PM



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District complies with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. If special physical, language, or other accommodations are needed for this meeting, please contact the District Manager at 503-391-9927 as soon as possible, and at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.