



**Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD)
Board of Directors May 8, 2024
Budget Hearing and Monthly Minutes**

5:30 PM – 6:00 PM Dinner
 6:03 PM – 6:33 PM Budget Hearing
 6:34 PM – 9:10 PM Board Monthly Meeting
 Facilitator: Chair Olson
 Recorded by: Brenda Sanchez
 Approved 07-10-24

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	
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
Brenda Sanchez	Alyssa Burge-Public	
Linda Lovett	Les Bachelor-Natural Resources Conservation Services	
Susan Ortiz	Brandin Hillbrant-North Santiam Watershed Council	
Becky Pineda	Alex C.	
Kassi Roosth	Sue Geniesee	
Sarah Hamilton		

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).

Budget Hearing

Olson Call to Order: 6:03 PM

1. Presentation of Proposed Budget

Sanchez displayed the LB-1 Form with the approved fiscal year 2024-2025 budget and stated the budget totals.

Directors casually discussed amongst themselves as they awaited any public comment.

2. Public Comment: No members of the public were attending and no comments were presented or submitted.

Chair Olson adjourned the Public Hearing: 6:33 PM

Board Meeting

Olson Call to Order: 6:34 PM

Public Comment

Sanchez explains that Alyssa Burge from Silverton Saturday Market will be attending but will arrive after 7 PM. Hart asked if she could provide some feedback on recent events she attended and Olson stated we can do that later. Sanchez said she could add that as a regular agenda item at the end, like it was in the past.

Announcements - None

Agenda Additions or Changes - None

3. District Snapshot

Sanchez shared that Sarah Hamilton (Native and Invasive Plant Specialist) brought to the District a sighting of garlic mustard, which is a high priority invasive plant, that has not been seen in Marion County. This patch of garlic mustard is the first known patch and asked if we could send a crew over to help control it. Sanchez agreed to the cost out of the invasive plant control budget and Hamilton was able to get a crew out to control the plant. Hamilton has put together a long-term plan for the landowner.

Sanchez added that the ivy growing around the facility has been treated for control. Sanchez also stated that she was selected as a member of the Public Meetings Law Rules Advisory Committee beginning May 13, 2024. The Public Meeting Laws recently changed and this committee will review the new rules and submit comments and edits.

Sanchez presented Linda Lovett and Susan Ortiz as this month's employee updates.

Lovett reviewed her work with the Directors, highlighting that the credit card process has been reviewed and we are securing its use, we are using "Square" as our point-of-sale unit and it worked well at the plant sale, and worked on QuickBooks chart of accounts to streamline and bring forward to current day. Lovett stated she was voted in as the new Safety Officer and will be working with staff to move forward on safety issues and said we need to work on bio-security concerns and how we contend with these concerns when we go on farms and ranches. Lovett added that she wrote the history section of the Strategic Plan.

Ortiz shared highlights from her work such as, she started by stating thank you to the District for allowing the staff to attend the CONNECT conference and the sessions

to learn were applicable and varied and the opportunity to meet all the other District staff. Ortiz brought up that at one of the sessions on water rights referred to instream water rights transfers; transfer water conserved into instream water resources such as for fish, and that coming soon any state funds provided to a grantee for water conservation will have to have an in-stream lease component. Ortiz added that the Soil Health Network will be working to establish “hubs” to assist with getting more soil health practices. Ortiz continued with updating the Directors on where we are on the District grant programs. FY 2023-24 was budgeted for \$978,500 for grant programs. We received 69 grant applications at around \$646,000 awarded; roughly 66% of the budgeted funds.

4. Treasurers Report March 2024

Budeau begins by stating that the March 2024 report represents 75% or three quarters of the current fiscal year and by March we only received about 82% of the current year levied taxes; adding that we may not receive much more this year and we are quite under the projected levied taxes for this fiscal year. Budeau adds, that Ortiz already pointed out that we are at \$0 for awarded Partner Grants but we will be considering these later and spending will increase over the last quarter, getting closer to that one-million-dollar amount on awarded grants.

Action: Koch motioned that the Board **approve the March 2024 Treasurers Report, 2nd** by Hart. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

5. March 14, 2024, Strategic Planning Retreat Notes, April 3, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes, and April 10 Work Session Budget Review

Budeau said that the retreat notes represented the meeting well. Amy Stork completed the retreat notes and Sanchez submitted as is. Budeau discussed his edits to the notes and minutes; mostly spelling and some corrections. Hart added two spelling edits. Walker requested that when written questions are submitted, they should be included in the minutes.

Action: Koch motioned that the Board **approve the March 14, April 3, and April 10, 2024, Meeting Notes and Minutes with edits, 2nd** by Hart. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-4 [Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

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

Bachelor explains that they are very busy and Jared Seaman is acting basin resource conservationist, so Les is short staffed during the busiest time. There is a little over one million dollars in the Inflation Reduction Act funds to spend and will working on

that in the upcoming year. Bachelor explains that he has postponed his retirement date until December 27, 2024; last day.

Public Comment Resumed: Alyssa Burge on the Silverton Farmers Market Board is looking to expand and move the market to a new location. With that will come a lot of expenses. Burge adds that we will be able to reach more people than ever. Burge shares that they have been looking at grants to help with funds and wanted to ask the Board for a grant. They acknowledge they missed the last Partner Grant application deadline. Burge reads from her grant proposal that the Silverton Farmers market seeks a \$5,000 grant to boost the growth and resiliency of their market as they embrace exciting changes in terms of location, size, visibility, and community access. Burge continues and states that they are the cornerstone of the local food system for several towns, and the only outlet for year-round Farm direct sales to customers. We host over thirty vendors from the immediate area, who provide organically grown vegetables and fruit, pasture, raised meat and eggs, annual and perennial vegetable starts, flowers, baked goods, medicinal herbs, herbal products, and more. We are empowering thriving businesses and livelihoods in sustainable local agriculture. Directors discussed with Burge the potential to assist in outreach for the District and discussed some ideas. The Directors also discussed how the market survives today with vendor fees and if there are other grants they are seeking. Burge's request was referred to the Education and Outreach Committee meeting on May 20, 2024. Sanchez added she would connect Burge again with Kassi Roosth (Urban Conservationists) to get meeting info.

7. 2024-2025 Budget Adoption

Budeau states the resolution **“be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District hereby adopts the budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 in the total amount of \$4,844,972. This budget is now on file at the District office-408 N #rd Ave. Stayton, Oregon. Be it resolved that the following amounts are hereby appropriated for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, for the following purposes: General Fund, Administration \$783,545, Education Outreach \$334,866, Natural Resources \$1,953,971, and Not Allocated to a Unit or Program \$1,110,000; Multipurpose Reserve Fund, \$316,271; Building Reserve Fund, \$346,319. Total Appropriations, for all funds \$4,182,382”**. **“Be it resolved that the following ad valorem property taxes are hereby imposed upon the assessed value of all taxable property within the district for tax year 2024-2025 at the rate of \$0.0500 per \$1000 of assessed value for permanent rate tax and be it resolved that the taxes imposed are hereby categorized for purposes of Article XI (11) section 11b as subject to the General Government Limitation Permanent Rate Tax \$ 0.0500/\$1,000 and Excluded from Limitation General Obligation Bond Debt Service \$ 0.00”**.

Action: Koch motions “Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the Marion SWCD hereby adopts resolution 050824 and the budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 in the total amount of \$4,844,972 and be it resolved that the following amounts are hereby appropriated for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, for the following purposes: General Fund total \$4,182,382, Multipurpose Reserve Fund, \$316,271; Building Reserve Fund, \$346,319; total appropriated, all funds \$4,844,972 and be it resolved that the following ad valorem property taxes are hereby imposed upon the assessed value of all taxable property within the district for tax year 2024-2025: at the rate of \$ 0.0500 per \$1000 of assessed value for permanent rate and be it resolved that the taxes imposed are hereby categorized for purposes of article xi (11) section 11b as: subject to the general government limitation permanent rate tax \$ 0.0500/\$1,000 and excluded from limitation general obligation bond debt services \$ 0.00”, 2nd by Hart. No further discussion. Motion passed (aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], opposed-0).

8. Conservation Assistance Grant (CAG)

a. March 2024 Cycle Award Approval

Susan Ortiz (Staff-Grants Coordinator) reviewed the CAG applications and the stipulations recommended by the CAG Review Committee for a few of the applications. Ortiz explains that most stipulations were addressed, except for Lewis Drip, which needs a design. Koch asked if they should approve the award with the stipulations? Walker replied “No” they should come back to the Board after the stipulations have been addressed. Walker requests that when they (Board) receives the CAG table that the award requested, match amount, and total project costs are reported in three columns, separated out. Directors discussed the design stipulation for Lewis Drip and wanted to know where they are in the design acquisition. Pineda (Staff-Conservation Planner) responded that she is working with the applicant, the designs are almost ready and will be sent to Hardy for review once received.

Action: Hart motioned that the Board **approve the 11 CAG applications totaling \$55,647.05, the Mill Creek Bank Restoration Project to be excluded in this motion. Motion tabled by Hart.** Discussion, Olson discussed his concerns with incomplete applications and that the District should work to remedy this. Olson would like to see incomplete applications not presented to the Board and to hold off until the application is complete. Hart asked if there was an important timing issue if we waited until the next Board meeting to approve, once the design is approved? Pineda responded, there is a timing issue but the applicant is waiting for a work window that agrees with the weather. Directors continued to discuss the timeframe for the project and whether there may be an issue if they wait until June to approve. Olson asked about whether they will fund buried drip lines, is there a conservation benefit?

Hardy stated that there are issues with above ground lines such as coyotes destroying the line for water. Directors continued to discuss the use of buried drip lines. There was further discussion related to micro “drip” or “spray”, and what is the difference. Hart asked if there was a conservation benefit with buried drip lines. Olson explained that there is, however, do we want to fund the burying of drip lines, is there a conservation benefit when drip lines are buried. Hardy replies that below ground is more efficient and is more targeted application. Directors continued discussing the potential benefits of buried drip lines.

Action: Budeau motioned that the Board **approve the 10 of the 12 CAG Review Committee recommendations to fund for a total of \$32,245.52, Lewis Drip #20-24-025 and the Mill Creek Bank Restoration Project #20-24-028 are excluded**, 2nd by Koch. Discussion, Ortiz asks for clarification on the Lewis Drip #20-24-025 and the Mill Creek Bank Restoration Project #20-24-028. Olson says we will address that after the vote for the current motion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

Olson adds that the Lewis Drip #20-24-025 project will be presented to the Board after the design is submitted and approved by Hardy.

b. Mill Creek Bank Restoration Project

Sue Geniesse (CAG applicant and Salem homeowner) is collaborating with nine neighbors and the City of Salem to improve a section of the streambank along Mill Creek. The project focuses on controlling invasive weed species, stabilizing creek banks against soil erosion, and enhancing backyard wildlife habitat. These eleven properties border both sides of the creek. Due to multiple stakeholders and financial constraints, funding limitations exist particularly surrounding timing of grant fund availability. The North Santiam Watershed Council (NSWC) is willing to act as the Project Manager and Fiscal Agent for Geniesse’s Conservation Assistance Grant (CAG) application for an admin fee of \$1,340. The goal of this action is to explore options to address the funding limitations to assure project success. We propose allocating a portion of the Invasive Species Control budget of \$13,400 appropriated in the Natural Resources budget to the NSWC to cover the three years of invasive weed control portion of the project. The CAG-20-24-028-Mill Creek Bank Restoration Project request of \$22,500 would be decreased by \$13,400 to reflect the funding for invasive species removal funding by the District for a new award request amount of \$7,760. Directors discussed the details of this request. Walker requests that the applicant demonstrate that the additional funds have been awarded before giving them the funds. Directors discussed further Walker’s concern. Geniesse explained that she is submitting a City of Salem grant to compliment the District’s funds to complete the project and feels confident that they will be awarded, but if

they do not get the city funds, they will discontinue the project. Geniesse goes onto discuss the public benefits of the project. Olson assures Geniesse that the Board likes the project but this is an unusual request and they must consider all the Director concerns before determining the outcome. Geniesse further explains that the project cost is difficult to manage for ten homeowners, and that the District staff was very good at trying to get this project funded. Plowhead brings up her concern regarding whether a homeowner sells their property during the three years and what would be needed for a new owner to complete project.

Action: Walker motioned that the Board **approves the payment to North Santiam Watershed Council of \$14,740 for invasive weed control funds for the Mill Creek Bank Restoration Project on the condition that the balance of the project funds be secured, 2nd by Koch.** Discussion, Koch asked when do the secured funds have to be demonstrated? Walker says before we give the money to NSWC. Walker withdraws the motion. Koch motioned that the Board **approves the payment to North Santiam Watershed Council of \$14,740 for invasive weed control funds for the Mill Creek Bank Restoration Project if the other funds are secured prior to the District releasing the funds, 2nd by Hart.** MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

Geniesse asks for clarification on the motion and if there is a way to get funds right away to begin. Directors deliberated options and then ended discussion.

c. CAG Extension Requests

Action: Budeau motioned that the Board **approve the Request for Extension for Westendorf Grape Drip Irrigation, Beneficial Insect Habitat Improvement, Cherry Creek Habitat Improvements, and McKay Irrigation Efficiency, 2nd by Koch.** No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

d. Partner Grant Year 1 Review

Ortiz begins by stating she would like to discuss with the Board lessons learned from the first round of Partner Grants. Such as how the Partner Grant application review should be adapted. Sanchez notes that she did not put the Partner Grant lessons learned in the Board packet. Olson and Walker want to move the discussion to the next Board meeting. Koch would like to see us meet via Zoom and adds that she needs more development of the grant to be confident in the process. Olson suggests we could meet after the Strategic Plan work session. Agreed to by consensus. Sanchez printed the Partner Grant Lessons Learned and provided it to attending Directors and Associates.

9. Education Committee

a. CLEAR Grants

Walker begins by sharing his concern related to purchasing boots, CLEAR grants normally pay for substitutes and buses, not boots. Directors deliberated the needs of children on field trips. Plowhead adds that the federal government provides free lunches for students in qualifying areas on field trips and that getting boots for students where the school promises to maintain them is a good thing for students.

Action: Hart motioned that the Board **approve the CLEAR Grant for Bethany Charter School for \$2000 and West Salem High School for \$802.18 to purchase boots**, 2nd by Koch. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-4 [Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-1 Walker).

Action: Hart motioned that the Board **approve the CLEAR Grant for Community Roots School for \$2000**, 2nd by Koch. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

10. Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (MWCOG) 2024 Intergovernmental Agreement

Sanchez explained that MWCOG every year updates their agreement with us. We have a seat on their Board (Olson is in that seat) and we use MWCOG services such as lawyers, background checks, and geographic information software training. Sanchez is seeking authorization to sign the agreement. The agreement does not have a cost to it other than when we hire and use services from them.

Action: Koch motioned that the Board **authorize the District Manager to sign the renewal of the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments 2024 Intergovernmental Agreement**, 2nd by Hart. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Walker, Olson, Koch, Hart, and Budeau], Opposed-0).

11. New Topics

No new topics were presented.


Hart wanted to share what she learned at CONNECT. Hart brought up the idea of equipment rental after attending a session at CONNECT. She met staff from Clackamas and thought maybe there was a way to collaborate with them and start renting equipment to people who need something like a no-till drill and they could store and assist with maintenance. Hart then went on to discuss the Oregon Climate Action Network; adding that Ortiz had summed that session up well. Hart continued

about the session on easements; describing how easements and trusts are worked out, sharing that the District would be responsible for 50-100 years and would have to enforce the easements. Hart also described how she went to a county weed presentation and although counties are charged with weed control, maybe there was a way to partner with them and aid with funding to control weeds.

Walker discussed how he attended the Conservation Club hazelnut cover crop workshop and tour. Walker attended the online portion and was impressed with the presentation and inspired to do more learning. Hart added that staff (Roosth, Blank, Hamilton) was excellent at the Silverton emergency preparedness presentation.

Sanchez reminded the Board that the Strategic Plan work session was scheduled for May 16.

Adjourn: Chair Olson adjourned the meeting at 9:10 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.