



Klamath  
Soil & Water  
Conservation District

**ORIGINAL**  
*signed 4/13/22*

541.883.6924 | Fax: 541.882.5409 | 1945 Main Street, Suite 200 | Klamath Falls, Oregon 97601 | www.klamathswcd.org

## **KSWCD BOARD MEETING: March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 12:00pm**

### **In Attendance:**

**Board Members:** Earl Miller, Martin Kerns, David Cone, Denise Kandra, Ken Masten, Grant Knoll, and Todd Kepple

**KSWCD Staff:** Brian Quick, District Manager and Barbara Farnsworth, Volunteer Admin Asst.

**Community Partners:** Josh Elke NRCS, Mark Johnson KWP, Brad Moore Energy Trust of Oregon, Laura Hall FSA (Zoom), and Julie Jespersen/Michelle Sharp SBC

**Meeting called to order at 12:06 pm by Chairman Earl Miller**

### **Agenda Changes:**

- Email addressed to the board from Will Natividad to be added to new business.
- Eric Nusbaum's Email Response.

### **Motion 1: Move to approve the minutes for February 9th, 2022**

**Motion:** Todd

**Second:** Grant

**Discussion:** There were no proposed changes to the minutes. David has requested that future minutes reflect the preparer's initials, date, and version in the footer.

**Vote:** Unanimous

### **Motion 2: Move to file the financials for February 2022**

**Motion:** Martin

**Second:** Grant

**Discussion:** David had questions regarding the drill repair cost being high. Brian shared that it often is the gage wheels and general wear/tear. Brian keeps parts available in the pickup to make the needed repairs. David shared that they have had a previous discussion about the purchase of a new drill. David would like to see an end of year report for the drill repair expenses. Then compare that cost against the cost of a new drill payment. David gave his approval to file the financial reports.

**Vote:** Unanimous

### **Unfinished Business:**

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Discussion on the Annual Work Plan. Brian provided the Annual Work Plan to Directors. Brian briefly went over the numbers and information that is in the Annual Work Plan. Denise would like to see the Board decide how often they will be looking at the Annual Work Plan. This will help determine the projects, staff requirements, responsibilities, and needs for the district. David would like to determine the breakdown of the estimates versus the actual hours spent on projects. Brian shared that all hours are tracked per grant on timesheets. Denise would like to see a better way of tracking and accountability for future Annual Work Plans. It will help to determine if we are being successful or falling short in project areas. At the end of the year Brian goes through timesheets to determine if there are project areas that need to be increased or decreased in hours. Due to Covid restrictions the forestry and farm tours haven't happened. Todd shared background information on the Annual Work Plan discussion. Todd likes the Annual Work Plan format and would like to see an evaluation process to help us determine what projects were met and if there are projects that are falling behind. The current Annual Work Plan **expires June 30th, 2022.**

#### **Chairman Report Earl Miller:**

Earl has requested that the attachment included in the email from Eric Nusbaum be entered into the minutes as **Exhibit #1.**

Earl also shared how Board training has not taken place this past year due to COVID restrictions. Earl mentioned that these trainings are beneficial to new Directors and help to understand Board responsibilities. Earl explained his thoughts regarding the districts email to Eric Nusbaum and feels this situation could have been avoided if Board training had taken place.

Discussion: Brian explained that he was the individual that originally emailed Eric Nusbaum asking about the Boards ability to not sign a check and hold off paying the invoice from HR Answers. The email sent to Eric and his reply were not presented to the board at the meeting, only the attachment. Ken shared that the Board could hold a check that is not in the normal bill cycle and to request an understanding of the charges being brought before the board. It also must have Board approval before it can be sent out. This pertains to anything over the \$1000.00 limit the Brian has available to spend. Denise contacted Ken and asked for clarification on the invoice before signing the check; was this for the discussions Ken had with HR Answers. They were not going to charge KSWCD for those discussions. Brian explained that the charges were for technical assistance while he was working with an employee's evaluation and progress.

Brian did place a call to HR Answers when he got the invoice asking what the charges were for. It was Brian's understanding that the HR support was part of the SDAO membership and that they were not charging \$160.00 an hour for support. The charges are broken down on the invoice, Todd shared that the district could try and submit a reimbursement request to SDAO. Grant shared that employment situations or invoices regarding employment HR should be taken into an Executive Session. Grant explained his understanding was that the invoice was due to an employment situation or issue. Ken asked

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that one of the Board members call and discuss this with HR Answers. Denise has asked for more up-front clarification and advance notice on these types of charges to prevent this in the future.

### **Motion 3: Move to approve and pay HR Answers Invoice**

**Motion: Todd**

**Second: Earl**

**Discussion: Earl shared the email information and attachment labeled Exhibit #1 from Eric Nusbaum regarding Board accountability; regarding not signing and sending the check for HR Answers invoice. Ken explained how it is board policy to complete and send checks that are in the normal bill cycle and budget. If an invoice is outside the normal operating budget it needs to be brought before the board for approval.**

**Vote: Unanimous**

### **Vice-Chair Report Ken Matsen:**

OACD reviewed their Financial Reports and Officer Elections were held. All positions stayed the same. Ken Bailey is no longer on the Board, he has resigned. He has been appointed as an Outside Treasurer only.

**Committee Updates:** NACD Reports, and Working Lands Committee, and the Advocacy Committee on the different Bills that are going through the Legislator. Interviews completed for an SWCD position funded with ODA. Water Rights Webinar going on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022, from 1-2:30pm. Position Statement Webinar March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, from 1-4:00pm. Connect Plus is meeting in Seaside for the Connect Conference September 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and OACD Annual Conference will be Nov 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 in Newport, Oregon. Next Meeting is on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Small Business Consulting: Julie Jespersen & Michelle Sharp**

Formatting has changed on Financials. This will make a formatting adjustment to Profit and Loss by Class. Prior there was a class for every single grant. Julie has chunked that up and shared the differences between the new classes. These are divided by admin, local, project management, fiscal, drill, and aerator. This will help to condense the Profit and Loss Report. The Project Management column is all the individual grants. Each grant can also have an individual report by project if needed. This tightens up the formatting according to Julie. Julie introduced Michelle Sharp. Michelle will be taking over Chris's position. Michelle will be doing the day in and day out bookkeeping for KSWCD.

**Question and Answer:** Denise inquired about late charges. Julie shared that this fiscal year to date there have been no interest or late fees. In the past there was always a late fee on the John Deere Financial Card. Julie feels that things have been tightened up enough that there haven't been any late fees. Julie can run reports for previous fiscal years if requested. Denise explained that wasn't necessary. Earl explained his understanding of the bank scheduling on statements being received. This can hold up the financial reports getting to KSCWD office and into the board packets before mailings. According to Julie,

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Umpqua Bank didn't have statements ready until Saturday for the past month due to the last day of the month being the 28th. Julie goes online and pulls them as soon as they are available. Brian suggested moving the Board meeting to the 3rd week of the month and that would prevent the problem. Julie mentioned that any Board meeting before the 10th or 12th day of the month is a push for the financials. Todd asked if the report could be run on the date it is requested for the board to review. Julie agreed. Earl shared that there may be a couple months that financials will not be available before the Board meeting unless the Board would like to change the meeting date. Grant mentioned that the financial activity is not that great and looking at 2 in a month would be okay.

#### **FSA TA: Laura Hall**

We are still in D4 drought meaning that on April 15<sup>th</sup> we will automatically enter into multiple livestock programs, including financial assistance for hauling water, additional transportation costs and grazing loss. We are currently completing all payments related to the 2021 drought loss for livestock. CRP Grasslands sign-up is April and will allow for grazing under a prescribed grazing plan to help maintain conservation efforts on working ranches. I will get you the updated fact sheet once I have it. There is a new program coming, but we have not gotten the specifics. We will do extensive outreach when that occurs.

#### **NRCS Soil Conservationist: Josh Elke**

Klamath Falls Update: High Deserts-Deschutes-Basin Team Leader Update: NRCS will be getting more positions in the Klamath Falls Office to help with the workload that has been created. A new student intern will be chosen from 52 applicants. A NRCS Biologist will also be housed in our office. A ODF-NRCS Forester position will be housed at ODFs building. A NRCS Soil Conservationist position may also be present in the office to complement the work that Alex and Amelia are doing. A new NRCS Civil Engineer Tech position also. Some of these positions are new and have not been in the field office before. State Leadership is also working with Josh on the redesign and layout for the office to increase office space for these positions. State Leadership is expected to be onsite soon to look at the physical location. Programs: A lot of our programs for fiscal year 2022 are wrapping up. NRCS is expecting to have another sign up in addition to the ones that they have already had for EQIP. NRCS Oregon will be asking for additional funds from National Headquarters. Klamath Basin Farming and Wetlands Collaborative is focused on wetlands. Conservation Stewardship Program is a 5-year long program, and the application deadline is March 18th. There has been little participation in this program due to long term commitments and the difficulty with water allocations.

Field Updates: Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) has 3 different funding opportunities for this year. The Food Security Initiative is targeting Organic and small farms. The Upper Klamath Lake Ag Water Quality Improvement, and the Chiloquin Community Forest Fuels. Working on a Conservation Incentive Contract. This is the pilot project I have shared at previous meetings. Oregon is 1 of 5 states that was adopted for this program. We have 14 applicants for this program due to climate change. It will focus on drought resiliency with projects like cover cropping, LESA/LEPA, No-Till, and Soil Testing

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Water Supply Forecast/Snowpack Update: Please see the handout. It looks alarming for our snow water. Kate Brown declared Klamath County in drought status again on Monday.

NRCS/SWCD Update: We are working together on the conservation needs assessment and Stukel Mountain Conservation Implementation Strategy. There is a lot of opportunity for SWCD to help with landowner outreach around Stukel. Irrigation Improvement and Drought Resiliency. CIS is a key focus and has received a letter of support from KWP. The annual Local Workgroup Meeting is scheduled for tomorrow at 10:00am.

### **Energy Trust: Brad Moore**

Brad shared information on Energy Trust's incentives for the LESA/LEPA programs. Landowners with an existing pivot can fill out the application form. They submit that application with a copy of the invoice for the equipment upgrade and the landowner will receive a check in the mail. Energy Trust is a private nonprofit. The funds are not state or federal money. These funds can work in conjunction with state or federal funds. If they are installing a new pivot or linear system, they will need preapproval. Have the landowner call Brad before the new install or conversion and he will help them through the process. There are additional incentives and rebates for different equipment. Brad left rebate forms with Brian, or they can apply online.

### **KSWCD District Manager: Brian Quick:**

Brian followed up on the Board's approval to hire an Administrative Assistant. Brian introduced Barbara Farnsworth to the Board and shared her previous work with the district. Barbara has agreed to be a volunteer 3 days a week. Approximately 15-20 hours per week. The district has agreed to reimburse Barbara for her roundtrip mileage due to living in Bonanza. Barbara will also run a minimal number of errands for the district with her personal vehicle. The average mileage will run \$350-\$400 every month. Brian updated the Board on the administrative duties Barbara will be performing.

Updates on Projects: The District is working with Brad and Josh on the LESA/LEPA proposal on irrigation efficiency. Within these programs the typical irrigation systems such as pivots and linear are approximately 78-85% efficient. Approximately 22% of the applied water is not going where it is needed. Landowners generally apply more water than needed to make sure their crops are getting the water. Irrigation efficiency can be increased up to 97% when converting to LESA/LEPA systems. It helps to reduce wind drifting, less evaporation, and less overhead irrigation. The district will seek funding from OWEB for projects. Brian shared an upcoming budget proposal to OWEB for these projects. The district is also working with Josh on the Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS.) The goal is to improve irrigation efficiency on existing linear and pivot systems by converting to LESA/LEPA.

The district will be conducting outreach with OSU Extension Service, KWP, irrigation districts, websites, surveys, and other ways to gather information. Brian created a Conservation Assessment Questionnaire. It will ask landowners if they have an interest in upgrading their current irrigation system. This will also generate demographic information. We are hoping to get this set up on our website and other irrigation

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websites as a fillable document. The district is hoping to get more landowner needs information from Community Partners at the Workgroup meeting tomorrow.

The Keno Forestland Project is still in process. Will is continuing to work with contractors and landowners on this project. Will is currently working on the mapping. After Will gets the mapping completed ODA will draw up an agreement with the district and projects can get started.

Grasshopper Season: ODA has created an online grasshopper reporting platform. The district hopes to add this fillable form on our website. Landowners can click on the reporting form and fill in the information. This will help ODA start the process of landowner onsite surveys. As soon as a landowner encounters a grasshopper they need to get online and complete the form. This will help generate the onsite surveys and when the landowner needs to spray. Senate Bill #5561 passed due to the loss of Oregon rangeland because of grasshoppers. This bill has allocated a onetime \$5 million dollar budget to help combat grasshopper infestations in 2022. This bill also provides cost sharing programs for landowners to combat grasshopper infestations.

No Till Drill: The drill has been going out regularly. Landowners are planting regardless of if they are receiving irrigation or not.

#### **New Business: ----- Board**

- Email from Eric Nusbaum **See Exhibit #1 Attached**

**Discussion:** There was no discussion as Eric was no longer in attendance at the meeting.

- Email to Board from Will Natividad regarding wage increase.

#### **Motion 4: Move to approve a 5% Cost of Living Allowance (COLA), for Will Natividad.**

**Motion:** Todd

**Second:** Martin

**Discussion:** Earl shared the email request that Will Natividad sent to the Board. Will is asking for a 30% increase in his salary. The district gave a 5% increase to our District Manager after 3 years of satisfactory performance. Ken suggested that Will should receive a increase but not a 30% increase. Grant explained that the District Manager should be the first point of contact for this type of request not the Board. The District Manager should look at performance standards and determine if they are being met. Then it would be brought to the Board by the District Manager as a recommendation or not. A performance evaluation was completed prior to Will's request. Todd shared that the Board doesn't have a direct read on Will's performance. The Board previously discussed having Will join the Board Meetings and give his reports directly to them. Todd would still support this if the Board agreed. Ken agrees. A satisfactory evaluation was completed by Brian. There were areas in need of improvement that were noted. Brian objected to giving Will a raise. Todd shared that an employee should not have to come to the Board to ask for a wage increase. The Board could look at doing annual or bi-annual evaluations and COLA increases for employees.

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**Vote: Motion passes with 5 yes votes. Ken Masten, Todd Kepple, Denise Kandra, David Cone, and Martin Kerns voted Yes, Grant Knoll, Earl Miller opposed.**

**Motion 5: Move to approve the effective date of April 1st, 2022, for COLA increase for Will Natividad.**

**Motion: Todd**

**Second: Martin**

**Discussion: N/A**


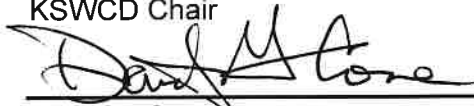
**Vote: Motion passes with 5 yes votes. Ken Masten, Todd Kepple, Denise Kandra, David Cone, and Martin Kerns voted Yes, Grant Knoll, Earl Miller opposed.**

**Public Comment: None**

**Meeting adjourned by Chairman Earl Miller at 2:57 pm.**

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 13th, 2022, at 12:00 pm**

Minutes Approved as Written:

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
|  | 4-13-22       |
| _____<br>KSWCD Chair  | _____<br>Date |
|  | 4/13/22       |
| _____<br>KSWCD Secretary/Treasurer  | _____<br>Date |

Minutes Approved as Amended:

\_\_\_\_\_  
KSWCD Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
KSWCD Secretary/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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