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

Monday, April 4th, 2022

6:01pm- Call to Order

Guebert called to order the regular meeting of the EMSWCD Board of Directors meeting at 6:01pm on Monday, April 4th, 2022, via videoconference.

6:02pm- Introductions, Review/revise agenda, Review previous action items

Guebert conducted introductions for the record. The following persons were present:

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

Staff: Nancy Hamilton (Executive Director) Dan Mitten (Chief of Finance & Operations), Kathy Shearin (Urban Lands Program Supervisor), Julie DiLeone (Rural Lands Program Supervisor), Heather Nelson Kent (Grants Program Manager), Monica McAllister (Community Connection Liaison), Chelsea White-Brainard (Rural Lands Outreach & Education Specialist), Asianna Fernandez (Executive Assistant)

Guests: Jamila Dozier (Consultant), Chris Wallace Caldwell (Consultant), Kimberly Galland (Natural Resources Conservation Service), Shannon Drohman (Compensation Connections)

Changes to the agenda: N/A

Guebert presented previous Action Items.

Fernandez to email the Board of Directors with Wednesday availabilities for April and July Strategic Planning Workshops. (completed)

6:03pm- Approval of minutes

MOTION: Carlson moved to approve March 7, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes, Masterson 2nd. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

6:04pm- Time reserved for public comment

N/A

6:5pm-NRCS Review of Civil Rights Responsibilities

Galland went through the Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners Checklist. Requested the Board to review and sign the document for non-discrimination in USDA programs. Ignore the 2nd page as the District is not co-located with NRCS. Each board member can sign the 3rd page and send in separately - does not have to be on the same document. Suggested reading the MOU and can go over it in a future meeting if there are questions about it, would only need maximum of an hour. The MOA should be available to all staff members.

Hamilton The Board did review this document at the beginning of her tenure, this might just be a matter of getting signatures.

ACTION ITEM: Board of Directors to sign and send Fernandez the 3rd page of the Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners checklist.

Guebert Any other updates from NRCS? **Galland** Looking to fill Matthew's GS11 position. Wrapping up contracting season, moving into conservation stewardship applications and contracts, hoping to have



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another application period beginning in November. Informal committee for conservationists who work with Urban/Small Farms in the District.

Hamilton The District has been assisting in providing some location options for urban gardening in East Multnomah District. **Kent** - NRCS has chosen Our Village Garden in North Portland, which is one of our grantees.

6:18pm- Executive Director Update

Hamilton

- We have begun a “soft opening” of the office again this month. No requirements to wear a mask, but everyone is welcome to if they’d like. Looking forward to a hybrid setting. Trying to be mindful that coming back to work can be sort of a shock to some people. Looking for something to be more formalized by May. Not yet any ideas for the Board to meet in person. Suggested June to be the first in person meeting, not including members of the public due to inability to manage vaccinations, online participation still encouraged for the public.

ACTION ITEM: Hamilton and Mitten to ensure all Board Members have sent in vaccination cards to Mitten before June if the Board wants to meet in person.

- Had a meeting with Lacey Townsend from Tualatin SWCD; has been attending SDAO webinars and trainings. Conversation with Mary at WMSWCD, working towards how to better work together in outreach and networking with partners and contractors. Has email out to Chris from Clackamas SWCD about creating a small regional lunch with all 4 to share ideas and discuss how to better collaborate, templating contract language, updating eligibility requirements for running for office, sharing workshops and information across regions, etc. Held a conversation with Townsend about renting vs. owning office space: Tualatin SWCD spends \$20k per month in rental space, including education open space for workshops. Are looking to buy.
- Will be attending the OCEAN Connect Conference in September in Seaside, OR. Looking forward to small in-person round tables with other Executive Directors.
- Site visit with Jeremy on April 6th. Has been visiting other properties recently as well.

Guebert Working together and collaboration with other SWCDs is a great idea.

Masterson The external facing work is exciting. Suggested meeting with Larry Ojua from Yamhill SWCD.

Hamilton Larry and Craig are next on her list to connect with.

- Will be participating in OWEB Climate Resolution listening sessions.
- Legislature approved \$5 million to Oregon Agricultural Program. Had a meeting with Shipkey to give Senator Lew Fredrick some talking points before the decision. It’s an opportunity to get matching federal money.

Masterson thanked Hamilton and the District for their work to helping the legislature to reach this decision.

6:33pm- FY20-21 Short Annual Report Zine

Hamilton The idea for the Zine was to create accessible plain language for our constituents around what the District does and what we did in the past fiscal year. Working on it since December but wanted to continue through to set a framework for this Fiscal Year and following years.

Brainard shared the Zine from the website. (<https://emswcd.org/20-21-annual-report/>) Emphasized that this project was to tell stories and show visuals.

Masterson This is a great, user-friendly way to give the cliff notes version of what we do.



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Guebert More readable than any other report we've had, suggested sharing it with people Hamilton meets with.

Caldwell This isn't something you see many other SWCDs doing, it's a great example of accessibility.

6:43pm- Strategic Planning

Caldwell Looking to go over recent Strategic Planning updates and touch base on the LLC meeting.

- How do we go through this process at a pace that keeps everyone involved? There will now be Strategic Planning Workshops once a month, assessing whether they'll be 2 or 3 hours now that they will be more frequent.
- Staff has been working on the mission for the organization, pulling together everyone's thoughts from the last workshop. An option will be presented at the April 13th meeting, the team will be finalizing this by the 6th to send out to the Board with the Workshop Agenda.
- We will also go over what we mean by some of the language used in our discussions and what we mean by the connection between equity and conservation.
- Preliminary work around the District's vision, looking at what outcomes are we looking for in the future. All staff have had an opportunity to contribute to these ideas. Now looking at next steps toward prioritization. The board can expect some direction on how to help contribute to prioritization.

Action Item: Caldwell and Dozier to send the Board a mission statement outline and the April 13th Workshop Agenda by April 6th.

Dozier led conversation around the discussions and information shared at last week's Land Legacy Committee meeting that included presentations by members of the Farm Access Equity Advisory Group.

Caldwell Considering Guebert wasn't present, suggested the Board members share their reflections with Guebert as well.

Zimmer-Stucky There are significant barriers to enter farming, but they are not impossible to fix with community and economic resources. Walked away feeling like the District can make meaningful change in using resources in the right way.

Masterson was impressed with how passionate everyone was in getting back into and furthering their farming, even with the presence of such barriers. Working with partners seems like a good way to help some folks who are already ready to launch. For those without any experience yet, getting them access to information and land.

Rossi The things he heard were challenges across all farmers. There are places we can help.

Carlson Agreed with Joe, not like it was in the past. It is inspiring what the presenters are here to do and great to see that there are still some looking to get into farming. It also benefits us to help them out.

Masterson We should stay focused not on loading the pipeline with entry level farmers, but also providing and presenting a working model so that we can show to be successful once you've started. Are we giving them what they need to run a successful business?

Zimmer-Stucky Providing land is just the first step. With the level of enthusiasm these folks have, it would be great to provide them with what they need to move up.

Dozier Looking to ensure that this topic is still on the Board's mind and would like for them to bring these ideas to the Strategic Planning Workshop.

Caldwell Megan may be able to attend the May LLC meeting and provide data on barriers to access.

7:05pm- PIC Grant Awards

Kent shared the Partners in Conservation (PIC) 2022 Recommendations.

10 first time applicants – 5 recommended for full funding

13 applicants with open PIC grant- 9 recommended for funding



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Hamilton Important to note that there's the new Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF) money which changes the dynamic for those in the City of Portland and informed some of the conversations that the committee had.

Guebert Were there any projects that were really agonizing to cut funding to?

Kent There were a lot of good projects left on the table, it leaves something for us to think about, increase in outreach and the expectation of new community partners, would like to work with those asking for higher dollar amount. The Friends of Trees generated the most anguish because she knows their contract with the City is not being renewed and given how much of impact urban street trees have, but they have many other city and regional partners.

Carlson For the two-year projects, struggled with deciding on funding for the full amount, or just for a year. If the District had the money, he would've funded them all. Learned a lot, exciting to see all the different projects that people are doing.

Zimmer-Stucky Due to direct conflict of interest, suggested having two separate motions or she can recuse her vote.

Kent it would be more in line with direction given to the grantees for Zimmer-Stucky to recuse her vote only for the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership.

MOTION: Zimmer-Stucky moved to accept the full PIC Grant Funding, with the exception of Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership. Guebert 2nd. (5-0).

MOTION: Carlson moved to accept the full PIC Grant Funding of the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership. Masterson 2nd. (4-0, Zimmer-Stucky's vote recused).

Mitten A lot of grantees applied for ACH payments, which means they got funding within 2 days. More accessible for grantees, getting started on projects right away.

7:33pm- Monthly Financial Reports: February 2022

Mitten presented the February 2022 Financial Report (available in meeting packet): Everything looks in line with where the District is in the current fiscal year. No wide variances. A couple observations: On the balance sheet, over \$20 million in assets. \$12.8 million in cash in our Operational and Government Account. \$13 million in cash receivable and assets. Remainder in fixed assets, building, accumulation, etc. Very healthy balance sheet, trending well. Nothing alarming in Profit & Loss. Lower revenue due to cancelled Plant Sale and lower interest rates. Property tax revenue to exceed expectations in March. Likely to exceed expected rental income. LGIP Interest rates rose from .45% to .55%, which is a good sign.

7:38pm- Closing items: announcements, reminders, and action items

Masterson Felt like the budget process this time has been very thoughtful and helpful. Thanked staff for their help.

Guebert Outward facing documents and presentations are improving in the right direction.

Fernandez read new **Action Items**:

- **Board of Directors to sign and send Fernandez the 3rd page of the Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners checklist.**
- **Hamilton and Mitten to ensure all Board Members have sent in vaccination cards to Mitten before June.**
- **Caldwell and Dozier to send the Board a mission statement outline and the April 13th Workshop Agenda by April 6th.**

7:40pm- Adjournment: **Guebert** adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm.