



3/6/2023

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

Monday, March 6, 2023

6:00pm- Call to Order

Zimmer-Stucky, called to order the regular meeting of the EMSWCD Board of Directors at 6:00pm on Monday, March 6, 2023, at EMSWCD's Office.

6:00pm- Introductions, Review/revise agenda, Review previous action items

Zimmer-Stucky conducted introductions for the record. The following persons were present:

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

Board of Directors Absent: Mike Guebert (Zone 3 Director, Vice-Chair)

Staff: Nancy Hamilton (Executive Director) (virtual), Dan Mitten (Chief of Finance & Operations), Kathy Shearin (Urban Lands Program Supervisor), Julie DiLeone (Rural Lands Program Supervisor), Heather Nelson Kent (Grants Program Manager), Katie Meckes (Urban Lands Planner), Alex Woolery (IT and Analytic Specialist), Asianna Fernandez (Executive Assistant)

Guests: N/A

Changes to the agenda: N/A

Previous action items:

- **Fernandez** to add Board tour of the office to the June Board Meeting Agenda. -In Progress
- **Board** to send Guebert any ideas/points to bring up at the Farm Bill Meeting with Earl Blumenauer. -Done
- **Hamilton and Mitten** to bring broker recommendations and high-level cost analysis budget information on the current office building to the Board. Proceed with current budget including placeholder for current office with redesign for the March Budget meeting. -Done
- **Staff** to determine if there's time to look into page 6 graphic redesign on Strategic Plan. -In Progress
- **Fernandez** to update LLC and PC Meetings invites. -Done

6:01pm- Approval of minutes

MOTION: Masterson moved to approve February 6, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Carlson 2nd. Motion passed unanimously (4-0, Guebert absent).

6:02pm- Time reserved for public comment. - N/A

6:03pm- Executive Director and Leadership Team Updates

Hamilton shared the ED Updates.

External Meetings:

- Rob Cato (Zenger Farms)- discussed follow up with the FAEAG recommendations. He has good understanding about how public entities operate, with healthy cynicism about moving forward. Relayed to him that any decision would not include a house, due to the value of a home on a property and our responsibility to our taxpayers, as well as the general challenges of being a landlord. Talked about Zenger Farmers generally and how we could partner with them.
- Andy Bleckinger (new ED at Yamhill SWCD) & Matt Shipkey- Shipkey was helpful in providing Andy information on easements and property ownership.



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- Robbie MacNichol (Colliers Real Estate) & Dan Mitten- referred by Harka Architects to discuss the building analysis.
- Jon Blasher (METRO Parks and Nature)- Follow up meeting. He will join meeting with some of SWCD EDs in May to gain understanding about SWCD priorities and Metro priorities, to gain common language.
- Paul Lumley (ED at NAYA)- we were founding contributors to their capital campaign. How we can partner with them for publicity as contributors. They're looking at two final grant prospects through Oregon Community Foundation (OCF). If successful, that would wrap up their capital campaign, and they want to collaborate with us in a celebration of such. If unsuccessful, we can work with them to do a press event with how much they need to raise to get over the finish line. Hamilton told Lumley about the new equity focused Grant opportunities we have and Urban Farm money in the current PIC cycle, but they did just get a big Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) grant. Lumley told Hamilton about some of the other cool stuff they've done lately:
 - Conversion of the Little League fields near the Columbia slough, in which the little league players participated in a planting ceremony.
 - They were awarded some American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) money during COVID to upgrade their young learning program and also added 30 staff.
 - Suggested another Board/Staff field trip during an upcoming Board Meeting to their office to see some of the things they are doing.

Looking Forward:

- Board Handbook- We now have everything we can get from ODA. Incorporated pieces from other SWCD's versions. Handed it over to Eileen Aikin (attorney who works with Special Districts) to review and finalize. Since it's not a personnel issue, it will be Aikin and Zimmer-Stucky presenting at the April Board meeting.
- Complete Office Modernization/Updates- to be talked about later in this meeting.
- Strategic Plan Next steps- developing FY 23-24 budget and FY 23-24 workplans.
- No website redesign yet.
- Investigating possible Federal Grants and strategic partnerships that may be available- HB 3016 to fund more green infrastructure, primarily in Urban areas (tree canopies, pervious parking lots, grey water movement, etc.). Opportunities through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds for carbon sequestration efforts via NRCS and OACD. LLP to look at valuation methodology to determine the ease at which partners can easily work with us on easements and acquiring property.
- No Lunch & Learns yet. First one to come up soon, may be focused on the new COE.
- CRM program- F&O working with COE. Alex Woolery taking lead on software program options; Katie Meckes to take lead in implementing it with staff and getting it populated with data. Will ask for a small amount of money to hire an admin person to dump all our data into the CRM.
- Continuing external meetings- see above. Meeting more with Jan Lee (OACD) and Stan Dean (JCSWCD and chair of Advocacy committee). Will be attending the Farm Open House.
- Attending two Conferences- Attending Urban Ecosystem Research Consortium (EURC) at PSU on April 4th. Goal of the conference: Focused on science-based data around urban ecosystems. Will help guide Hamilton's decision-making for the Urban Lands program mostly. Many staff attend as well.



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- Strategies for changing eligibility requirements: Board of Directors approved support for SB 775 which has been introduced by Senator Fredrick. It's being referred to the Rules Committee in which deadlines don't stand, meaning it will stay alive through the last day of session (most bills die on 3/17 if they haven't had a hearing). First session in Rules is in mid-April. Continuing to work with Chair of WMSWCD and other individuals/entities working on moving the bill forward.
- Developing communication strategy for whole District- operational changes and introduction of CO&E.

Masterson Excited that Hamilton is out talking to the external community.

Leadership Team Updates

Hamilton shared the Conservation Legacy Team updates:

- Headwaters Farm (HWF): focused on budget and planning for next fiscal year. Discussing possible strategies for digitizing equipment check-out, payments, etc. instead of continuing with a time-consuming paper trail.
- Grants: Guebert and Carlson on the PIC review committee- meetings happening through March. Won't be able to fund all requests, but by putting the review process into 3 groups should help to more deliberately determine the organizations to recommend for funding.
- Land Legacy Program (LLP): Shipkey has been working on the outline for future work on acquisition and easements, to be discussed more at April LLC meeting. Transitioning DiLeone in as Shipkey's supervisor. Preparing the Gordon Creek property for sale, more information at the April LLC meeting. Finalized contract with Luis Octavio Prado to continue to harvest blueberries and manage the site through the cleanup process.

Shearin shared the Urban Lands updates:

- Plant Sale: the main focus for the past couple of months. Gave an overview of how the event went during the Something to Celebrate segment (below).
- Collaboration: Marion SWCD in process of initiating their own UL Program and reached out for insights/advice.
- Collaboration: Clean Rivers Coalition- Coalition of 60 different entities, working together to educate the community on keeping rivers/waterways clean. Launching pilot project in Eugene/Salem, want to talk to Urban SWCDs about setting up some similar programming.

Mitten shared F&O Updates

- Preparing FY 23-24 Budget & programmatic changes information & logistics for the District's re-organization.
- Building analysis- to be discussed later in this meeting.
- Coordinated CPR/AED/ First Aid Training for all staff with LifeLine Training Centers.
- F&O involvement in Plant Sale: Managed the Shopify website, sales and refunds, background logistics, food and beverage, and branded gear.

DiLeone shared RL Updates

- Workshops with Clackamas SWCD- workshops for farmers, based on survey results implying interest in soil health and weather monitoring tools.
- Eat 'n Greet for Farmers (Open House) at Columbia Grange in Corbett on APRIL 19th (incorrect date in packet). Focus on commercial farmers. Lunch time event- time TBD.
- StreamCare plantings this year have been smaller due to necessary shift in Nipp's outreach and site prep schedule swap. Last year was the first time we had a significant loss in plants due to the freeze and the heat dome.



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Something to Celebrate- Plant Sale 2023

Shearin presented the Plant Sale 2023 update.

- Got 925 orders and sold 10,325 plants.
- Since 2007, Plant Sale has cost EMSWCD \$55,000(+/- including staff time)
- Started with Native Plant workshop to teach community about the Native plants they're going to choose for their spaces.
- Big thanks to Monica McAllister for coordinating the whole process this year.
- Showed an example of a community planting: Powell Butte Neighborhood Association has adopted the East Gresham Park and bought native plants from us for a community planting event.
- This year:
 - changed the sale time from 6am to 6pm for accessibility reasons-worked really well, will continue to do this.
 - Changed our purchase limits to max 10 of each species.
 - Contracted with Wisdom of the Elders instead of working with volunteers. Smooth-lined the processes.
 - Refined our niche to bare-root trees and shrubs only.
 - Took climate change into consideration and offered only a few species that occur South of Willamette Valley that we expect to "move" North due to climate change.
 - Refined our postcard mailing list to commercial and residential addresses in the 97233- zip code only (susceptible to heat crisis/heat related deaths)- generated a 600% increase in sales from those neighborhoods, will continue to do this next year.

6:46pm- EMSWCD Re-organization

Hamilton We're looking for the policy change and program changes to match the Budget decisions made in the previous Budget Committee meeting #1.

Masterson requested an Organizational Structure Chart.

Action Item: Mitten to craft an Organizational Structure Chart for April Board Meeting Packet.

MOTION: Masterson moved to approve the organizational restructuring recommendations for FY 23-24, Carlson 2nd. Motion passed unanimously (4-0, Guebert absent).

6:48pm- Legislative Updates

Hamilton gave a brief update:

- Board agreed to support 5 bills (listed below)
- Mitten put together a Bill Tracker.
- HB 2998: Had its first hearing in February. Another meeting today. Moving to Ways & Means committee. 50+ testimonies, 5 of those were oppositions, all SWCD who testified were in favor.
- HB 3021: OACD is in support. There has yet to be testimony. Referred to Agricultural Land and Natural Resources and Water Committee. Keeping an eye out for its hearing.
- SB 775: First hearing likely to be in mid-April.
- SB 530: Connected to fed/state money. OACD is in support. No hearing yet. Referred to Natural Resources Committee and will go to Ways & Means as there will be a fiscal impact. Keeping an eye out for a hearing.
- HB 3016: Planning to send a letter of support by tomorrow night after its hearing today. **Zimmer-Stucky** really likes this bill because of its Emerald Ash Borer program.



6:53pm- Cost Analysis of Keeping the Office Building

Hamilton Staff was asked at the February Board meeting to do cursory analysis of marketplace availability, costs for current office, what funds selling the office would generate, and other options.

- Talked with Robbie McNichol with Colliers Real Estate on the list of things that are important to us for an office space: storage, washer and dryer, shower, designated space for field staff to clean up after being around herbicides and other chemicals, in District/a close neighborhood, opportunity for a demonstration area, off-street parking for District vehicles.
- This building is not on the list of historically registered properties, but it has a very important connection to the community (historically a black neighborhood); first black-owned mortuary and then a black-run maternity ward. Selling it would probably mean tearing the house down for apartments, but it's a little smaller than what is wanted for such developments. Would likely get about \$1 million.
 - If an entity was interested in the house, perhaps a landscape/creative firm, we might get as much as \$2-2.5million. The market is very depressed right now, we will get a better price if we wait.
- MacNichol showed us 4 potential properties to use as comps; 736 MLK, Buck Building, Factor Building, and Siker; and compared them each with the current office and each other.
- Current expenses are also included in the packet.
- Hamilton apologized for delays in getting this information to the Board.

Masterson Doesn't see this analysis needing to be done each year, but it is good to look at the numbers and do some comparisons.

Rossi Thanked Hamilton for the research done. Thought it was important to see what the information showed. Confident that we're making a good decision.

Hamilton The one that came the closest to what we have now is 736 MLK, and is near great public transportation, but higher crime rate and being near the convention center would make it a challenging location.

MOTION: Carlson moved to keep the office at the current location 5211 N Williams Ave. Portland, OR 97217, Rossi 2nd. Motion passed unanimously (4-0, Guebert absent).

7:06pm- Grants Policy Changes Recommendation

Kent and DiLeone worked on this together due to potential updates to CLIP program. Noticed other Grants programs could use some updates as well to be in line with our practices.

Policy Section 3.2 Grants:

- Changes to policies over all the Grants programs
- Addition of the equity Focused Grant program to the policy
- Would like to update the policy to be clear on what part of the programs need Board approval and which parts are staff or staff and board responsibility. The table in the packet is what is being proposed- includes original decisions and proposed decisions.

Kent Would also like to be able to properly update the Grants sections of the website.

DiLeone Changes came from CLIP team wanting to change the application process, eligibility criteria, etc. When it comes to big changes, budget implications, or how we are serving the public, staff would still come to the Board for approval through Policy. Everything else would be considered a procedure.



Action Item: Kent to add a column on the Grants Roles and Responsibilities page for significant program goals/purpose changes to be Board Decision, and clarify the Project Evaluation Process for SPACE process, come back with recommendations at the April Board Meeting.

Kent Would there continue to be a role for the Board in the project evaluations process after they've set the overarching guidelines and principals for the program? Ex. Grants Committee needs?

DiLeone CLIP grants policy proposed change: For Hamilton to approve up to \$50k across all Grants programs, including CLIP. Other changes to be made are more process based, to be discussed at a later date.

Zimmer-Stucky What is staff thinking about adding to CLIP? Don't want to release all of the money on a small number of grantees.

Hamilton Staff have internally considered adding another 50% on top of what is already set. Assumes that most of the grantees wouldn't be requesting or approved for \$50k.

Internal ideas being considered by staff:

- Having the District pay more (percentagewise) of a cost-share in order to bring in more landowners to work with us on property improvements.
- Increase the limit on how much a CLIP grant could be.
- (Not fully fleshed out) Possibility of keeping the CLIP program for only Rural landowners, and creating something else that's more urban-focused, to better address the needs and opportunities of each.

Masterson Would like to continue to have conversation about making changes to urban CLIP. For urban grants, what are the resource concerns?

Hamilton Resource concerns are similar to the HB 3016 for green infrastructure: Churches, commercial properties, etc. with large impervious parking lots, stormwater issues, and a lot of auto pollution, as mentioned earlier. If the bill passes, there may be money there that we could tap into, and then we may look to the urban CLIP program as a partnership with other stakeholders – more like MHCC.

Rossi Is the pool of people who could take advantage of these programs too small?

DiLeone There are always some people we may not have been able to reach out to yet. In the Rural area, we've been reaching out to everyone, but now we're focusing on mailing out invitations to those who are eligible for cost-share. Periodic reminders are something the RL team has considered. In the urban area, the applications that tend to come through are for more areas that CLIP doesn't make the most sense for (riparian areas, streams, etc.), which is why we want to focus on more projects that are like MHCC where progress is more substantive.

Masterson Can we discuss this in the Budget committee meeting?

Action Item: Fernandez to add the Grants Policy changes topic as an agenda item for the April Board Meeting.

Action Item: Mitten to add CLIP discussion to the Budget Committee 2 Meeting agenda if appropriate

Shearin Still trying to figure out the best course of action for the urban CLIP idea. Doesn't expect to have an answer about a possible UL CLIP program by the April Board meeting. It will be a bigger discussion with the Board.

No decision to be made tonight.

7:36pm- Monthly Financial Reports- January 2023



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Mitten presented the January 2023 Financial Report: Balance Sheet shows EMSWCD's account balances as being slightly over \$13.5million. Overall balance sheet shows a 1.47% increase over last year at this time. Liabilities: nothing to note. P&L Budget: property tax revenue is \$5.29 million, and our annual budget is \$5.41 million. We've earned \$162,000 in interest to-date, whereas we only projected \$85,000 for the entire year. As of the end of January, we are exceeding revenue expectations. Any unappropriated money received sits until we appropriate it in a budget amendment or the next budget cycle. Mitten noted in the line, "Purchase of Real Property" the \$1,500 was for a search and exam of records related to a previous property transaction. P&L by class: all programs are under fiscal year spend to date, as well as for the entire year.

7:40pm- Board Discussion

Carlson proposed information on the Portland Water Bureau's water treatment plant. The recent meeting is to be rescheduled. Fire District 10 has voted to recommend that Multnomah County reject the construction. The construction would remove 1.8 million cubic yards of soil off the property. PWB wants to divert a road 40 ft. through a farmer's property. The Gresham-Barlow School Board voted to oppose the project for student safety concerns around the construction traffic. There have been over 50 comments from residents opposing it as well. There's also the issue of spraying trees next to a water treatment plant that doesn't make sense. The Pleasant Home Community Association and Cottrell Community Planning Organization both have the necessary funds and attorneys behind them to oppose it.

Masterson is glad Carlson is tracking it. Concerned that its urban infrastructure pushed onto farmland, not sure what exemption allowed them to do that. We want to separate neighbor concern from farmer community concern.

Zimmer-Stucky It has to pass the farm impact tests. Farmers need to document their concerns in a way that will hold up in a court of law.

Hamilton Is the Board still choosing to stay neutral on this issue?

Rossi As one Board member, noted that on things like this, it's worth holding the developer accountable for better results instead of right out saying "no" to the overall project. Now's the time to ask for things that farmers need.

Masterson would like to see the Board weigh in if there are impacts to soil and water health.

Hamilton Before Board took a neutral decision on this topic, we did have a seat at the table from David Kendall from the PWB, who is leading this project, to see where we are and if there's information to bring back to the Board.

Masterson Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission is meeting for the first time next week. This will be the first time to consider statewide farmland easement proposals- a historic moment. Doing so can generate understanding around why this kind of program is needed. There are great proposals from all over the state.

Zimmer-Stucky attended a training on wildfire home ignition zones last week with Corbett Fire department with Lucas Nipp on staff also attended. Key takeaway: no big focus on fires in rural areas. The big wildfires are becoming urban fires, what to do when you have multiple homes on fire. Nothing for the Board to put on their radar.

Rossi continues to be bothered by the equilibrium of the Venn diagram of soil and water, climate mitigation, and equity having equal weight on the Strategic Plan and internal Strategic Plan 2-pager.



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Hamilton plans to have the graphic redone to show that soil and water is higher in priority, but also reframe this page based on Rossi's feedback.

7:59pm- Announcements, Action Items, and Adjournment

Action Items:

- **Mitten** to craft an Organizational Structure Chart for April Board Meeting Packet.
- **Kent** to add a column on the Grants Roles and Responsibilities page for significant program goals/purpose changes to be Board Decision, and clarify the Project Evaluation Process for SPACE process, come back with recommendations at the April Board Meeting.
- **Fernandez** to add the Grants Policy changes topic as an agenda item for the April Board Meeting.
- **Mitten** to add CLIP discussion to the Budget Committee 2 Meeting agenda if appropriate.
- **Staff** to look into restructuring page 6's graphic redesign on Strategic Plan and reframing the Strategic Plan 2-pager.

Zimmer-Stucky adjourned the meeting at 8:00pm