



Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, December 18th 2024

Attendees

Directors: Brenda Epp (D), Scott Hendy (D), Diana Woodward (D), David Briggs (D), Sean Negherbon (D) | **Employees:** Maggie Begoun, Cindy Bright | **Partners:** Eric Nusbaum (ODA) | **Public:** Jay Bond

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman - Sean Negherbon @ 5:10pm. Director roll call performed. Introductions performed.

Agency Reports

Eric Nusbaum - ODA

Nusbaum reports that there is a new grant for updating district websites and making sure they are ADA compliant. He mentions that SWCD domain names should be .gov and not .org. He will also be travelling around the state to do new director orientations. The Connect conference will be held in Florence, OR this year in April. He suggests the staff go .

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Dir. Briggs motions to approve the minutes of the October Executive Session, November Executive Session, and November Board Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial & Admin Report – Please see attached report.

Presented to the board and attached are:

- November Expense Report

Begoun apologizes for not having QuickBooks reports. The new bookkeeper is still working through getting everything transferred correctly. Hopefully in January we will see some new reports. The bookkeepers are working hard to correct a lot of our weird items in the reports, but



Begoun plans to see how much this is costing us. If it's too much, she'll have them just do the essentials.

IRS Discussion - Begoun explains that the IRS did not have quarterlies from 2018 on file at all. Once she sent them in and they were processed, it added about \$60k to our total debt. It went from \$240k to \$320k. Begoun made sure the IRS agent knew that we did not have that kind of money and all we had was some of our building sale fund. They want to cooperate with us especially because we are a government agency.

The first step to all this is paying the Trust Fund Recovery Penalty for \$36k. This amount is what was entrusted to us (the employer) by the employees. This is the only amount that if we do not get it paid, the IRS can come after each individual member of the board to collect it.

Dir. Epp asks why the previous members of the board aren't held responsible. Begoun answers they're not held responsible because this current board isn't holding them responsible. The current board are the ones dealing with this issue and that's all the IRS knows. Begoun offers that if the board wants to hold certain people responsible including Walt Barton, then that can be discussed.

Begoun told the agents about the timeline of how the board didn't know there was a real problem for a while and that once they did, COVID happened and it took forever to get the building sold.

Dir. Woodward asks if the \$36k is part of the total bill. Begoun answers yes, the total bill will be reduced to \$290k after this check is paid. Nusbaum suggests that the board needs to pay that \$36k because it is employee money and the current board is held liable for it. After that's done, the individuals of the district are NOT held liable for the remaining amount. He also notes that once these penalty abatement letters go through as well, they may be able to lift at least \$80k in penalties off the total. This is not guaranteed though - but the board can appeal any decision that is made.

Motion: Dir. Briggs motions that the Trust Fund Penalty Recovery check is paid and sent to the IRS officer ASAP. The motion passed unanimously

The W2 issue is a separate part of the IRS that we will have to work with to resolve. The SSA office in town said they have those W2s on file. If this gets resolved, it should wipe out another \$40k off our plate.

Dir. Hendy asks what happens if they don't forgive any penalties and the SWCD doesn't have enough money to pay the IRS. Nusbaum answers that ODA can dissolve the district in this case. Nusbaum asks Begoun to ask the lawyer/agent if ODA would end up owing the amount. If the district pays off the principal but doesn't have anything left for the penalties and interest, who absorbs the liability? Let the lawyer/agent know that the district would have to dissolve.



Begoun reminds the board they're meeting with the lawyer virtually tomorrow at 10am. They would like Jason Bond and John Estill to attend as well. A link will be sent to them.

Begoun notes that typically the IRS would be sending out a letter about now barring the district from receiving at the very least federal grant money. They are deferring this letter for us but if the district so much as misses a deadline or payment, they will send the letter out.

Popcornflower - Begoun lets the board know that the district was thanked in a recent article by USFWS for taking care of rough popcornflower, and that there is a new petition to downlist the flower from endangered to threatened because of its success in recovery. Begoun notes that she recently talked to Sam Friedman from USFWS and he suggested getting some grazing done on the property. Dir. Epp asks about the possibility of burning. Begoun and Bright answer that it probably wouldn't be likely with how small the property is and how close the actual population is to the adjacent home. Begoun suggests that propane torch spot burning may be an option.

Dir. Briggs asks about getting rid of the property. Barton was supposed to contact the City of Sutherlin about taking it over but he never did. Dir. Epp thinks a garden club might like the property. Dir. Hendy suggests that the Friends of Ford Pond should be contacted about taking it over.

Motion: Dir. Epp motions to authorize Dir. Hendy to contact the head of Friends of Fords Pond regarding selling the district's rough popcornflower property to them. . The motion passed unanimously

Conservation Technician Report – Please see attached report.

Dir. Negherbon asks how much ArcGIS is. Begoun thinks it ranges \$1000-\$3000 a year for a license specifically for a district. Begoun will work with NRCS to get Bright's ArcGIS access worked out. If it doesn't work, Bright will try to see what the new GIS Specialist at ODA has to offer.

Conclusion of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05pm.

An executive session is scheduled for Thursday, December 19th via Microsoft Teams - 10am.

The next board meeting is **Wednesday, January 15th @ NRCS Roseburg - 5pm.**

Submitted by Maggie Begoun for Brenda Epp, District Secretary/Treasurer.

Annual & Board Meeting: Wednesday, December 18th

4:00pm - 6:00pm @ NRCS Office Roseburg

We are having a potluck style meeting! Please bring a tasty appetizer/snack for everyone.

December Admin Report 2024 - Updated 12/17/24

Bookkeeping:

We have entered into a contract with Lifeboat Accounting. I have provided them with our QuickBooks data and we are working together to get these running. I have also let PUR know about the termination of our contract and they will be providing their final invoice before the end of the year.

Payroll is up and running. They're doing a lot of clean up on the rest of our books and will have an update soon.

IRS Update:

We have been assigned a Revenue Officer (Ellen Rose)! Woohoo! I spent a good amount of time getting extra documents into her that were requested.

Kate Roth (our lawyer) and I met with Ellen Rose on December 17th. [I have provided a report to the board](#). We can discuss it at our meeting on December 18th.

The board will then meet with our lawyer on December 19th to discuss. This will be a virtual meeting through Teams. I sent the invite to you all this week, but please keep on your calendar: **DSWCD Tax Lawyer Meeting - 10am, Thursday Dec. 19th. Online.**

Board/Elections:

Official Results: David Briggs (Z3), Scott Hendy (Z2), and John Estill (Z1) have won their positions.

Jay Bond has put in his application for the final at-large position, so [please review it here](#). Diana Woodward *may be interested* in staying on the board as well.

Annual Meeting:

Please let me know what you are bringing to the pot-luck ASAP.

So far we have: Izzy fizzy fruit drinks, soda, water, fruit tray, assorted cheeses, salami, crackers, creamy cranberry jalapeño dip, chicken chip dip, fried chicken & assorted cookies.

The format of the meeting will be similar to last year. The staff will present a powerpoint presentation of accomplishments and the year's financials. (July 2023 - June 2024).

Popcornflower:

Rough popcornflower may be downlisted from endangered to threatened. And the district has been acknowledged for their help! Check out the press release here: <https://www.fws.gov/press-release/2024-12/service-proposes-reclassify-rough-popcornflower-endangered-threatened>

After talking to USFWS recently, they would be very interested in having our piece of land grazed for management. I'd love the board input on this.

Weeds:

Cooperative Weeds Management Area Meeting (CWMA):

Thursday, December 5th @ 1:00pm - ODFW Roseburg Office. Good turn out, maybe about 25 people. Got a lot of updates, information, and requests from the meeting. I even got \$10k of in-kind match for one of our grants! Two big takeaways were a need for pumphant survey/clean up and general public outreach.

OR State Weed Board Grants:

Fairgrounds Tree of Heaven Project & Douglas County Class A Weeds Project grant applications were submitted 12/6/24.

Here's a tentative schedule I think I will just keep here.

Please let me know if I'm missing something important.

Dec 18th - Dec Board Meeting & Annual Meeting

Dec 19th - Tax Lawyer Meeting

HAPPY HOLIDAYS + HAPPY NEW YEAR

Jan 15th - Jan Board Meeting - Swear in Directors + Appoint At-Large?

Jan 22nd - (TENTATIVE) Board Duties Workshop & Financial Policy Revisions

Feb 19th - Feb Board Meeting & Long Range Business Plan Workshop

March 19th - March Board Meeting & Contracting Policy Review

April 16th - April Board Meeting & Annual Work Plan / Budget Review Workshop

May 21st - May Board Meeting

June 18th - June Board Meeting (Annual Work Plan, Annual Budget, & Long Range Business Plan must be approved).

December 2024 Cindy K. Bright Conservation Technician

ODA/SIA:

Three SIA small grants for Beals and Weaver Creek are to be reviewed December 13th for funding approval. The next SIA small grant cycle has been pushed back to February-March.

I went to two new sites and will begin planning for a S. Umpqua tributary off Tiller Trail Hwy on TORS Ranch and another on Days Creek.

I made another follow up visit for ODA to determine if there was an issue with manure piles. I found there is no issue and that the landowner is doing everything right.

OWEB:

Buckhorn Creek, we will be touring out to the project on December 17th with the OWEB review team.

I've been told there is some restructuring happening at OWEB and so the next open grant windows are being moved back. So, the larger OWEB restoration grants will now be April-May and OWEB small grant may not be open until July-August.

ODA/Complaints:

Working with landowner in Riddle with duck pond issue. I'm looking at ways to improve the conditions and a possible grant to assist with redirecting overflow onto a filter pasture instead of into drain onto neighbors. And also considering a aeration system and additives for reducing bacteria/nutrients.

Workshops, Outreach and Trainings:

Next outreach event will be in March to Realtors association and the DCLA Spring livestock conference in April.

The Spring conference committee has begun meeting. Our next meeting will be in January. I have been assisting in lining up speakers.

Other:

I will continue to work on project planning and grant writing in between project management. Currently I have 14 projects in planning and or grant writing. And anticipate picking up more in the SIA area.

Projects in progress at a glance:

Elk Creek, Meeting with contractor to do some follow up work on brush piles, mulching and willow stake placement.

Morgan Creek, Blackberries have been removed. Next will be willow stakes and follow up spraying in spring.

Pheasant Creek, Blackberries removed. Next will be further assessment for BDA placements and get the permit updated for the next in-stream work window. A follow up spraying will be in Spring.

Fall Creek, Fencing has begun with some BB removal. The contractor will assess the ground to see if he can continue BB removal or may have to wait until Spring along with heavy use pad areas to minimize ground disturbance.

Buckhorn Creek, OWEB review team going out to site December 17th.

Doerner Creek, Barn gutter systems have been installed. Contractor says ground to wet to excavate and install heavy use areas, so will have to wait.

Ag water quality projects in progress: (5)

Callahan Creek, Doerner Creek phase II, Huntley Creek, Pheasant Creek extension, and Riddle Ag ponds.

SIA

Weaver Creek and Beals Creek in review with review team.

SIA in planning progress: (9)

Weaver Creek III, Beals Creek II, Stinger Gulch, Days Creek X3, Woods Creek, Beals Creek tributary and a S. Umpqua tributary.