

MASON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Board of Supervisors Special Meeting Minutes
October 3, 2023

The meeting of the Mason Conservation District Board of Supervisors was called to order by Jason Ragan, Chair, at 4:00 pm.

Board Members present: (in person) Jason Ragan, Carmen Echeverria, Andrea Miller, Michael O'Day and (via Zoom) Larry Boltz

Board Members absent: None

Staff present: Evan Bauder, Margaret Kreder, Jacob Murray, Justin Bennett, Megan Chapman, Andy Sorter, Rhonda Nydegger and Nick Schneider

Members of the public present: Molly Paige (DOE) and Hannah Coe (DOE).

Introductions: None.

Public Comment: None

Meeting Minutes – August 17, 2023: The minutes were reviewed. Minutes were approved as presented.

(M – Miller, S – O'Day, Passed – Unanimously)

Financial Report – July 2023: Michael O'Day reviewed the financial report with detail of balances for all funds and checks (20219-20256 excluding 20243 + EFT) executed during period. Check #20243 was accidentally written with a June 30th date and was accounted for in the June report and excluded from the July activity.

(M – Boltz, S – Miller, Passed – Unanimously)

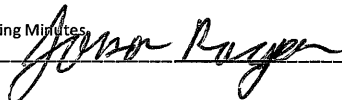
Financial Report – August 2023: Michael O'Day reviewed the financial report with detail of balances for all funds and checks (20257-20285 + EFT) executed during period.

(M – Miller, S – Boltz, Passed – Unanimously)

PROGRAM & STAFF UPDATES

WSCC Update –

Although WSCC was not present, Evan gave the board an update on the Executive Director search process at WSCC. Sarah Groth is currently acting Executive Director. In addition, Evan informed the board that the March 2024 meeting for WSCC will be held in Shelton and is in the planning stages. Evan is currently serving on a riparian funding group working on programmatic guidelines to have in place by January 2024.



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WACD Update –

The northwest area meeting is October 4, 2023.

NRCS Update –

No report.

DOE Update –

Hannah gave the non-point team updates including the information that Sheila, the former supervisor, has taken another position and Hannah is acting as the supervisor in the interim. Molly will stay consistent with our area. Molly reported on a couple of complaints that had been referred out in the area. She will be driving the Sherwood Creek watershed due to Mason County Dept of Health reporting some high bacteria numbers. Larry asked for clarification on the three classifications of streams, setbacks, and who the decision makers were for these.

Staff Update –

Evan reported that the District has engaged Creative Office out of Olympia for the purpose of improving the way the District utilizes the current space as there is little likelihood that another price comparable space will be found before the next lease agreement at the end of 2023. Carmen talked about how Creative Office worked with her organization and did a great job.

Jacob reported on his Chehalis region projects.

Justin reported on the VSP as well as the VSP workgroup activities.

Margaret reported on the forester activities including site visits and wildfire visits.

Megan reported knotweed treatment season was finished and the crew is now moving into the maintenance phase and planning for planting season.

OLD BUSINESS –

Evan reported that the cost share project ranking matrix is outdated and should be updated to reflect the District's long range plans as well as funding sources. Staff has been working diligently on updating and changing the matrix to be more accurate and usable. There is currently no policy in place requiring the board to approve the matrix. Evan asked the board if they would like a policy in place that requires board approval, or if they would prefer to allow staff to update the matrix without official board action. After discussion, the board agreed by consensus that the authority to make changes to the ranking matrix would be left to staff.

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NEW BUSINESS

Mason County Environmental Health Funding Subaward

The District and MCEH applied in partnership for the National Estuary Program (NEP) Shellfish Strategic Initiative Leader (SIL) funding. This funding was awarded with the District serving as the grant manager. The board previously approved the funding award on July 20, 2023. This subaward allows MCEH to conduct two town hall or educational events/meetings annually for the 3-year lifespan of the grant and totals \$57,480. Motion made to approve and authorize the chair to sign the subaward to Mason County Environmental Health for Mason County Partnership for Clean Water as presented totaling \$57,480. Motion carried.

(M – O’Day, S – Boltz, Passed – Unanimously)

WSCC Livestock TA Funding Addendum

The District received funding for conservation planning and other technical assistance activities under the Livestock Technical Assistance grant with WSCC. The award is for \$20,000 split as \$10,000 for conservation planning involving drafting, updating and other aspects of conservation plan development for cooperators in Mason County and the other \$10,000 for other TA activities for BMP implementation, practice guidance, assistance with funding applications, and general BMP assistance to cooperators with livestock. Motion made to approve the Livestock Technical Assistance Addendum for the 2023-2025 biennium as presented. Motion carried.

(M – Miller, S – O’Day, Passed – Unanimously)

WSCC Shellfish Program Funding Addendum

Four cost share projects have been awarded funding through the WSCC Shellfish Program. These projects were previously approved by the board. The total of the funding is \$185,850 with \$37,170 for technical assistance and \$148,680 for cost share. Motion made to approve the WSCC Shellfish Funding Addendum as presented. Motion carried.

(M – O’Day, S – Miller, Passed – Unanimously)

Anchor QEA Vance Creek Planning Contract Amendment

The District has a contract with Anchor QEA currently to create restoration preliminary designs and prioritization for Vance Creek. The proposed amendment looks at future flood depth and extent between 10 and 20 years from now. This analysis will be used by the District to demonstrate potential future flood risks to support recommended stream restoration elements. Motion made to approve and authorize the chair to sign Amendment #2 with Anchor QEA in the amount of \$25,600 for a total contract amount of \$225,100 as presented. Motion carried.

(M – O’Day, S – Miller, Passed – Unanimously)

SCC Salmon Recovery Funding Addendum

The District received WSCC Salmon Recovery Funding for riparian restoration. The project involves a collaboration between the District and HCSEG. The total grant award is \$409,705 and consists of

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\$81,941 for technical assistance and \$327,764 for riparian restoration implementation. Motion made to approve the WSCC Salmon Recovery Funding addendum as presented. Motion carried.

(M – Miller, S – O’Day, Passed – Unanimously)

Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group Agreement

The District received funding to collaborate with HCSEG for riparian restoration. This agreement will complete the scope of work identified in the SRF funding grant. Motion made to approve and authorize the chair to sign the Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group agreement in the amount of \$29,030. Motion carried.

(M – O’Day, S – Miller, Passed – Unanimously)

USF Skokomish Phase 6 Professional Services Agreement

The District published an RFQ and professional engineering services necessary to complete required assessments and engineering design for the Upper South Fork Skokomish River stream corridor assessment and improvement project. The District received one responsive statement by the deadline of September 28, 2023 (one month after publication) from Anchor QEA. Motion made to approve staff to begin contract negotiations with Anchor QEA and to authorize the chair to sign a services agreement with Anchor QEA so long as staff can negotiate a scope of work that fits within the available budget of \$200,000 and accomplishes the intended outcomes. Motion carried.

(M – Miller, S – O’Day, Passed – Unanimously)

Forest Health and Wildfire Resiliency Funding Addendum

The District was awarded funding from WSCC for Forest Health and Community Wildfire Resiliency totaling \$657,570. The District partnered with Jefferson CCD, Kitsap CD, and Pierce CD for this funding. Motion to approve the addendum for the 2023-2025 biennium Forest Health and Community Wildfire Resiliency funding the forestry program as presented. Motion carried.

(M – Miller, S – O’Day, Passed – Unanimously)

Mason County VSP Contract Amendment 4

This amendment adds additional funding awarded to Mason County from WSCC for cost share, technical assistance, and monitoring. This total is \$459,123.50 which includes \$47,000 for effectiveness monitoring, \$82,424.70 for technical assistance for eight landowner cost share projects with the remainder for the cost share. This amendment is to the contract between Mason County and the District authorizing the District to act on behalf of the County for the Volunteer Stewardship Program. Motion made to approve and authorize the chair to sign amendment 4 to contract 19-053 as presented. Motion carried.

(M – O’Day, S – Boltz, Passed – Unanimously)

WRIA 14 Support Professional Services Agreement

The District began working on the WRIA 14 fish passage inventory under project number 17-1138, which ended on 12/31/2022. Additional work was identified upon review. Under this agreement, South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group will be responsible for coordinating activities related

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to the project. This project is funded by PSAR funds providing \$20,000 towards updating the WRIA 14 salmon recovery strategy. Motion made to approve and authorize the chair to sign the professional services agreement with SPSSEG as presented for \$20,000. Motion carried.

(M – Miller, S – Echeverria, Passed – Unanimously)

Employee Health Insurance Renewal

The District provides health insurance through Washington Counties Insurance Fund for all eligible employees and their dependents. WCIF has presented the District with the 2024 rates which includes a 6% increase over 2023. As part of due diligence, the District attempted to compare the WCIF rates with state PEBB rates. State PEBB rates were not yet available. However, their website displays a notice to employees stating that there is a large increase on the Kaiser plans available and a small increase on the UMP plans. Based on the comparison of estimated PEBB rates to WCIF rates, and given that under PEBB employees are able to choose which option, there is a wide range from a savings of \$26,131 with PEBB to an increase of \$285,310 with PEBB compared to WCIF. Motion made to approve and authorize the Executive Director, Evan Bauder, to sign the renewal application with WCIF based on the published rates. Motion carried.

(M – Echeverria, S – Miller, Passed - Unanimously)

Employee Health Reimbursement Account Renewal

Part of the benefits the District provides to employees is a health reimbursement account which is managed through Rehn & Associates as part of the WCIF package. The HRA benefit is one of the selling points that allows the District to be more competitive in the labor market. The administrative cost for the year are estimated at \$1,140. Reimbursement costs are hard to calculate but have been less than \$20,000 consistently for the past four years. Motion made to approve and authorize the Executive Director, Evan Bauder, to respond to the email from Rehn & Associates confirming the renewal. Motion carried.

(M – O’Day, S – Miller, Passed – Unanimously)

Proposed NW Area WACD Resolution

Evan presented the proposed WACD resolution that the livestock committee has been working on to address challenges throughout the state related to livestock. The resolution was drafted by the committee in an effort to address challenges presented by better aligning roles and responsibilities between Department of Ecology and Conservation Districts. The draft resolution, a product of collaboration between all livestock committee members, is also directly relevant to the challenges Mason CD staff face. Motion made to approve the resolution as presented and thereby authorize it to be submitted to the NW Area as a requested action from the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried.

(M – Miller, S – Boltz, Passed – Unanimously)

Public Comment Period –

None.

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With no further business on the meeting agenda the meeting adjourned at 5:32 pm.

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Minutes Approved

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Date

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