

North Lynden Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – January 16, 2024

Attendees

“(t)” indicates presence via tele-conference, “(p)” indicates proxy vote.

Board – Present	Board – Absent with Notice
Larry Stap (<i>chair</i>) Brad Rader Kevin Engelsma	Kevin TeVelde Harman Brar

Staff and Consultants	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Gavin Willis	Ag Water Board
Frank Corey	Whatcom Conservation District
Cynthia May (t)	Whatcom Conservation District
Katie Faber (t)	AESI
Jay Chennault (t)	AESI
Fred Likkel	Whatcom Family Farmers
Dillon Honcoop	Whatcom Family Farmers

Other Guests	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Mark Strempler	Whatcom County Council
Alan Chapman (t)	Whatcom Conservation District

Proceedings

Larry called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

1. Consent Agenda

- a. Agenda was reviewed.
- b. November 21 minutes were reviewed.
- c. Financial reports were reviewed.
- d. Brad moved to approve the consent agenda. Kevin E seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Administration

- a. Harman will sign oath of office at next meeting.
- b. Kevin E moved to approve Resolution 2024-01 – Auditing Officer Designation. Brad seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. Gavin provided an update on ECY’s draft filing form and instructions. There are concerns about the simplified filing form for permit exempt wells for domestic use allowing significant irrigation without requiring evidence of use. Discussion followed about source of 500 gallon/day number; Jay provided some clarification. ECY also underestimates dairy use in the instructions, and narrowly defines “stockwater”.

- i. A board member noted that the title of “referee” for the court employee managing the adjudication is offensive in indicating an adversarial process.
- b. Gavin provided an update on the proposed joint application to ECY’s 2024 Streamflow Restoration Grant. At the recent WMB meeting, Nooksack staff read a letter from council indicating that the tribe would not participate in anything related to water rights until the adjudication is filed. As a result, the joint grant application is not proceeding.

4. Drainage / Habitat / Flood

- a. Gavin provided an update on the Fishtrap Creek beaver management. Otis has said that the spot is looking good.
- b. Discussion around ditch spraying and whether that causes increased erosion. Board indicated that mowing the banks and spraying the base of the ditches was their preference for management.
- c. Frank provided an update on the SCC’s proposed new riparian buffer program. Minimum width for incentive-based buffers is 50’ (35’ on intermittent streams). Noted that buffers of any size can be installed and maintained with program funds, but landowners will not receive rental payments for smaller buffers.
 - i. Although the program has increased incentives for larger buffers, Whatcom County participants will hit the cap of \$1000/acre regardless of additional incentive tiers.

5. Water Quality

- a. Cynthia provided a WQ update. They have been doing more intensive weekly sampling at border sites. Dec 5th during rain event had high levels (over 10,000), so they reported to BC through the new protocol. BC agencies will report back on follow-up activities in March.
 - i. Four additional testing runs since then have returned low counts; overall things are looking better than at this point last year.
- b. Shellfish beds have looked good; discussions are happening around opening more beds for harvest.

6. Education / Communications

- a. Alan noted that CD elections are in March. Ballot request is available on the website.
- b. Fred noted that March 27th will be the next WFF water rights education event at the Farm Pavilion at NWWF. Event will be from 6:30-8:30 pm.

7. Other Items

- a. None.

8. Next Meeting

- a. Next meeting is scheduled for February 20th at 9:00 am.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:14 am.

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____

