

North Lynden Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – November 21, 2023, 9 AM

Board Attending:

Larry Stap Brad Rader Kevin Te Velde
 Kevin Engelsma Harman Brar

Others Attending:

Gavin Willis _____ Henry Bierlink Fred Likkel
 Cynthia May Jay Chennault Katie Faber
_____ Jon Hutchings Bill Clarke Alan Chapman
_____ Frank Corey _____ Dillon Honcoop _____ Brandy Reed
x – present o – absent with notice t – teleconference p – proxy

Larry Stap called the meeting to order at 9:01.

1. Board of Equalization

- a. Kevin T moved to open the board of equalization. Harmon seconded. Board was opened.
- b. No one was present to contest assessments.
- c. Brad moved to close the board of equalization. Kevin T seconded. Board was closed.

2. Consent Agenda

- a. October 17 minutes were reviewed.
- b. Financial report was reviewed.
- c. Brad moved to approve the consent agenda. Kevin T seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Administration

- a. With no other nominees, Harmon is elected to a new term on the board.

4. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. Bill shared an adjudication update.
 - i. ECY says they are still on track for spring 2024 filing.
 - ii. Should be a draft of the claim form by the end of the year. Current form is 8 pages, which seems excessive given the information that the RCW states needs to be collected.
 - iii. Referee has been hired – John All. Has been previously working in the Whatcom County public defenders office. Has academic background in water law but not much experience.
- b. Alan mentioned that there have been a flurry of water rights filings in the Lake Whatcom area leading up to the adjudication (single domestic use surface water withdrawals on Lake Whatcom)

- c. Support from other WMB partners on a combined application to ECY's Streamflow Restoration grant. Noted in discussion that surface-to-groundwater conversions are more complicated now following the Foster decision.
- d. Meeting between AWB staff and tribal technical staff on water supply projects in November went well. The board provided encouragement to staff to continue to build that relationship.

5. Drainage / Habitat / Flood

- a. Brief update on FLIP – county is now under pressure to put shovels in the ground and get moving on projects.
- b. Fred provided an update on issues with the CREP program.
 - i. Likely to lose 1000 acres of CREP buffers in Whatcom County. Some disenrolled buffers have already been removed.
 - ii. One positive outcome is that environmental groups are reaching out interested in building partnerships.
- c. No further update on ditch maintenance. Still need to do a bit more to finish Assink Rd
 - i. County seems interested in doing some work on Double Ditch, but it's hard to see a path forward for permitting that work.
- d. Beaver management was discussed. Significant progress on Fishtrap, trapper will continue to monitor.
 - i. Brief discussion about starling trapping.

6. Water Quality

- a. Cynthia provided an update on water quality. Have seen a couple of hot spots over the last month, most notably Fishtrap @ Badger. Follow-up sampling since then has looked better. Counts are slightly elevated at the broder on Pepin, but not at critical levels.
- b. Shellfish testing is looking good. Numbers are lowest they've been in 20 years; Dept of Health will be re-analyzing numbers in the next few months to see if there is the possibility of widening shellfish bed openings.

7. Education / Communications

- a. Website – northlyndenwid.com
 - i. Website update appears less urgent than previously mentioned – will revisit next year.
 - ii. Need to cover OPMA training for WID board members. Gavin will arrange for January or February meeting.

8. Other Items from Commissioners

- a. None

9. Next Meetings

- a. The next meeting is scheduled for Jan 16th at 9 AM.

Larry Stap adjourned the meeting at 9:54 am.

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____