

North Lynden Watershed Improvement District

Minutes for: September 18, 2018 Meeting, 10 am - Noon

Ag Central 204 Hawley Street Lynden, WA 98264

Board Attending:

Brad Rader Harman Brar Kevin Te Velde
 Jeff Bedlington Larry Stap

Others Attending:

Erika Douglas Henry Bierlink Fred Likkel
x = present o = absent with notice t = teleconference p = proxy

I. Consent Agenda

- a. Review and Approval of June 19 Minutes
- b. Financial Report and payment of bills – *see financial report*

Larry provided a Proxy Voting Form designating Kevin as his proxy vote for this meeting.

Kevin moved to approve the Consent Agenda, Harman seconded, motion carried unanimously.

II. Administration

- a. Jeff Bedlington's position – not able to attend, working on getting Blake Te Velde qualified as a landowner within the district. Fred noted that Kevin Engelsma was open to serving. Brad will talk with Jeff about the timeline for getting Blake eligible. If it isn't soon the Board would like to appoint Kevin.

III. Ag Water Board – *written report submitted, briefly discussed*

- a. AWB/Tribal meetings – Nooksacks have responded positively to the invitation to meet sent in July. No response from Lummis yet. We will plan to conduct these meetings before the end of October.
- b. Foster Task Force pilot program
 - Meeting with Ecology - August 30th – advance all potential projects (10) - Dale and Chuck are meeting with the potential project owners to get a better sense of the costs. A grant application will be prepared by mid-October to cover the costs for as many projects as we can develop. We plan to garner support from the Planning Unit caucuses and the Watershed Management Board.
- c. Watershed Management Board and Planning Unit update
 - 6091 work deadlines this fall – ag projects are likely to be high priorities - (conversions, augmentation, efficiencies) – How much help should farmers be providing to help solve rural water users' issues? There is a tension there as we don't want to give up any water rights or credits generated by installing stream enhancement projects. But there is an opportunity to help projects get done that would require law changes currently inhibited by *Foster* as well. And with the support of the Water Management Board and Planning Unit a grant application to get these projects done would be rated quite highly.
 - Does Ag want to state positions on amount of water allowed for exempt wells (5,000 gpd in law, 3,000 in 6091), fees (\$500 in 6091), and meter requirements? There was ambivalence on the fees and amount and skepticism on how meters could be a made a useful requirement. Voluntary metering would be our position.
- d. Key partner discussion needed – issues include:
 - Farmers shut off from water – Hans Wolfisburg's situation explained and discussed.
 - water bank/exchange – PUD partnership – The PUD, Birch Bay Water and Sewer, Bill Clarke, Chuck Lindsay, and RH2 discussed initiating a water bank proposal. This is partially built on the NORTH WHATCOM COUNTY REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY FEASIBILITY STUDY done for BBWS and the increasing need to help farmers like Hans deal with their water supply issues. The question of how much service should be supplied by the WID and how much should be each farmers'

initiative was discussed. There was a consensus to have the WIDs do the preparatory work but leave the final negotiations over water contracts to individual farmers.

- Timing of gage recalculations – AWB wrote USGS to protest the timing of the River gage recalculations. In July the flow was well over the minimum and the interruptible water users began irrigating only to find that USGS recalculated the Ferndale gage and lowered the flow 25% which was under the minimum. As a result, these farmers had to shut off again and have not been able to use their river rights since. Discussion with USGS and Ecology should take place this fall.
- September meeting with Ecology, PUD, Birch Bay Water, County, *others?* – A discussion with all of our partners this fall bringing all the issues together is being considered. The Tribal meetings would be the priority followed by this meeting.

IV. Drainage/Habitat

- a. Ditch maintenance – Fred reported that Larry felt most of the work we wanted addressed had been completed by the County.
 - Double Ditch flow – augmentation effort – Fred reported on the short term effort to help fish when the ditch dried up in August.
 - Pangborn Road ditch had quite of bit of work done to improve drainage.
 - Double Ditch was being mowed.
- b. Heeringa mitigation maintenance – Brad asked if the Board would consider paying for weed control in the new plantings on the Heeringa side of Fishtrap. The Board approved of the idea. Brad will talk with Gordy Vlas.

V. Water Quality

- a. Monitoring Results – Erika reported that summer results were good but the fall flush is upon us and it is a crucial time to be careful with applications.
- b. ZAP Units – still in calibration
- c. DNA source tracking project report – Erika reported the state Conservation Commission had awarded the WCD with \$200k to 1) build the source library for DNA of a large range of potential contributors to local fecal coliform levels, and 2) to conduct monitoring in several county “hot spots” where improved identification of sources would help lead to clean-up.
- d. Portage Bay/Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District – Fred noted that the intensive spring marine sampling was pointing towards potential reopening of the beds for the spring closure period (April – June). There are no assurances from Health yet but the data looks good enough to justify this opening. The Fall closure remains in place.
- e. Discovery Farms – Fred called attention to the numerous farms participating in this program where significant research was being conducted on water quality protection issues.
- f. Financial assistance – Erika reminded the board of the resources available through County Public Works to help small lot farms and septic system owners. Publicizing this opportunity in future newsletters would be appreciated.

VI. Education/Communications

- a. Website - www.northlydenwid.com
- b. E-Newsletter – pictures of projects help prompt the development of e-newsletters.
- c. Whatcom Working Lands grant –Chris Elder of County Planning reported concerning the recent \$1.3 million Regional Conservation Partnership grant the County received to strengthen the Purchase of Development Right program. Partners in this project are the WCD, the Whatcom Land Trust, and AWB which will be relied upon to give direction to where the program best helps agriculture and water management. This is federal dollars which are matched with the County Natural Resources Fund dollars to make \$2.6 million available for conservation easements. Chris was encouraged to have the County, perhaps the AAC, better define what “ag viability” means.

- d. County Natural Resources newsletter – Chris reminded the board of the opportunity to include WID information in this newsletter which is mailed to over 18,000 county rural residents. The next issue is slated to go out in December.

VII. Adjournment/Next Meetings

October 16

Respectfully submitted by Henry Bierlink, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____