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Description automatically generatedTuesday November 12, 2024

6:00-8:00 PM

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Phone: 1-669-900-6833

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

**In Attendance**

Board Members Present: Nate Johnson, Marcella Henkels, David Barron, Greg Jones, Aubrey Cloud, Kerry Hastings

Board Members Absent: Eliza Mason

Associate Directors Present: Rana Foster

Staff Present: Holly Crosson, Michael Ahr, (minutes), Cierra Dawson

Staff Absent: Teresa Matteson, Sara Roberts, Candace Mackey

Others Present: Charlene Carroll, Michael Rhodes, Jennifer McCrae

**Call to Order - Johnson** (6:06pm)

**Introductions, Public Comments, Announcements, Additions/Changes to Agenda**

**Introductions:** Each introduced themselves and their roles.

**Public Comments:** none.

**Announcements**:

**Additions/Changes to the Agenda:** None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

* **Approve draft Minutes from October 7, 2024, Board Meeting**
* **Approve Financials (9/30/24)**

Discussion: None

MOTION: Nate Johnson moves to approve the consent agenda Second: David Barron

Results: Pass 6/0

**REGULAR AGENDA**

* **Appoint Charli Carroll as Associate Director**

Discussion: Charli introduces herself, had a small farm out in Wren prior to moving to Corvallis. Had Kincaid Lupine & Blue Bottle Butterfly. BSWCD came out to help with conservation plans and she is friends with Cliff and Gay Hall as well. Volunteers with BSWCD Salmon Watch due to past sons’ involvement and loves what the organization does.

MOTION: Nate Johnson moves to appoint Charli Carroll as a BSWCD Associate Director Second: Greg Jones

Results: Pass 5/0 (David Barron absent from vote)

* **Appoint Michael Rhodes as Associate Director**

Discussion: Michael introduces himself, he and Jennifer newly live in Kings Valley, purchasing Cliff and Gay Hall’s property enjoying and admiring the conservation efforts they put into the property. He previously worked for 25 years in land stewardship and resource conservationist in CA. Looking forward to contributing to what they can to the organization.

MOTION: Nate Johnson moves to appoint Michael Rhodes as a BSWCD Associate Director. Second: Marcella Henkels

Results: Pass 5/0 (David Barron absent from vote)

* **Appoint Jennifer McCrae as Budget Committee Member**

Discussion: As previously said, the BSWCD mission and their own property are very near and dear to both she and Michael. In addition, has deep budgeting experience as a retired educator: she has presented budgets to boards and has experience with the public process.

MOTION: Nate Johnson moves to appoint Jennifer McCrae as a BSWCD Budget Committee Member. Second: Kerry Hastings

Results: Pass 5/0 (David Barron absent from vote)

* **Oregon Association of Conservation District (OACD) Annual Meeting Update**

Discussion: Nate Johnson mentions that the presentations in the link sent by Holly Crosson for the OACD Annual Meeting were very informative. HC shared that the Executive Director of OACD had sent a message to all the district managers and ED’s to submit something about any staff or board members that had passed away in the past year or so. HC sent a photo and wrote about Jerry Paul and Bob Morris which was included in an OACD document to honor those who had passed.

* **Executive Director Recruitment Update**

Marcella Henkels gives a status report. Trudy Hylemon 9Cascade Employers Association) received 8 potential candidates for the Executive Director position and gave them to the PFC with a rubric for scoring the applications. Marcella Henkels is pleased that the candidates are very strong. Trudy Hylemon will score the rubrics from each committee member, and then will set up the first round of interviews with the top candidates with the Personnel and Finance Committee.

* **Oak Partnership Update**

Michael Ahr highlights information about the upcoming Oak presentation this week. Speak to Aubrey Cloud for more information. They also held a partner meeting with the local Benton County agency folks who work with Oak, such as the Watershed councils, Institute for Applied Ecology, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. They spoke about what people are doing in the County with oak. There is a program through Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife that will set up a wildlife conservation plan. Michael sees a niche in BSWCD getting into this work with landowners. There is a great need for landowners that authentically want to take care of the land but don’t quite fit into other conservation programs so they can have more certainty about the future of their land. We have an oak engagement grant where we are assessing different priorities for oak in the County. Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT) has also been active because talking about oak conservation can also begin to connect landowners with OAT. BSWCD wrote a letter of support for OAT’s engagement grant.

* **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Retreat Nov. 19th**

Any questions? 9am-1pm on November 19th for board and staff members. Look for an email that includes agenda and more information. There will be a little bit of prework including a document for review.

Greg Jones states he will be gone, so unfortunately won’t be able to attend. Question? What is driving this? Is it coming down from the ODA?

Holly Crosson responds that this is something BSWCD has been working on for years and was established by the organization to be more inclusive with our programs, policies, and procedures, and ensure District programs are relevant and accessible to the diverse public in Benton County. Our funders (OWEB, ODA) and partners also support this work. Associate Directors are invited to participate.

* **FY24 Audit Update**

This Friday there will be a meeting with the Auditor, Holly, Nate, and Jenny, our bookkeeper. It was a positive audit with an increase in net position, and no significant deficiencies identified. Holly Crosson reminds the board that approval of the draft audit will be on the December Board meeting agenda.

* **Board Director Election Results, and Benton County Taxpayers’ FAQ**

ODA doesn’t receive verified election results until the first week in December. Holly Crosson will send something around to the 5 directors who were on the ballot. Thanks to the directors who put a statement in the voter pamphlet. We all have these opportunities to connect with our constituents so they can better understand the value of what we do, and what we have to offer them to help.

* **Questions from Board on BSWCD and NRCS activities**-

Nate Johnson asks Michael Ahr if the new Wildlife Enhancement property tax relief is similar/same to the EFU? Yes. Nate Johnson emphasizes this could be a large tax relief for landowners and could be a great “carrot,” to help create more land conservation if BSWCD chose to be involved. Our value proposition would go up the more we people we can put in touch with beneficial programs. Aubrey Cloud asks about how Wildlife Deferral Program stacks with NRCS EQIP/CREP program? Generally speaking, the tax assessor will be ok with a landowner who is already involved in an NRCS program; however these have end dates. The Wildlife Deferral Program could help after the NRCS program is completed. There is discussion about what makes a “conservation” plan. Teresa Matteson and Michael Ahr have been in discussions with ODA about this. The plans BSWCD turns out qualify, so the organization is already providing landowners with a valuable tool in qualifying for deferrals and grants.

* **Other Board Business- None**

**Meeting Adjourned** - **Johnson** (7:09pm)