

**Skagit Watershed Council**  
**Meeting of the Board of Directors – Final Notes**  
**March 6, 2014, SWC Office in Mount Vernon, WA**

Attendance: Chair Ken Dahlstedt, Dave Pflug, Carolyn Kelly, Steve Hinton, and Richard Brocksmitth. Bob Everitt and Brenda Cunningham were absent but provided comments prior to the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05am, with quorum. The Board reviewed January financial reports. Carolyn moved to approve, Dave seconded, and they were approved unanimously.

The Board reviewed February meeting notes, with discussion on several items:

- The Board reviewed the discussion around “non-strategic” actions, with one clarification that the discussion was about strategic actions for salmon other than Chinook and another that we should look at supporting projects that weren’t in the Chinook recovery plan and 3 year work plan. There was agreement that further discussion is warranted.
- The Board clarified that the failure to agree on a new contract with Puget Sound Partnership for Adaptive Management and Monitoring was mostly due to there being at least one dissenting opinion, not just procedural.
- It should be noted that Steve Hinton abstained from decision-making with regard to the GIS contract with Skagit River System Cooperative.
- The action table does not need to be incorporated into the monthly notes, just followed up subsequently.

Carolyn moved to approve the amended meeting notes and Dave seconded, with unanimous approval.

All Board members noted their appreciation for getting updates from the committees, particularly the Protection Subcommittee.

Richard briefed the Board on the reconstituted Similk Beach project proposal, its review and recommendation for approval with conditions by the TWG. The condition states that “the sponsor will phase the project to first complete critical coastal process studies and obtain landowner and significant stakeholder agreement that there are feasible and sufficient alternatives for restoration, before completing remaining project studies.” It was noted that the project review functioned well, but the Board had not yet seen the final proposal. Carolyn motioned to send out the proposal and request electronic voting by the Board, with Dave seconding. This was approved unanimously with Steve and Ken abstaining. Subsequent electronic voting unanimously approved the project for submittal to SRFB for consideration of funding, including the condition recommended by the TWG and supported by SRSC and that an additional TWG member (in addition to the County) is added to the project’s steering committee.

Richard briefed the Board on the Protection Subcommittee and TWG's recommendation to the Board to consider using the existing reach-level grant to fund acquisition of development rights and permanent protection of a large ranch on lower Illabot Creek with limited riparian area quality, even though it would require an exception to the protection strategy that focused those funds onto large sites with existing high quality habitat. Two members of the Board noted their particular disagreement with the recommendation for multiple reasons, including not following the protection strategy process; lack of previous information provided to the Board; questions about zoning and development potential, restoration potential and need to be proposed as a "combination" project, process for negotiating with the landowner, and sense of urgency; questions about alternative funding sources being available; and whether existing regulatory conditions should be adequate.

Alternative perspectives were relayed that this is an important opportunity on an important fish system where we've committed significant resources previously. Should we ask the Land Trust to come talk to us about it after getting more information? Most in the room (only 3 Board members at this point as Ken had briefly stepped out) felt that wasn't helpful as the project should stand on its own through a future competitive process rather than the existing reach-level grant.

It was felt that the Board, and even the TWG, didn't have enough info given lack of briefing materials beforehand (there was some sensitivity to disseminating this information electronically). The majority felt that where policies are written, SWC should stick to them because they have been hammered out over time for a reason, though there was a dissenting minority opinion on that point. No motion was made and no vote was taken.

Richard reviewed the written materials that outlined inconsistencies between bylaws and operating procedures with regard to quorum and decision-making. The Board concurred that attention will be needed on this topic and with the requested actions to address these (and multiple other inconsistencies). May was not seen as a realistic timeline, so instead we can attempt to seek input from membership in May and adopt changes to bylaws at September meeting. Steve moved and Carolyn seconded to **\*amend Jay Watson's existing contract not to exceed \$3,000 to help update/reconcile/amend bylaws and operating procedures**, which was agreed to by the Board unanimously.

The Board discussed the status of nominations for the Board of Directors vacancies and empty positions. **\*Margaret Fleek's information should be disseminated to the membership immediately in preparation for a vote on March 6.** It was undetermined if she should be nominated to fill the existing vacancy from Mr. Carey's resignation (through September 2014) or if she should be proposed to fill a new 3-year term. **\*It was agreed that a nomination committee should be brought forward for future nominations.** We anticipate additional elections in May to expand the Board, and additional elections in September to address 2 expiring terms.

There was an update of status of potential new Board members for sectors identified as gaps, mainly tribal, federal, and fisheries enhancement. Discussions are ongoing with Upper Skagit Indian Tribe as they work through their Council on policy preferences for rejoining SWC. The Board recognized new

energy coming from the US Forest Service to reengage at SWC. We will all have the opportunity to meet and greet Loren Everest who is a regional fish biologist out of Everett and may be interested in supporting SWC's mission at the Board level. Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group has had recent turnover at their Board which has hampered our outreach to them on the topic. However, there is a new Board member who may be very qualified and interested, but not quite ready for Board membership. All felt he may be a very good candidate for the Lead Entity Citizen's Committee in 2014 as a stepping stone, if he was willing. Ken had rejoined the group by this point, so Carolyn moved and Steve seconded **\*to advance Ms. Fleek to the SWC membership for consideration of a vote to be a Board member**, and there was unanimous agreement.

The Board reviewed the new draft organizational structure and narrative and found it to be fairly consistent with their previous conversations and suggested future. There seemed to be different opinions on the HWS Subcommittee, and Richard noted that it wasn't a particularly complex topic that needed a committee at the moment and that it was more of a program that crossed multiple committees and topics. It definitely will be important to the Adaptive Management & Monitoring Subcommittee in some way, as well as the others. It was confirmed that the Protection Subcommittee was generally reflected correctly, though some thought the question of restoration related to them wasn't the right role. **\*It was agreed that this "working draft", with the caveats provided herein, was generally ready to be reviewed by the committees themselves and the membership at the May meeting, seeking input on functions, structure, and membership (Key Message for May membership meeting). \*Policy issues can be handled through the bylaws/operating procedures update. \*The Board should send any additional specific comments they have to Richard on the document soon.**

Steve moved and Carolyn seconded to approve new memberships to SWC by the City of Burlington and the Puget Sound Partnership. This provided another Key Message for May membership meeting that SWC has 22 great organizations now to celebrate; we can celebrate 2 new members; and are exploring with 10 to 15 more about that membership could provide.

The Board was in agreement that it was time **\*to hire one new staff member for SWC**, but they wanted to ensure it wasn't rushed and there would be at least 4 weeks for the position vacancy to be advertised, starting as soon as Richard could post it, likely in mid-March. Carolyn moved and Steve seconded, with unanimous agreement by the Board (including by Bob and Brenda in previous emails to the Board) to have Richard proceed as discussed. **\*If the Board has any further suggestions for the position announcement or how to disseminate it, please forward to Richard ASAP.**

Richard reviewed the update process for the habitat and assessment project portions of the 2014 3 year work program, and that while there were a few new, smaller projects proposed that were consistent with the 2010 Strategic Approach, the update mostly focused on existing project initiatives. One smaller project not aligned with the priorities of the Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan and 2010 Strategic Approach was Bowman Bay riprap removal, but it was not included at this time. Steve moved and Carolyn seconded approval of the habitat and assessment portions of the 2014 list as presented. The 3 year work program was approved unanimously.

Carolyn moved and Steve seconded a motion to approve the 2014 Request for Proposals and timeline as presented, which was approved with unanimous support. **\*The potential changes to the Program Guide were not discussed in detail, but should be vetted by the relevant committees before moving forward.**