

# Skagit Watershed Council

## Meeting of the Board of Directors – March 2, 2017 Final Notes

(\* indicates action item;        indicates decision, parentheses indicate attachment #)

Attendance: Jon-Paul Shannahan, Richard Brocksmith, Brendan Brokes, Carolyn Kelly, Michael Kirshenbaum, and Colleen McShane.

Not in attendance: Chair Ken Dahlstedt, Steve Hinton, and Jon Vanderheyden.

The meeting was called to order at 9:11 am with a quorum. JP chaired the meeting.

### Call to Order

- Approve Agenda (#1)  
No changes suggested for the agenda.
- Approve Board Notes: February 2, 2017 (#2)  
Carolyn is not the Vice-Chair. Page 2 under Old Business, note that Ken Dahlstedt called into the meeting thus establishing a quorum, but then he signed off. On page 3, Brendan joined the meeting providing a quorum again at that time.  
Carolyn moved and Michael seconded the motion to approve the February 2, 2017 notes with the above clarifications. Motion carried unanimously.

### Executive Directors Report

- Richard indicated January was a bit in the red, but annual profit & loss and the budget are on track. He showed the full list of disbursements and noted they were provided on a cash basis. Richard and Carolyn indicated the new payables approval procedure requested at the last Board meeting is happening.  
Carolyn moved to approve the January Financial Report (#3) and Brendan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- SWC Investment Plan Discussion  
Richard noted that SWC's certificate of deposit (~\$11,500 set aside for reserves) will mature and roll back in on March 15, 2017. The Board felt SWC could take advantage of better rates than our bank is offering. They discussed money market and bond options with potentially higher rates though also other drawbacks. While the Board doesn't feel the need for a complicated investment policy, they did request Richard bring them recommendations for a simple, general policy. **\*Richard will inform the bank not to reinvest the CD after it matures and will create a draft investment plan for the Board to consider next month.**
- Community Engagement Program (CEC) and Legislative Updates  
Richard noted he is very happy with community engagement including the intern's social media efforts and the recent Youth Educator retreat which attracted over 2 dozen partners and teachers for the 2-day event at NCI. Richard shared that the retreat members developed a strategic vision to work towards.

A survey has been distributed to 50-60 people to collect and catalog in-school, field-based, and extra-curricular K-12 programs offered in the Skagit. The survey will be used to develop a draft Resource Guide which will be available in the next 3 weeks. SWC is acting as a catalyst for launching this guide which will include organization and program information and how they support the latest student learning goals. Plans are to direct market to the ESD, school districts, and educators. Yet to be determined are: 1) the guide's format (it may be available in a web form or as a searchable PDF, 2) who will keep the guide up-to-date over the long-term, and 3) how SCEA, ECONet, or any other Skagit partners should be aligned with this outreach process since it is bigger than salmon and SWC.

The Board felt SWC's role in initiating this guide is exciting and valuable, while expressing that the SWC continue to explore opportunity for another group or entity to take on this work (e.g. maintain guide, coordinate broader message) over the long haul.

- Legislative Report – Ken and Richard spoke to nine legislators this past month to convey the great progress Skagit has been making and the need for continued funding. He shared the leave behind letter, table of funding priorities, and other materials on progress of programs. It's going to be a very tough year for funding they've been told. The Board expressed the importance of SWC working across political boundaries because of the current political climate.

- March 8 SWC Council of Members Meeting  
The March Council of Members meeting was cancelled. Richard sent notice to members with three remaining meeting dates of the year including a celebration of the SWC's 20th year in September at the Annual Lunch.

Richard noted that there appears to be about \$13K remaining in returned PSAR funds to be spent by June 2017. The Board asked if it could be used for engagement or education. Those activity types aren't eligible as a standalone project, but instead solely as tools for completing a habitat project. **\*He will share this opportunity soon.**

- Richard announced that he's recently become the newest member of the Mount Vernon Planning Commission and that he is looking seriously at running for Mount Vernon City Council – a non-partisan position – this year. He noted that his intent is to keep these activities solely on his personal time and he'd ensure they didn't interfere with our main priorities. The group reviewed language in the SWC bylaws and personnel policies and did not feel like it would pose a conflict of interest with his SWC role given the lack of grant applications from the City. It may even be beneficial in the long run. Richard noted that he is also serving on the Mt. Vernon Public Schools Foundation Board of Directors.

## **Committee Reports**

- Technical Work Group and M&AM Subcommittee – provided verbally  
M&AM update – They met on February 21, 2017. The contract with Abby Hook continues. Their June report will 1) summarize status and trends data (estuarine, floodplain, riparian); 2) develop recommendations about additional metrics and protocol; and 3) look at status and trends and make recommendations about amending or not hypotheses and strategies in the Chinook Recovery Plan. There is a SRFB round

coming up and monitoring is proposed to be an eligible activity; they will review proposals at their next meeting.

Technical Work Group updates – The group discussed progress on the riparian habitat assessment and status of the consultant’s draft plan and data development. Initial cover classification is on a web portal for review. Also field reviews of the data are starting now. The TWG wanted an opportunity to consider the huge amount of new information coming in rather than moving immediately to the consultant ranking reaches.

The TWG discussed the Protection Strategy Update, including the Protection Subcommittee’s work to answer previous TWG questions. The parcel scores are on a web portal for review. The TWG did not feel it necessary for them to have a joint Board work session on this. Reach-level SRFB projects follow the current policy from 1998/2001, but once SWC adopts a new policy via this update, current and future reach level grants will begin to use it.

### **Old Business**

- Approve 2017 Lead Entity Program Guide and Request for Proposals (#5)

The Board considered four issues from the briefing memo plus a fifth issue brought forth by SRSC regarding the Lead Entity Program Guide: 1) administrative refinements, 2) Lead Entity Citizens Committee supplemental questions, 3) attendance requirements, 4) 4 year work plan approach, and 5) a proposal to eliminate eligibility of reach-scale block grants.

- The Board first reviewed modest changes to the document that were either agreed upon in their February discussion or recommendations made by TWG. These were all accepted.
- The Board discussed the suggestion in the memo to adjust decision-making toward committees and away from administrative responsibility. The Board did not agree to the specific suggestions in the memo regarding decision making roles as they felt these to be policy changes that were unnecessary and/or inefficient.
- The Board discussed the Lead Entity Citizen Committee Supplemental Questions for Habitat Project Proposals. A few questions were modified by the group before they concurred on the final text.
- The Board agreed that LECC attendance is important & strongly recommended.
- SRSC suggested changing guidance from amending 4 year work program usually before the grant round to instead after the grant round. Given the change in the likely due date of this deliverable to the regional organization, this change was not accepted at this time.
- The Board discussed the value of reach-scale block grants for acquisition of best remaining habitat. The Board felt that all relevant projects should compete on a level playing field and thus we’ll fund the most beneficial projects. No changes were recommended for the RFP.

Carolyn made a motion to approve the 2017 Lead Entity Guide and Colleen seconded. Motion carried unanimously. \*Richard will incorporate the changes and put the Guide and an RFP on the website this week.

- Review Status of Protection Strategy Update

Given the limited time available today, the Board only discussed how they'd like to have next month's conversation regarding this topic. **\*Richard will do an overview presentation on the background, problems, proposed changes and results in April.** The formal review period with the TWG and the two-meeting rule would likely not allow the Board to approve this until the May Board meeting. **\*Carolyn suggested key people from the Protection Subcommittee come to the Board meeting to be able to answer any questions the Board might have. Staff will prepare documents and maps and distribute before the next Board meeting.**

### **New Business**

- The Board briefly discussed appointment of members and chairs to the Monitoring & Adaptive Management Subcommittee and the Community Engagement Committee (#6) Carolyn moved to accept recommendations for new members to the CEC (Lisa Miller, Stewardship and Outreach Associate with the Skagit Land Trust and Samantha Russell, Volunteer and Program Coordinator with the Coastal Volunteer Partnership at Padilla Bay) and Alex Dupont, WSU Extension as the Chair. Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

SWC has never had a discussion re: membership and chairmanship on the M&AM. The Board discussed several options, but many of the Board members spoke to how busy those people who have been proposed already are. The purpose of the Chair is to set the agenda via consultation, guide a fair process, and make sure there are notes.

The Board discussed whether a policy exists about Board members serving on committees. Bylaws discuss how people are appointed, but nothing about overlapping roles of Board members on committees. There are plusses and minuses of such an approach. Time is often too stretched to take on multiple roles. Also, a Board member should not have multiple levels of influence in their involvement. In some organizations, it might be critical to interface between Board and committee members, but here there was some concern about who's perspectives are being represented. That is one reason the Executive Director was given that role in the Bylaws. The Board felt a policy should be considered regarding membership on committees. They also felt that the committee doesn't need to have a single Chair. Staff can put together the agenda, members comment, and the Chairmanship can rotate from member to member. **\*The Board agreed to table this issue.** Carolyn moved to name Richard and Steve as co-chairs through 2017 to be re-evaluated in January 2018 and JP seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Adjourn 11:46 am**

**Next SWC Board Meetings:** April 13\*, May 4, May 8 & 9 (site visits for LECC)