

Skagit Watershed Council Final Notes

Meeting of the Board of Directors, via Zoom, January 8, 2021

(Underline indicates decision point; parentheses indicate attachment #; ***bold indicate action item**)

Attending: John Stein, Bill Blake, Jon-Paul Shannahan, Michael Kirshenbaum, Jon Vanderheyden, Brendan Brokes, Andrew Bearlin, Devin Smith, Richard Brocksmith, Aundrea McBride (notes), Holli Watne

10:09 am Call to Order

- Introductions, Determined Quorum, and Approved Agenda.
- Approved Board Notes as presented for December 3rd, 2020. Motion by Bill, second by Michael, all approve.

Executive Director's Report

- Financials:
 - Still in the black.
 - All appreciate the addition of notes to the financial reports.
 - Approved November Financial Reports. Motion by Brendan, second by Andrew, approved by consensus.
- 2021 Calendar, Final:
 - Board will meet first Thursday from 10-12 (new time), with May and July changed due to Lead Entity work.
 - Staff sent out Google calendar invites; ***JP, Brendan, Bill and Devin would like Outlook invites.**
- Committee and Staff Reports
 - The LE Program Guide will be coming next month for approval after TWG looks at it, including the RFP for the 2021 grant round. ***TWG then Board will need to discuss set-asides for riparian and monitoring to be included in the RFP.**
 - Adaptive management (project-scale) is being discussed in the TWG, outcomes to be reported next month for adding a process to the Program Guide.
 - RFQQ went out for the Sauk project. ***We will need to approve a contract for a consultant in the next month or two.**
 - Luminate Skagit and Illuminight Winter Walk will be the last Friday in January, all virtual, luminary contest, 6:00-7:00pm on Facebook live event.
 - Letter to County Commissioners seeking Director nomination went out.

Old Business

- Estuary projects recap:

- 4 projects are under construction or will be this year or next (Britt Slough, County South Fork project, Swinomish Channel marsh construction, and North Leque).
 - 4 projects are in design phase (Milltown 2, Deepwater 2/Island Unit, Smokehouse dike setback, and Wiley Dike reconstruction adaptive management)
 - 2 are in conceptual stage (McGlenn and Telegraph)
 - Purpose of today's update is basic information sharing but also to get the Board thinking about what we need to do collectively to champion this work and put more focus on advancing a next generation of projects. ***In order to communicate these plans, staff will create an updated map and description of these for our next meeting and Salmon Recovery Council retreat. Continue work in background for now to bring stakeholders together.**
- Governor's budget:
- All our projects are below the funding line for FBRB. DOT is proposed for a huge amount of culvert money. We will need to find other sources for our prioritized culverts (steelhead), including FBRB.
 - SWC should advocate for higher amounts for the next session, in collaboration with the Puget Sound community to develop a larger package.
 - Need to include CREP money and improvements, which is currently far lower than the actual costs to plant.
 - Floodplains by Design is not currently a program we participate in much. We may want to change this in future years.
 - There may be stimulus money for ready-to-go projects.
 - Requests for increased funding need to be tied to benefits to Chinook and orcas
 - ***Richard will draft a letter and circulate. Devin and Jon-Paul will make sure tribes review it. SWC letter to target 5 funds: SRFB ~\$40mil; PSAR ~\$50mil; ESRP ~\$20mil; FBRB ~\$38mil, but higher level to get our projects; and CREP.**

New Business

- PSAR returned funds (\$33,658.13) from Martin Ranch Road and (\$10,866.71 more) from Skiyou Rock Removal. Funds expire in 2023.
 - An RFP will go out to active project sponsors today, get reviewed by the TWiG on the 21st and come back to the Board for approval February 4th.
 - ***Staff will look at returned funds policies and bring back a memo next month, assuring the process for returned funds is clearly spelled out in the Program Guide.**
- COLA raises for Staff, approved administratively by Richard. Bill moves and Devin seconds, all approve, a COLA raise of 2.1% for Richard in keeping with what other staff have received.
- ***Board will work on a performance evaluation for Richard.**

For the Good of the Order and Adjourn 12:00. March retreat is in the works.