

Skagit Watershed Council
Conference Call Meeting of the Board of Directors – Final Notes
December 3, 2015, 9-10:30 am, Mount Vernon, WA

(* indicates action item; indicates decision)

Attendance: Chair Ken Dahlstedt (reported in at 9:10), Michael Kirshenbaum, Richard Brocksmith, Bob Everitt, Steve Hinton, Colleen McShane, and Jon-Paul Shannahan.
Not in attendance: Margaret Fleek and Carolyn Kelly.

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 am with a quorum.

Agenda (#1)

Approval of the Agenda with no changes.

Draft Notes Review (#2)

Approval of the November 5, 2015 notes with no changes. Unanimously approved.

Executive Director Report

- Richard made general comments about the October 2015 financials with nothing unusual to report. (#3) He noted that the SWC has come out of a couple months in the red but the organization is back in the black for the month and year as anticipated.
Bob moved and Colleen seconded the motion to approve the October 2015 financials as included in the board packet. Unanimously approved.
- Medical Benefits: Richard noted that with Affordable Care Act (ACA) changes were made to the regulation of medical benefits. First, organizations can't offer employer payment plans, but they can offer wellness benefits; however, they must be recorded as taxable income. This will change how SWC does its accounting, but it won't change the SWC budget. Because of these changes, SWC needs to change the medical benefit terminology in personnel policies. ***Richard indicated that he will prepare personnel policy terminology for consideration at the January Board meeting.** Richard also expressed that Chris has asked for a refinement of how his benefits are administered, which will be part of the proposed solution in January.

Committee Reports

- Nominating Committee Update: ***Steve asked that notes from the nominating committee be provided to the Board.**
Carolyn, Colleen, and Michael were unanimously approved by the Nominating Committee to continue on the Board. To maintain the current number of Board members, two more positions need to be filled: Loren Everest and Margaret Fleek. The committee unanimously approved Brendan Brokes to continue WDFW representation on the Board, and Brendan has agreed if so approved by the Board. To replace Margaret, the favored nominee, Brandon Roozen, declined due to other commitments, but would like to be reconsidered at a future time. ***John Vanderhayden**

was discussed as a potential nominee and the Board expressed strong support for contacting him as soon as possible. He serves on the SFEG Board and would be a good bridge with the US Forest Service until a replacement can be found for Loren Everest who is leaving since Jon worked there at one time. The committee will be contacting him. A positive goal for the SWC Board is to get a broader support group and to include a liaison with the cities. Bob Hyde was discussed for further exploration.

Steve moved and Bob seconded to approve the slate of four to be proposed to the full Council of Members in March (Brendan, Colleen, Carolyn, and Michael). Unanimously approved.

***The Nominating Committee will work with Richard to convene another nominating committee meeting in early January. Loren was one of the Nominating Committee members.**

- Subcommittee Reports: The TWG and Protection Subcommittee met recently with key folks from the Skagit Climate Science Consortium. The event proved to be very informative regarding climate change impacts to the Skagit watershed system over time. Protection and restoration folks agreed that their work is aligned with the information presented, though there is room to grow as we further understand recent findings and propose ways to adaptively manage our actions.
- Steelhead Bull Trout Subcommittee met a couple days ago to consider if there were simple improvements that can be made to the 2016 Interim Steelhead Strategy while working within existing policy direction. JP expressed some concerns about policy guidance during this interim period. JP would like to provide connectivity between the Board and that work group in light of Loren's departure. Steve nominated JP Shannahan and Bob seconded for JP to chair the Steelhead Bulltrout Subcommittee. Unanimously approved. ***Richard will speak with JP further about status and support the subcommittee's efforts.**

Old Business

- Community Engagement Plan Framework (#4a & 4b)
Richard noted that several venues and processes provided good input on the draft Plan framework. Based on that, moderate changes were incorporated into the Plan that was forwarded to the Board. Twenty-one entities are represented in the Educator Network. Additionally, suggestions solicited from the Council of Members were tabulated and included in the Board packet and will provide input to the next phase of the engagement planning process.
Richard proposed adoption of the Plan as amended. ***A new SWC website page will be developed to highlight community engagement efforts of the SWC and partners.**
Based on discussion, all 21 organizations should be listed explicitly in the Plan.
Bob moved and Michael seconded to approve the plan as modified and to include the 21 names of organizations involved in the process as of December 15, 2015. Unanimous approval.
- Fish Barrier Removal Board Coordinated Pathway Nominations (#5)
Richard reflected that although there's a better way to approach this, the Council bodies have expressed support to submit a nomination and move on to watershed-based prioritization. Richard acknowledged frustration expressed regarding the processes'

inconsistency with (as well as the slow evolution of) the 2015 Strategy. After discussion with TWG, the list of 10 packages of culverts was narrowed to 4. ***The Board will discuss the issues of inconsistency and the Salmon Recovery Plan at the Retreat in January.** ***Colleen indicated she would provide Richard with a couple of small edits later today.** Steve moved submission of the letter with the addition of Colleen and Richard's minor edits and his suggested deletion; Bob seconded to approve the Fish Barrier Removal Board Coordinated Pathway Nominations. Unanimously approved.

New Business

- Ken expressed his thanks to Richard for his leadership and to Steve for filling in when Ken has been absent. He thanked everyone who has served with special thanks to those Board members who are leaving. Ken and the Board expressed their regrets for Loren's resignation. He expressed that this group has been great to work with and has done a great job moving the work of the SWC forward. He wished everyone great holidays.
- Typically, at the next Council of Members meeting, a gift is given; however in the absence of Loren and Margaret, ***Richard will craft a letter of thanks along with a gift and certificate of appreciation for their contributions, commitment, and time.** Bob Everitt and Phil Kincare will just have to wait until the March Council meeting!
- Other:
All are invited to the December 9th Holiday Open House with SFEG at SWC.
Richard cancelled the January 7 Board meeting based on Board input and due to the already scheduled Board Retreat on January 27, 2016. Next Board of Directors' Meetings Jan. 27, 2015, from 9am-3pm, Board Retreat and Feb. 4, 2015, from 9 am-12 pm.
***Richard will email the future Board meeting schedule to the Board as previously included in the Board packet.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 am.

Next Council of Members' Meetings

- December 9, from 4pm to 7pm – Holiday Open House with SFEG at SWC Office
- March 9, from 9am to noon – 1800 Continental Place, Skagit County Administration Building
- June 15, from 9am to noon – Skagit PUD – Project Presentations