

Laurel Watershed Improvement District

Minutes for: January 9, 2023 Meeting, 10 am

Videoconference – <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89777427615?pwd=bzVKM2tRR3lvVTVqbGZvUDNScHhHQOT09>
 Meeting ID: 897 7742 7615 Passcode: 098724

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leroy Plagerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roger Blok	<input type="checkbox"/> Jon Maberry
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rich Appel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Boxx	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Henry Bierlink	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fred Likkel	<input type="checkbox"/> Jay Chennault
<input type="checkbox"/> David Haggith	<input type="checkbox"/> Katie Faber	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aneka Sweeney
<input type="checkbox"/> Alan Chapman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tristen Simons	<input type="checkbox"/> Kasey Cykler
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gavin Willis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Frank Corey	<input type="checkbox"/> Cynthia May
<i>x = present</i>	<i>o = absent with notice</i>	<i>t = teleconference</i>

Mike called the meeting to order at 10:05.

I. Consent Agenda

- a. Review and Approval of November 14 Minutes
- b. Financial Report

L0123	AWB	Jan - Feb. AWB	\$9,379.22
TOTAL VOUCHER			\$9,379.22

Rich moved approval of the Consent Agenda after reviewing the minutes and financial report, Leroy seconded, motion passed unanimously.

II. Administrative

- a. Oath of Office – Leroy was sworn in.
- b. Appointment to vacant position – several had been contacted. Rich will connect with Kevin Sterk. *(Kevin responded positively after the meeting. Will need to adjust our meeting time and date to accommodate his schedule).*
- c. Election of Officers: President, Secretary, AWB Representative – Leroy moved to keep Mike as President and AWB representative and Rich as Vice-Chair/Secretary, Rich seconded, motion carried unanimously.

III. Ag Water Board/Water Supply

- a. Water supply update
 - Somach Law – alternate to adjudication – federal settlement as one option.
 - Ecology adjudication budget request may be packaged with guidelines for the adjudication and support for alternative settlement processes.
 - [Project List](#) ready for distribution to the appropriate discussion table – forming an out-of-stream water users group where proposals can be vetted.
- b. Water Right acquisition candidates
 - AWB establishing – [Whatcom Ag Water Exchange](#) – recent mtg with Ecology indicates we can do some our water right protection strategy without creating a formal bank. But we will still be pursuing it as an option if needed.
 - Draft [Mailing to all WID members](#) – likely this summer after we see the status of the adjudication and have the parameters of the Exchange established.
 - Follow-up with key acquisition candidates as were identified by the WID Board last spring.

IV. Drainage/Habitat/Flood

- a. Ditch maintenance – should have our priority cleaning areas to the County by March.
- b. Buffer discussion - WCD led worksession – Frank, Aneka, Tristen
 - Large amounts of funding from the federal and state govts
 - Funding pathways:
 - i. CREP – 50’ requirement, pays rent

- ii. NRCS/EQIP – new program, planning and maintenance
- iii. Legislature – funding through the Conservation Commission – standards to be determined. Opportunity to help develop these standards.
- Opportunity for voluntary progress but little progress will give strength to the mandatory buffer perspective.
- Width of buffers remain a contentious issue, CREP plants 35’ with understanding it will grow out to 50”. That is the minimum. Farmers are much more comfortable with 15-20’.
- Map of regulated streams classified as Green (50’+), Yellow (present but under 50’) and Red (no buffer) distributed. Tristen will calculate stream lengths in each category and we will track to use data to demonstrate our progress.
- Map needs groundtruthing. And assigning areas into 2-4 tiers indicating the priority areas for improving habitat. Frank will draft a second map for the board’s consideration.
- WID will use opportunity to advance buffers with landowners as a carrot in the water settlement negotiations.
- Consider a few Field Days – March for landowners to demonstrate working buffers and June/July for Legislators.

V. Water Quality

- a. Monitoring Results – Cynthia reviewed data. Overall the results have been quite good.
- b. DNA testing – no update
- c. Portage Bay/Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District update – Fred noted that Erika has moved up in the administration and will not be as available for the PIC program as in the past. Ingrid is replacing her. The WSDA Dairy inspection program has had several resignations resulting in decreasing inspections.

VI. Education/Communications

- a. Website – www.laurelwid.com

VII. Other Items from Commissioners

- a. Henry called attention to staff changes at the Ag Water Board. Gavin will be coming onto the AWB staff and beginning to take over administration of the WIDs and AWB board. Henry will continue in the water supply area for awhile but moving towards retirement.

VIII. Adjournment/Next Meetings

Mike adjourned the meeting at 11:46. Next meeting is February 13.

Respectfully submitted by Henry Bierlink, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____