

Laurel Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – Regular Meeting – January 13, 2025

Attendees

“(t)” indicates presence via tele-conference, “(p)” indicates proxy vote.

Board – Present	Board – Absent with Notice
Leroy Plagerman Rich Appel (t) Mike Boxx	Jon Maberry Eric Sundstrom

Staff and Consultants	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Tania Grim	Ag Water Board
Gavin Willis	Ag Water Board
Fred Likkel	Whatcom Family Farmers
Trevor Gearhart	Whatcom Conservation District

Other Guests	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Alan Chapman (t)	Whatcom Conservation District

Proceedings

Mike called the meeting to order at 10:02am.

1. Consent Agenda

- a. The agenda was reviewed.
- b. Minutes from the November 11 meeting were reviewed.
- c. The financial report was reviewed.
- d. Voucher L.Gen.0125 in the amount of \$5591.67 was reviewed.
- e. Leroy moved to approve the consent agenda. Rich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Administration

- a. Jon will sign the Oath of Office at the February meeting.

3. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. Gavin gave an update on adjudication.
 - i. Hearings in December and January resulted in the approval of the claims form. An additional hearing will be held later this month to approve the service list. The claims filing deadline is still set for May 1, 2026.
 - ii. Fall water rights office hours on October 24 and December 6 had 32 sessions, with 120 water rights reviewed and approximately 1,650 pages of supporting documents provided to landowners.
 - iii. Whatcom County is asking for additional funds from the legislature for adjudication support, with the expectation that some of those funds will be passed through to AWB for additional office hours.

- iv. Sharon Shewmake will likely sponsor draft legislation that would allow pre-code water users who don't have a claim on file to participate in the adjudication (although she will no longer be chairing the ag and natural resources committee). Lummi has indicated that they do not oppose the bill.
- b. Fred provided an update on recent WMB discussions related to the USU study. After contentious back and forth, the tribes seem to have stepped away from having any conversations related to instream flow.
- c. Gavin noted that any comments about federal lobbying or settlement discussions should be noted to him or Mike before the next AWB meeting where those topics will be discussed.

4. Drainage / Habitat / Flood

- a. Fred provided a FLIP update. Discussions are continuing about changes near the flow split, and subsequent impacts in Sumas and downstream mainstem areas. Also noted that TFI is making very little progress, which is contributing to frustrations.
 - i. Rich noted that the Cougar Creek project should be going out to bid soon.
- b. Drainage issues on Four Mile Creek were discussed. Gavin has spoken with local landowners and visited the sites; beaver activity is causing significant impacts on surrounding land near Ten Mile Rd, as well as near Hannegan Rd.
 - i. A board member noted drainage issues upstream as well near Green Lake.
 - ii. Trevor will check with WCD staff about generating an elevation profile of the creek to better understand beaver dam impacts.
 - iii. Gavin noted that he was informed that three new members have petitioned to join the DD#3 board. He will invite a member to join a future WID meetings.
 - iv. Rich will speak with a contact about beaver trapping services.

5. Water Quality

- a. Trevor provided a WQ update. December 3 testing had low counts throughout the district. Also noted that recurring issues seems to be more connected to urban areas than agriculture.

6. Other Items

- a. Trevor noted regional dairy management training on February 19 from 9-12 at the Mt Baker Rotary Building.

7. Next Meeting

- a. Next scheduled meeting is February 10.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:59 am

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____

