

# Bertrand Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – October 9, 2023, 3 PM

## Board Attending:

Vern Vande Garde                       Mike Schoneveld                       Pete Vlas  
 Scott Bedlington                       Greg Ebe

## Others Attending:

Gavin Willis                       Henry Bierlink                       Fred Likkel  
 Trevor Gearhart                       Dale Buys                       Frank Corey  
 Alan Chapman                       Bill Clarke                       Brandy Reed  
 Jay Chennault                       Katie Faber                       Rud Browne  
*x – present      o – absent with notice      t – teleconference      p – proxy*

Vern called the meeting to order at 2:02.

## 1. Consent Agenda

- a. September 11 minutes were reviewed.
- b. Financial report was reviewed.
- c. Scott moved to approve the consent agenda. Mike seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## 2. Administration

- a. Terms are ending for Vern and Pete.
  - i. Scott moved to renominate all board members with expiring terms. Mike seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. Discussion of the budget, including AWB budget request. Pete moved to approve the AWB request and set additional budget of \$6780 for operation expenses and \$41,086 for projects. Scott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- c. Resolution 2023-01 – Setting the 2024 Assessment Rate
  - i. Mike moved to approve Resolution 2023-01 setting the assessment rate at \$10.00 per acre. Scott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- d. Resolution 2023-02 – Establishing the 2024 Assessment Roll
  - i. Assessment roll was reviewed.
  - ii. Pete moved to approve Resolution 2023-02 and establish the assessment roll for 2024. Scott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## 3. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. AWB event about adjudication on Sep 13<sup>th</sup> was well attended, with 452 people showing up. Could get a sense at the event that people are not happy about the adjudication. WFF will be hosting a similar event on Nov 8 from 2-4pm
- b. Preliminary talks between the federal settlement team and the tribes have begun.

- c. The AWB is considering re-applying for ECY's Streamflow Restoration Grant in order to do surface-to-groundwater conversions. There is potential to coordinate with other interests on the WMB as opposed to applying as a single entity – packaging the applications in this way may improve the odds of the application being approved, and also reduce administrative load for AWB staff for grant management. Applications due Feb 29, 2024.

#### **4. Drainage / Habitat / Flood**

- a. Gavin provided an update on FEMA projects.
  - i. Gavin will check with Jordan about next steps on the Parklyn Drainpipe project.
- b. Fred provided an update on CLASS. H&H study should be completed at the end of October.
  - i. Concerns expressed by board members about continued industrial development within the city while CLASS work and related concerns have not been fully addressed.
  - ii. The board would appreciate an update from the CLASS team ( at the next WID meeting.
- c. CREP update.
  - i. There is a possibility for the State Conservation Commission to step up and take over the contracts that FSA is abandoning or changing.
    - 1. Issues are that SCC funds are for new, not existing buffers; and the state can only fund contracts for a biennium, as opposed to 15 years for federal contracts.
  - ii. One possible solution is for the state to purchase permanent conservation easements for buffers that are then held by the WID.
    - 1. Board members noted that if the WID is to hold easements to maintain buffer areas, that they would be sure that the easement is written to allow the WID to manage vegetation, wildlife, sediment, and any other issues that could impact drainage.
- d. DeBoer project – final remaining step is riparian planting for mitigation. NSEA has provided an estimate of \$4100 to perform the work. Since construction work went over budget, this exceeds the previously-approved budgeted amount for the project.
  - i. Pete motioned for NSEA to perform the work as described in their estimate. Scott seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
  - ii. Vern signed the commitment letter to NSEA so that work could commence.

#### **5. Education / Communications**

- a. Website – [bertrandwid.com](http://bertrandwid.com)
  - i. Possible website update to simplify AWB staff workflow and ensure compliance with state requirements. Gavin will bring more info to the next meeting.

- b. Whatcom Family Farmers is hosting their annual Farmer Rally on Nov 8 at the Northwest Washington Fairgrounds in Lynden. They will be hosting an educational event for farmers about the adjudication from 2-4 pm prior to the rally.

**6. Other Items from Commissioners**

- a. None.

**7. Next Meetings**

- a. The next meeting is November 13<sup>th</sup>.
- b. November meeting will serve as the board of equalization.

Vern adjourned the meeting at 3:43 pm.

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_