

Minutes of the meeting for the South Fork John Day River Watershed Council

The South Fork John Day River Watershed Council met on the 10th day of February 2020.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm, by Joanne Keerins at the Izee Schoolhouse in Izee, Oregon.

In attendance for regular session:

Phil St. Clair, Vice Chair	Joanne Keerins, Chair	Jeff Maben, Director	Russ Powell, Director	M.T. Anderson, Director	Micah Wilson, Alternate Director
Scott Hess, Treasurer	Hannah Latzo, Program Assistant	Amy Stiner, Coordinator			

Quorum was present because there are currently 8 directors on the board and 7 were represented at this meeting.

I. Agency Reports;

- a. **Russ Powell**, ODFW, finalizing budget, probably April before finalized. 6 projects planned this year, 4 on Forest Service and 2 on Private.

II. Action Items

- a. January Meeting Minutes: Phil moved to approve as presented, Jeff 2nd, motion passed
- b. January Staff Time: Phil moved to approve as presented, Russ 2nd, motion passed
- c. Staff Check Request: Phil moved to approve as presented, Jeff 2nd, motion passed

III. Staff Report

- a. Open Projects: Amy and Hannah have been working on completion reporting over the winter.
- b. Grant Applications
 - i. OWEB Small Grants: The small grant applications have just started accepting applications this February. We have submitted 2 applications, one for Sawtooth Meadows fence, and one for the Tobin River Fence. We should have review results by February 18th, and if successful we can move forward with grant agreements, and hope to secure funding by April.
 - ii. Fall OWEB results,
 - 1. Our Murderers Creek project ranked #1, Tex Creek ranked #4, and the Keerins's Brisbois Aspen ranked #7, and the Annual Grass Monitoring application was a "Do Not Fund."
 - a. We are pursuing other funding sources for the Annual Grass study, and have just submitted a request to the Bella Vista Foundation. April 27th deadline.
 - b. Loren Stout has been raising the issue with different funders, and at the State level. He is also working to raise public awareness on the issue.
 - iii. OWEB Spring cycle is currently open, with an April 27th deadline
 - 1. We are currently planning submissions for 2 Juniper/Aspen/Spring Development projects on the Inshallah Ranch, and plan to re-submit the Keerins Brisbois Aspen project.
- c. Partnerships/education/outreach/trainings
 - i. BLM Workshop: SFJDWC overview and priorities, BLM reorganization, Sunflower culvert plans. We will plan reoccurring meetings every 6 months, to keep the communication going. Phil stated excitement for the specialists that have been assigned to our area. Appreciated Cathleen Kathy's and Ron Wyden's continued participation and support. Micah discussed a letter that they had recently received in mail from the BLM regarding changes in grazing regulations, and that the period for letters of comment seemed to be currently open. He suggested that permittees provide comment. This was not mentioned at the BLM workshop, and unexpected.
 - ii. Monument SWCD Annual Meeting: Hannah attended the Monument SWCD Annual Meeting. Maria Snodgrass from ODA presented regarding the Strategic Implementation Areas, and it was not very well

received by attendees. Haley and Eric from Grant County Watermasters presented on water rights and transfers. Aaron Roth NRCS presented on current opportunities. The Blue Mountain Land Trust presented on conservation easements. Monument SWCD presented on Juniper cutting and herbicide treatments. Directors were interested in this technique and would welcome more information.

- iii. NRCS Local Work Group: Directors discussed the importance of soil health, re-seeding, re-cutting/maintain cuts, Juniper cutting, water developments, forest health, and aspen health.

IV. Discussion

- a. ByLaws: Amy attended a webinar on non-profit law changes for 2020. A couple of changes that we will need to gather further information on include:
 - i. Alternates not being allowed to vote, and
 - ii. For a vote to be valid it has to be all one method, either all in person or all electronic
- b. Phil and Joanne led a discussion regarding Oregon Department of Agriculture's Ag Water Quality program. Grant SWCD does not support the Strategic Implementation Area approach, or the methods ODA is using to justify regulatory actions. The program is becoming less voluntary and more regulatory. Grant SWCD board of directors is trying to push back. Ag Water Quality Plans were all supposed to be unique to each area, but now more generic. Concerns over aerial imaging. Grant SWCD is raising concern with different local groups; Cattleman's, radio, Farm Bureau, and County Court. The Grant SWCD Annual meeting will have a focus on the Ag Water Quality Plans and Strategic Implementation Areas. This meeting will be held Thursday, March 5th, at the Grant County Regional Airport, at 6:00 pm.

V. Coming Up

- a. NRCS Local Work Group: 2/11/2020, 10-12 at the ODF Conference Room
- b. Grant County Court Update
- c. Grant SWCD Annual Meeting, Thursday, March 5th, 6:00 pm at Airport

VI. Joanne entered the meeting into Executive Session: ORS 192.660 (2)(a) Employee Reviews

VII. Joanne adjourned executive session. Phil moved to approve Amy Stiner's proposal, Jeff 2nd, motion passed.

- I.** Joanne adjourned the meeting at 2:20 pm, Next meeting date: Monday, March 9th, 2020.