

**Marys River Watershed Council
Board of Directors Meeting
Philomath City Hall
January 11, 2011**

The meeting began at 6:33 PM

Board members present: Jennifer Beathe, May Dasch, Wayne Phillips, Mark Taratoot, Dan Sundseth, Thom Whittier, and Dave Zielinski

MRWC Staff present: Xanthippe Augerot, Christine Hurst
Contractors present: none

Announcements

Xan shared a packet of materials that she received from River Network. She said that River Network and the Network of Oregon Watershed Councils offer similar things for groups like our watershed council. The council may consider working with one or both groups in the future.

Christine is leading a group of volunteers to plant willows on Saturday (1/15). The location is along a bank on Greasy Creek from 9 AM to 1PM. Anyone interested should talk to Christine.

Reports

Secretary

The new method for submitting corrections is that the secretary will send to the Executive Director and Board Chair for edits and then the minutes will be circulated to the entire board. This should expedite the corrections and edits. Director Sundseth made a motion to accept the minutes. Director Zielinski seconded the motion. All Directors voted in favor.

Treasurer's report

There were no questions. Xan reported that one of the CDs holding part of the Haswell funds is set to expire soon and is scheduled to automatically be renewed. The treasurer's report is accepted into the record

Chairs Report

Director Whittier reported that he worked with Holly on the process for performance evaluations.

Education and Outreach

The report was accepted into the record

Restoration and Monitoring Report

Christine asked if anyone had any questions about the Spirit Mountain Foundation application email that she sent out.

Director Sundseth asked about teaching students how to develop a plan to plant riparian areas. Christine said that the plan was not very detailed. It included an area grid, native plants to use in specific habitat types, and what steps should take place for planting riparian areas. After plotting plants by species and planting density, the class went out and installed pin flags on the site and next month the class will plant trees and shrubs.

Director Whittier asked if we are doing planting with volunteers or paid contractors. It varies: At the Schmedding property, Greasy Creek and Tum Tum, hired contractors will plant all or a portion of the sites. At Shotpouch Creek the Russell property will be planted by John Ferris. Director Sundseth said that there are USDA funds available to plant trees. Xan said that the landowners are not interested, so far, in signing up for the USDA programs. Christine has spoken with a landowner about participating in the CREP program. Dan said that other watershed councils have used the USDA funding for matching purposes.

The report was accepted into the record.

Executive Director Report

Xan thanks Holly and May for sending out the end of the year donation requests. Some donations are still coming in. The MRWC has also sent end of year thank you notes to landowners that are involved with the council.

Quarterly membership meeting

The next membership meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 24th. Teresa Matteson, BSCWD, “Soil Tools for Water Quality” Xan plans to give an update on the council programs and plans. The location will be the Philomath Youth Activities Club.

Director Whittier asked if Xan needs anything from the board for the meeting. Beyond posting flyers, Xan said that attendance would be great and if board members can arrive at 6PM it would be helpful. Director Taratoot asked about cross-posting the meeting announcements. Xan said that she hasn’t been doing very much cross-posting, but she said that she knows that some organizations forward on the meeting announcements.

For the April Quarterly meeting, Xan is developing plans for a panel on water temperature and flow issues around the watershed. She met with Tom Penpraze to discuss urban water issues and Rock Creek watershed stream temperature monitoring. MRWC data will be presented. Our intern, Kristin Larsen, will be compiling the data that the council has collected over the years

Director Whittier offered to provide an update on low flow conditions on the lower Marys River.

Director Beathe asked about forest streams and encouraged the council to include a person whose expertise includes headwater forest tributaries. Christine said that she will explore the different options and is trying to have a panel that is not too big and not too small. Will tentatively target April 26th for the meeting date.

Employee Handbook

New language on COBRA benefits:

COBRA Benefits. The Council is not subject to federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) requirements, nor is it allowed to offer the continuation of health insurance benefit. The State of Oregon provides a similar benefit for employees of employers which are ineligible under COBRA Titles X and XXII.

The timelines and rules under Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 743.600 and 743.610 differ from the federal COBRA benefits. See <http://www.leg.state.or.us/ors/743.html> for the actual ORS language. Council employees are encouraged to become familiar with these statutes should they wish to continue group health insurance coverage for themselves upon termination of employment and/or for their spouse upon death or divorce of the covered party.

Director Taratoot made a motion to accept the new language. Director Sundseth seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Executive Director Performance Evaluation Process

Holly contacted four other watershed councils to inquire about how Executive directors are evaluated. The board asked the question: Why we are doing evaluations?

Xan will be evaluating MRWC staff as well.

Other WCs evaluate on a calendar year basis. Part of some evaluations include salary adjustments. Xan recommended no salary adjustments in the short term. Director Whittier said that we should have built into our grant proposals salary adjustments. It has to occur before the end of the biennium, if we wish to include salary adjustments in OWEB Council Support proposals.

Director Sundseth said that he doesn't think the evaluation should say salary adjustment but "awards/recognition". If you leave it more open ended there might be other ways to reward performance. Would it make sense to address salary adjustments with the budget? Xan said that in order to have the money in hand for the new biennium, you have to request the money in the grant proposal due in January (Council Support Grant).

Director Sundseth asked if the other watershed councils have a performance plan for their employees. We can look at the council support grant proposal for the work plan.

Director Whittier asked who should be responsible for doing the evaluation. Director Taratoot said it would be good to have input from the full board, but a smaller subset of the board would be better for the evaluation.

Xan pointed out that the Long Tom Council goes outside the organization to ask for feedback for performance evaluations. They are brief and can be helpful in determining how the person presents themselves.

Christine suggested an option for the employee to do a self review and then receive feedback. The board was very supportive of that idea.

Director Sundseth is supportive of the executive director evaluating the staff. The staff has the opportunity for feedback. The chair is the review authority, along with the board. The review is to make sure that there is objectivity involved.

Performance evaluation should be tied to performance of the job and not related to salary.

Christine said that she doesn't expect the performance review to be tied to salary due to the nature of funding and timing of funding for the watershed councils.

Thom said that he thinks that two other people would be helpful in creating a group to work on the performance evaluation. Directors Sundseth and Zielinski volunteered to help Director Whittier.

OWEB Support Grant

Director Whittier offered edits to the proposed grant. Xan indicated that lack of completion was “dinged” in the past. This time around, we can show many projects that have been fully completed. Xan said that she wants feedback on the makeup of the board in terms of what interests are represented and will send out the list. She wants board members to make sure that they are comfortable with their affiliations as described. Director Whittier asked if there was anything that the board could think of that was omitted from the draft grant proposal.

Xan’s goal is to mail the proposal by this Friday.

Christine said that the last “ding” was related to lack of a strategic education and outreach approach. She and Karen spent time more fully explaining and representing the MRWC education and outreach.

Xan said that they were trying to describe projects by their local sub-watersheds so that it would emphasize that we are working on focused geography within the watershed.

Dan had earlier noted an error in the draft budget and Xan edited the budget portion to reflect the change. Related to the budget; Xan put as much of the overhead as possible into the budget. She would like to see the Meyer money be used for the 0.75 to 1.0 person that the council plans to hire for education and general outreach. Xan also said that the MRWC needs bigger office space because there are four people sharing one office and it is too small.

Xan is planning to send the board the attachment describing current and desired Board members to be included in the OWEB Council Support Grant.

Office space

Xan has explored a few options in downtown Corvallis to find adequate office space. The search is still underway. She is looking for rental space and ways to reduce expenses by sharing resources with other nonprofits. Xan is also looking for space with a storage room. The current space requires four people to share a 300 square foot room.

Director Sundseth asked if Xan had looked at rental space in Philomath. Not yet. She has not eliminated Philomath as an option, but strongly prefers Corvallis because many partners that the council meets with are also in downtown Corvallis and it is more convenient. Director Whittier asked if Xan would like a volunteer from the board. Yes, if someone is interested, it would be helpful.

How much to put in the budget for rent? Director Taratoot asked where the money is coming from now for rent. Grant proposals and administrative overhead. Xan is comfortable increasing the line item for occupancy, but not by a large amount. The goal is to set a target for what we can afford and negotiate from that.

Xan has been approached by a couple of other groups that are interested in sharing space and she is planning on looking into those spaces also.

Director Zielinski suggested increasing the occupancy to \$1.25 per square foot for 800 square feet of space. The board was comfortable with those numbers.

Other items

OWEB Board meeting in Corvallis January 19-20. Director Whittier encouraged attendance.

Draft MOA with Philomath School District (PSD) has been signed by the PSD and is awaiting a signature from the council.

The Gray Family Trust has funded our education program in the past and it is hopeful that they will continue to provide funding for our education program.

OWEB review team met for the Shotpouch culverts proposal for the Willamette Region and ranked the project third out of eight. This reflected a well planned proposal and site visit.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20.