

Marys River Watershed Council

Board of Directors Meeting

April 6th, 2010

Philomath City Hall

The meeting began at 6:35 PM

Board members present: Meleah Ashford, May Dasch, Holly Campbell , Dan Sundseth and Thom Whittier

Contractors present: Xanthippe Augerot and Karen Fleck Harding

Guests present: Dave Zielinski and Linda Zielinski

Introductions

Announcements

Director Whittier announced that the General Public MRWC meeting is April 13th in the Philomath Council Chambers.

Director Whittier relayed that unseasonable weather and river levels have been measured due to dry winter and now very wet spring. River levels are currently the highest levels of the year and have only been higher in 1943s for this time of year.

Xan announced that the Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation and Development organization is having strategic planning meeting. The board is invited to come and provide input.

Director Sundseth announced that a group called Farmland LP has expressed interest in buying (lots of) land to lease farm land for local organic farms. The group is from California and wants 10,000 acres in the Willamette Valley. They will split up large plots for smaller farming. Water will be an issue. Will lease land back to local farmers.

Secretary's Report

Motion to approve the December minutes: Director Ashford

Second: Director Campbell Motion passed: 5-0

Treasurer's Report

Xan indicated that the Henderson money was put down in advance but won't be used until the Cardwell Hill Landowner's Guide is ready to print.

The treasurer's report was accepted into the record with no objections.

Chair's Report

Nothing to report.

Education and Outreach Report

Karen has been busy. She discussed the questions "Are there beaver on Woods Creek?" There haven't been for 3 years but they are back. Land owner wants them trapped and Karen has been working to gain acceptance. The beaver took out 20 of the 120 trees on one restoration project and on another property took out 30 of 37 trees. Karen has developed a strategy to heavily protect plantings at beaver sites. Log jams are working well in Woods Creek.

Linda Zielinski wanted to know how fast the rivers are flowing. Karen indicated that we would like to put flow meter on the creeks but we do not have them metered now. Director Whittier has the MRWC flow meter.

The E&O report was accepted into the record with no objections.

Coordinator's Report

Most of month was taken up with proposal writing. ODFW recommended that we not submit the Tum Tum River project proposal, but we will submit because if we wait for the next grant cycle, we will not have time to undertake the project before the end of the in-water work season.

Benton County hosting a Strategic Partnering Session for non-profits and agencies to work on how to collaborate, Thursday, April 8, 9 – noon at Corvallis Library. MRWC will speak about Cardwell Hill project and the Willamette Model Watershed Program. After presentations a discussion of partnership work can occur. Xan will check if it is open to public. County staff and commissioners will use this session to stimulate questions for their review of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Xan's PowerPoint presentation will be available for MRWC modification and use.

Model Watershed Meeting, April 7th, will discuss increasing funding from DEQ, OWEB Special Investment Project (SIP) and The Freshwater Trust. Director Whittier suggested that there is not enough money in the Model Watershed Program budget for monitoring at 90 sites over the first year (\$60k).

The coordinator's report was accepted into the record with no objections.

Model Watershed Program (MWP)

Xan is meeting with Kendra from Bonneville Environmental Fund (BEF) on April 12 and the GIS technician to talk about the action plan and clear up issue on spatial representation. Different councils used different references. They will also talk about next steps. Xan will have heard by then about review and whether we are formally in the program and we will then know our budget so we can plan. We will also get a draft contract with Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT).

Director Ashford noted and supported the great letter from Mr. Todd Reeve (VP Watershed Programs, BEF) in support of the MRWC Plan.

Council Workplan

The Council Workplan was reviewed. Xan indicated that the color coding is to show progress. Most activities not complete yet are related to fund-raising and internal operation and procedures for the council. This work was not completed because MWP took so much time, but in terms of proposal and project work, things were completed. Cardhill Landowner Guide was delayed because subcontractor was behind schedule and we want to be sure we produce a useful product. Council members were very impressed with progress and that Xan has been keeping such good of records. Xan uses the Council Workplan to predict how much work we can accomplish.

New Position Descriptions

Education Coordinator – this person will work with schools K-12 (emphasis 4 – 12) for hands-on restoration. Proposals are out for half-time funding. MWP may be able to fund some of the work if the individual donor fundraising and communications part of job description was beefed up. In the meantime, Karen needs someone immediately to help with Spring Stewardship Day (SSD); six days in May. MRWC has a little money, \$1,500, for short term help for the SSD. Director Whittier would prefer to not use two processes for the short-term and long-term hire. We will not hear about other funding sources until May or June so this would be difficult.

Director Sundseth commented on the job description that 13 bulleted duties is likely not part-time. Xan will compile list into themes and then tasks to be able to manage it into the part-time status. Director Sundseth asked if we will be able to attract people for this job at this wage. Xan says we have people already expressing interest. Karen has made some good contributions to a revised description.

Director Ashford asked to remove the word “design” in the first bullet as it seems to be asking too much. Xan confirmed that others will work on design. The person should be flexible enough to do lots of tasks.

Director Sundseth -qualifications-clear and open communication style is hard to quantify. Xan is thinking of someone how listens well, as well as speak. Communication is also really important; Xan may drop the second-to-last bullet.

Director Ashford asked if for upcoming SSD work can we hire someone short term. Director Whittier said it cannot be a subcontract to Xan or Karen because of contractual issues. Karen and Xan cannot supervise, but if it is specific and short-term like managing a restoration project. Xan and Karen will try to bring someone on in a short-term manner. Money is in the budget so Xan can bring someone on using an hourly basis for short-term project to work on this project.

Restoration and Monitoring Manager or Technician – This position is to take over some of Karen’s workload for restoration projects to support more ramped up work because of MWP.

Xan commented that job announcements are a good opportunity to communicate and reach out to public. We may want to stagger the hiring process. The hiring schedule will be July and August for the E&O coordinator. Restoration manager position will be filled in June. Right now we have \$14k on hand, but need \$30-40k. MMT can raise most of that. MMT funds will be used first to stabilize Xan and Karen’s positions.

Xan will work in comments, and send them out for review and comment for approval at May meeting. She will also develop a short version for advertisement.

Director Whittier asked for a board member to help with the process. Xan suggested that we set up an ad hoc committee for hiring at the next meeting.

Director Sundseth likes the layout and content of position description, but would like to see a position purpose and core role the person will play.

Xan indicated that we need Mission Statement to use with these descriptions; however, not enough people are here to approve changes. Karen suggested we just include one of the statements but not as a formal statement. We need to go through the process so our new statements reflect landowner inclusion we value.

Network of Watershed Councils (NWC)

Dinner/tours. We need to comment by April 9th. NWC wants to help promote what is being done with Oregon Lottery money and provide funding for events.

- Tours: MRWC needs to provide a couple ideas for tours in our watershed. Karen suggests Cardwell Hill in spring/summer and Woods Creek in the fall. The tour monies may be used for adjoining watersheds but tours do not necessarily have to be conducted jointly.
- Leadership Dinner: This is a Board development dinner that celebrates the MWP focus on landowners for specific creeks and recognizes the community and accomplishments. Director Whittier asked if Xan has the capacity to take it on. Xan felt with advanced preparation it could be done. The window is through October 31st. Director Ashford felt that there would be support from Board Members to help out. Holly asked if we would have speakers and suggested that it would be a good time of year. Director Ashford suggests a short key-note speaker. The Council agreed to pursue the dinner support funds.

Other topics and issues

- Director Whittier indicated that when Director Laurent left we lost our vice-chair. This will be taken care of at a later meeting. We also need to recruit new board members. Recruitment of landowners is a target. Three years is the typical term. Recruitment will continue and elections will be during the full public meeting. It would be good to have someone from each of the key sub-watersheds in the MWP. Xan will talk to Dave Buchanan about becoming a board member. Dave Silenski was asked if he was interested at the meeting, he said he would consider it.
- We have an opportunity to put in a stream gauge on Beaver Creek, in partnership with Roy Haggerty (OSU Geosciences). Haggerty's NSF funds must be spent on the gauge and to support involvement of Muddy Creek Charter School students in stream-related education. We are pursuing a multi-party agreement, to include The Freshwater Trust as well, to clarify the roles of the non-profits and OSU Geosciences with respect to Muddy Creek Charter School environmental education activities.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.