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KSWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES February 12, 2025

In Attendance:

Board Members:

Present: Ken Masten, Jolene Moxon-Robison, Earl Miller, Robert Douglas, David Cone, Charles Dehlinger.

Excused: Lyndon Kerns

Others Absent: none

District Staff: Misty Buckley

Community/Agencies: FSA

Other: n/a

Proceedings:

Meeting called to order: 12:35 pm – Ken Masten

Quorum present? Yes

Agenda Additions/Changes: Introductions preceded business. Nina Caldwell with ODA was inadvertently left off of the Reports segment of the agenda.

Unfinished Business:

- Approve Minutes for January 2025 Regular Meeting – Earl Miller motioned to approve the January 2025 Regular Meeting minutes. David Cone seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Approve Financials for December 2024 – Lyndon Kerns is absent and David Cone's internet has been unreliable because of the storms and he was unable to print the financials thus approval of December 2024 financial reports was postponed.
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Reports:

- **SBC Report: Julie Jespersen**

Earl Miller inquired why information had not been sent to the auditor so the audit could be completed. Julie stated that she had answered everything last week but she didn't realize there was a deadline and January is her busiest month. The unrestricted balance is about \$4,000 with the exact number in the email she sent. Robert Douglas said this is significant and inquired what the average payroll is; Julie responded that monthly payroll

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last month was about \$15,000 so we are essentially at limit at halfway through the month. David Cone said it would be less without Will's payroll and Julie estimated about \$10,000 to \$12,000 this month. Jolene Moxon-Robison said she has some ideas that she will share at a later point in the meeting. Julie said the profit & loss by class will help show what is being charged to admin vs what is being charged to projects and the grant advances are broken out. Ken asked when additional unrestricted funds would be incoming and Julie expects the next influx for the capacity grant in April. Misty Buckley asked about the updated grant tracking spreadsheet and Julie said she is still working on the changes Misty requested and specifically those in the capacity grant but it will take her awhile to look at that and she said the capacity grant will never balance with Quickbooks nor OGMS because of things that were done by prior direction before Will and before Sam and Sandi Hyatt with ODA 'signed off' on that and the accounts won't balance because of prior transactions.

- **ODA Report: Nina Caldwell**

Nina has returned to work in a part-time capacity. She is interested in hearing what the District plans to do with hiring a manager and who her point of contact will be for ODA reporting and SIA monitoring. ODA will be transitioning to digital reporting for Scope of Work for the next biennium so that will go live in about May or June so she will do additional training prior to that time so that process is smooth. Nina will meet with Misty and Sunday on Friday this week. She asked if we would like to present her 'ODA 101' presentation which is especially useful for new Directors and the tentative plan is for her to present that at our Annual Meeting in March, pending completion of the audit. Jolene Moxon-Robison directed Nina to consider Misty Buckley as her local point of contact until further updated.

- **NRCS Report: Josh Elke**

Josh sent his report via e-mail as he would be unable to attend today and Misty forwarded that on Monday this week. Some did not see the e-mail as their internet had been unreliable. Misty stated that she had been able to make a claim for the previous period of work and she thought it may have been approved but she wasn't sure yet. Jolene Moxon-Robison made a motion to direct Misty draft a letter to Representative Bentz and other legislators explaining the payroll constraints that result from the funding freeze and to inquire with ODA if we can get early release on some of their funds. Charles Dehlinger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Nina Caldwell said she can help look into potential early releases. Robert Douglas indicated it seems like this could have been foreseen sooner and had Will been on full payroll last month we'd be in trouble even sooner. Jolene Moxon-Robison indicated that Misty should research if it is legal to utilize grant funding advances if we are certain it can be paid back; several Board members concurred that they believed they had been told at some time that this was legal but all asked for written clarification. Jolene recommended that if we locate verification

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of this that the Board schedule a special meeting to act upon that. Misty will re-send Josh's email for anybody who may have missed it.

- **FSA Report: Kenadee Dirk**

Kenadee shared that FSA has two open programs at this time, one is Dairy Margins Coverage and she has reached out to her dairy producers. The other program which is relevant right now is the Livestock Indemnity Program.

- **District Manager Report: Will Natividad**

Will let us know he would not be able to attend today at this time.

- **Administrative Manager Report: Misty Buckley**

Misty sent her report via e-mail; not all had received/read it yet because of unreliable internet due to the storms. Misty asked for feedback on meeting length; Will Natividad's concern is administrative expense to lengthy meetings. Jolene Moxon-Robison said employees don't need to be present as she can take notes but the business that needs to be discussed needs to have time to happen. Ken Masten and David Cone expressed agreement. Misty also suggested that we move to e-mail reports sent in advance of the meeting so Board members can review the information and spend meeting time asking questions and discussing if needed; this was positively received. Misty expressed concern with billable workload in light of the funding freeze; NRCS has work ready and waiting for us to do but they cannot be certain that we could get paid from NRCS funds for doing that work. Ken said this is a point we need to remember to communicate to our legislators; Robert Douglas said we can do that but it is unlikely to create a timely result. Jolene said this is probably a wide-spread issue with many special districts so this is probably a high priority for legislators. Charles Dehlinger needed to cancel his SDAO Conference trip due to poor travel conditions and winter storms but the hotel said they would not charge us, however the conference registration was non-refundable. Sunday and I set up an unstaffed table at the Klamath Bull Sale and it was a successful low-cost event with many people picking up copies of the Klamath County Noxious Weed booklets. We'll be at the Farm Expo next and we do have to staff that table in the evening public open house hours. Eric from ODA will be on an extended vacation but we'll have plenty of support from other ODA staff. We are required to submit to ODA our long-range and annual work plans so please be considering what we want that to look like. As we know, Molatore CPA was unable to finish the audit and we had to cancel the Annual Meeting. ODA notified us that we are on the audit delinquency list but Molatore CPA thinks that is a clerical error and has provided me with contact information to inquire. Public officials are personally responsible for compliance with public ethics laws and we should be mindful of that and make sure we are keeping track of possible conflicts of interest. I have spent a great deal of time, particularly in the past month, getting up to speed on each of the existing grants. There are some important matters that

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should be reviewed which essentially amount to discrepancies in some cases between the bookkeeping reports and the balances shown on the platforms where we request funds. Sunday has been indispensable in compiling status reports which are needed in most platforms along with a release of funds request, but much work was behind schedule and the tasks for us both were complicated by the fact that neither of us were employed here or only recently employed when the work took place. She and I have developed a plan for documenting our work on a routine basis to streamline future reporting. Future grant opportunities should be reviewed by the Board to assure alignment with priorities; in the short-term we can apply for most anything and hope we get something to keep us going until we can be more strategic or we can start strategically with very focused work but that narrows our pool of possibilities. Earl Miller commented that we should pay special consideration to grants that have administrative overhead; David Cone said sometimes the smaller grants are easier to get but they have a heavy administrative workload. Misty also reminded the Board of last month's SDAO legislative action toolkit which suggested development of policy to allow the Board to take official actions between meetings and this may be particularly relevant now.

Jolene Moxon-Robison requested to skip ahead in the agenda to the District Management portion. She stated that our current manager works for another entity now and we need at least an interim manager and she feels Misty's communications make it obvious that she has the capability to be an interim manager until we make a hiring determination and that we need an active leader in the next two weeks. Jolene motioned that Misty Buckley be appointed as interim manager until Monday, March 3, 2025 without a pay raise and that Will Natividad be requested to return his KSWCD belongings by Wednesday, February 19, 2025. Jolene included information that Misty Buckley has already submitted her application to Will's posting for District Manager and that Jolene will recuse herself from applicant screening due to knowing Misty for many years outside of the District. Charles Dehlinger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. David Cone asked if we have advertised the vacancy and Misty provided information that Will has inquired if she intended to apply and upon learning that she may apply, Will handled the posting and did not direct her with any additional related tasks. Consensus was that Misty will communicate a request to Will to provide all current applications to Ken Masten and Misty will coordinate with WorkSource to collect future applications on our behalf. Robert Douglas had some questions about the process of termination and Jolene said she wishes Will the best but it's not efficient as it is currently being done and Will has a conflict of interest with his new employer. Robert asked if Will's knowledge is still needed internally; Jolene said ODA will be willing to help and Nina confirmed that we can probably do what we need to do with what we have. Robert questioned funding availability to hire a new District Manager; Jolene indicated that the immediate need is legislative communication and inquiry and definitive information regarding use of grant funds to meet immediate payroll needs. Everyone concurred that this is a short-term

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solution. David Cone asked if anyone else in our organization is trained for NRCS work and Misty said none of us are and unfortunately due to previous expenditure of funds for training and those individuals then leaving for other organizations, NRCS has expressed reluctance to continue funding training of KSWCD staff as it has not provided a return on investment for NRCS.

- **Project Manager Report: Sunday Tinsley**

Sunday has been working on the HB2010 Juniper removal project which intersects with USFWS work. She has obtained quotes for the remaining supplies and Misty reported that Julie has confirmed that we have received the HB2010 funding as an advance. Sunday scheduled work with the OSU researcher but that may be difficult to keep the date due to such heavy snow and the snow limits other on-site work. Sunday believes that the work can still be done even though the original projected end date was June 2025. David Cone inquired if this project has administrative fees and Julie Jespersen said the budget she has from Will has \$10,000 allocated for that; Julie said we received the funds of \$125,000 in October 2023 and the budget was in email form, Misty said she has not found a signed budget that would typically accompany projects. Julie will forward the email.

Sunday has also been working on the Community Wildfire Defense Grant which is a new project opportunity that would augment work started by the OSFM grant that Alex Sharp started. This project requires 25% match and we are awaiting information from the Keno Fire Department as to what they can provide. It's a 5-year project with the application due at the end of this month. We will include administrative indirect in the budget.

Sunday has also been working to complete project reports especially with the Deming Creek project and she was shadowing with NRCS until the news of the funding freeze trickled through. Sunday provided a list of current grant opportunities that we are reviewing and prioritizing. Jolene Moxon-Robison commented that many of them are aligned with forestry work which is Robert's area of work; Robert said this aligns with our mission. Ken Masten said there is need in the Bly Mountain area also, but Earl Miller commented that matching funds may not be as available and Misty Buckley commented that there has to be an updated wildfire plan and Keno has a solid plan whereas other communities don't have plans as well updated. David Cone said we had applied for additional funds previously, but they were not approved at that time.

- **Chair Report: Ken Masten**

We had to re-schedule the Annual Meeting. Misty Buckley said Sustainable Northwest has scheduled their Lost River Listening Session on the same date overlapping the same time as our next-scheduled Regular Meeting and there was discussion of who might attend and if that created a need to re-schedule our next Regular Meeting. It was agreed

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to move the next meeting to Friday, March 14 at the usual 12:30 p.m. time at the NRCS conference room. Jolene made a motion to postpone the Annual Meeting until we receive confirmation that the audit is complete. Robert Douglas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Misty shared a flyer for the Lost River Listening Session and also shared that she is in the process of scheduling the NRCS Local Work Group Meeting which will be Friday, March 7, 2025 at the Government Center and we will be facilitating that gathering including advertising. Misty will share that announcement in the near future.

New Business:

Discussion of service opportunities other SWCD's provide, including soil sampling. Jolene Moxon-Robison said Basin Fertilizer and Macy's Flying Service already provide this service but we may be able to come to an agreement with them to assist in this service if they are short staffed. Ken Masten inquired if we would have to stay in Oregon as those entities provide services in both Oregon and California; we would need to check on this. Jolene also suggested that we reach out to the refuges and see if they have contract work needs. We'll need creative solutions. Jolene stated a reminder that contracts need to come before the Board.

Misty Buckley also indicated interest in connecting with other rural SWCD's and sharing information about challenges and solutions at this time. Charles Dehlinger said missing the networking was a disappointment in having to cancel the SDAO conference. Nina Caldwell suggested the CONNECT conference and said it is a worthy event for our attendance; Misty said she was aware of the conference but the conference hadn't posted their agenda yet so it felt a little early to ask for possible attendance. There is a registration scholarship available, but it wasn't clear yet how relevant the offerings would be. Nina said it is a reliable event with good information and the content always includes agriculture. Funding may simply not allow attendance even if it is valuable.

Jolene Moxon-Robison reminded us to set a budget meeting. Lyndon Kerns and David Cone should be included as the past and present Treasurers and Ken Masten volunteered to work with the budget committee. Jolene also said Julie would be included.

Ken Masten asked for consensus regarding Charles' cancellation of the SDAO conference and all agreed it couldn't be helped and that reimbursement of the registration fee was unnecessary.

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Public Comment:

None.

Next regular meeting is March 14, 2025 at 12:30 pm.

Jolene Moxon-Robison made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Earl Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting is adjourned at 2:28 pm.

Minutes Approved as Written or Amended:

KSWCD Chair

Date

KSWCD Secretary/Treasurer

Date