



35285 Millard Road
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www.columbiaswcd.com

COLUMBIA SWCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA – OCTOBER 21, 2026

REGULAR BOARD MEETING CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – From September 16, 2026

TREASURER'S REPORT- September 30, 2026

PUBLIC COMMENT – Topics from the Floor

AGENDA ITEMS

Reports:

- ◆ NRCS
- ◆ Watershed Councils
- ◆ Staff Updates

Old Business:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| ◆ Strategic Plan Retreat | Discuss |
| ◆ Meeting Room | Discuss |
| ◆ Personnel Policy | Discuss |
| ◆ 2026 Audit | Discuss |

New Business:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| ◆ Committee Assignments | Discuss/Approve |
| ◆ Public Meeting Policy | Discuss/Approve |
| ◆ Comment on Port Westward | Discuss/Approve |

Reports:

- ◆ Board

ADJOURNMENT

DATES TO NOTE

- 11/01 – Daylight Savings Ends
- 11/03 – Election Day
- 11/03-05 – OACD Conference
- 11/11 – Office Closed;
Veteran's Day
- 11/18 – Board Meeting
- 11/26-27 – Office Closed;
Thanksgiving
- 12/16 – Board Meeting
- 12/21 – First Day of Winter



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**Minutes of the
Columbia SWCD Board of Directors
Board Meeting
September 16, 2026**

Directors Present:

Debra Brimacombe, Director (via Zoom)
Michael Calhoun, Chair
Paul Gibbons, Secretary
Bill Eagle, Treasurer
Alex Devin, Vice Chair
Jason Busch, Director

Directors Absent:

Dave Freytag, Director

Associate Directors Present:

David Taylor
Alison Charbonneau
Rachell Meyers, Scappoose Bay Watershed Council
(via Zoom)

Columbia SWCD Staff:

Taylor Murray, Executive Director
Laurel Tappert, Field Technician

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS):

Hannah Isaacs, District Conservationist

**Lower Columbia River Watershed
Council (LCRWC):**

Rachael Barry, Interim Executive Director

Public:

Claudia Eagle
Julia Rutherford
Bill Etter
Brenda Vassau

BOARD MEETING CALL TO ORDER AT 5:00 PM

Prior Month's Minutes:

Vote Record:

Director	Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Motion	Seconded
Debra Brimacombe	☐				
Bill Eagle	☐				
Michael Calhoun	☐				
Alex Devin	☐				
Jason Busch	☐				
Paul Gibbons	☐				

Financial Report:

Vote Record: Accept the Financial Report for August.

Director	Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Motion	Seconded
Debra Brimacombe	☐				
Bill Eagle	☐				
Michael Calhoun	☐				
Alex Devin	☐				
Jason Busch	☐				
Paul Gibbons	☐				

[illegible]

Bills to Pay: Jason moved, and Paul seconded a motion to approve paying the bills as presented. Approved. Motion passed unanimously.

Vote Record: Approve payment of the bills as presented

Director	Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Motion	Seconded
Debra Brimacombe	☒				
Bill Eagle	☒				
Michael Calhoun	☒				
Alex Devin	☒				
Jason Busch	☒			☒	
Paul Gibbons	☒				☒

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

REPORTS

NRCS: Hannah reported that a final NRCS reorganization plan had begun moving forward but was paused by the courts. She could not yet share details, but said she expected to remain in St. Helens and that no offices were currently expected to close or staff to move. She expects to provide more information at a future meeting.

NRCS and the District are pursuing a Farm Bill technical assistance grant that could support District staff working on NRCS activities. Hannah said the opportunity could be mutually beneficial and, if successful, could be pursued annually. She also reported that NRCS is considering changes to ranking and funding for the next program year so offices with smaller contracts and fewer acres may compete more effectively.

LCRWC: Rachael reported that funds for the Clatskanie Engagement Project had been awarded and contracting was underway. A steering committee with two Board members and three community members had begun work, along with communications planning, material development, and field photography. LCRWC is also developing an employee handbook and preparing to hire its first employee.

Rachael reported continued relationship building with the City of Clatskanie, including a water system tour, a Board-approved letter supporting wastewater treatment plant funding, and discussion of a GIS intern or shared-service arrangement. Upcoming work includes community engagement, drone flights, review of employee policies, and an organizational assessment.

SBWC: Rachell reported completion of the season's Scappoose Bay weed treatments in partnership with West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District. The partner weed grant with Columbia SWCD also supported garlic mustard work and hand pulling of policeman's helmet, with approximately 90 percent eradication reported for the latter. Spurge laurel treatments are next.

The recent knotweed workshop, held in partnership with Columbia SWCD, drew four or five participants and was considered effective. SBWC and the District plan to offer spring educational programming focused on poison hemlock and tansy. SBWC is also preparing for its fall native plant sale, developing fundraising efforts for greenhouse improvements, and considering additional community events.

Rachell also reported that construction at Chief Concomly Park was completed within the in-water work window. A newly awarded small grant will support outreach, education, planting, and revegetation in partnership with Columbia SWCD.

Staff: Taylor noted that Jennifer was absent for a family funeral and Amber was also absent. Staff are continuing work on the previously approved lighting color change and are exploring whether native seed can be used in areas disturbed by utility vegetation clearing.

The recurring written staff report is still being developed. Staff now meet weekly to review projects, assign site visits, coordinate work, and identify opportunities for partner referrals. A review of the budget and current grants showed a need to pursue more grant support for staff salaries, including the NRCS technical assistance opportunity. Several major projects are progressing, and permitting was completed for multiple items.

The District and SBWC reported that the knotweed workshop generated site visit requests and replanting consultations. Members discussed expanding outreach beyond social media and newsletters to local newspapers, libraries, and OSU Extension for future workshops.

OLD BUSINESS

Strategic Plan Retreat: The Board retreat is scheduled for Friday, September 25, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the District office, with food provided. Directors and Associate Directors were asked to review the retreat materials and complete the included survey even if they cannot attend. Taylor will send an email reminder and an electronic copy of the survey.

Stand-Alone Policies: Taylor reported that legal guidance had been received regarding public use of the meeting room. A policy and user agreement are being developed to clarify who may use the space and under what conditions. A draft meeting room policy, travel policy, and training policy are expected for Board review in October. The travel policy will use consistent mileage and meal reimbursement standards, and the training policy will emphasize sharing relevant knowledge with other staff.

The Board discussed the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts convention and the value of training and networking for Directors and Associate Directors. Michael recused himself from the decision because he had requested to attend, and the Vice Chair facilitated the action. **Bill moved, and Jason seconded a motion authorizing District payment of eligible expenses for any Director or Associate Director who wishes to attend the OACD convention or conferences. Approved. Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Authorize District payment of eligible expenses for Directors and Associate Directors attending OACD conventions or conferences.

Director	Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Motion	Seconded
Debra Brimacombe	☒				
Bill Eagle	☒			☒	
Michael Calhoun			☒		
Alex Devin	☒				
Jason Busch	☒				☒
Paul Gibbons	☒				

2025 Audit Plan of Action – Sec State: Taylor explained that the Board had already approved a plan of action for the two findings from the 2025 audit at its May 20, 2026 meeting. However, the plan was not submitted in the required format. It must be formally approved by the Board, signed by the Chair and Treasurer, and uploaded through the required portal. As part of the corrective action, reconciliations and journal entries will be reviewed and signed or initialed to document oversight. **Paul moved, and Alex seconded a motion to approve the resolution reaffirming the Board’s May 20, 2026, approval of the District’s plan of action for the two 2025 audit findings, effective immediately. Approved. Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Reaffirm the May 20, 2026, audit corrective-action plan and implement it immediately.

Director	Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Motion	Seconded
Debra Brimacombe	☒				
Bill Eagle	☒				
Michael Calhoun	☒				
Alex Devin	☒				☒
Jason Busch	☒				
Paul Gibbons	☒			☒	

NEW BUSINESS

2026 Audit: Taylor reported that the on-site portion of the 2026 audit was nearly complete. The Chair, Treasurer, and Executive Director had completed their required questionnaires, and the IT questionnaire was ready to be submitted. Any additional documents requested by the auditors would be uploaded through their online portal.

Strategic Planning Charters and Communication Structure:

The Strategic Planning Committee presented draft charters for the statutory Budget Committee, Finance Committee, Personnel Committee, and Strategic Planning and Board Development Committee. Under the previously approved structure, the Board Chair will make committee appointments.

Discussion addressed the definition of investments, the Treasurer's oversight role, the Personnel Committee's relationship with the Executive Director, and legal or human resources review. The drafts will be refined through the retreat. No action was taken.

Quarterly Financial Reporting: Beginning October 1, staff plan to present quarterly expense and revenue information. Taylor expressed interest in convening the Finance Committee in October after the retreat.

32-hr Workweek: Michael asked the Personnel Committee to research a 32-hour workweek with no reduction in pay. Discussion addressed burnout, productivity, flexible field schedules, public access, comparable compensation, and fiduciary obligations. The committee will gather questions and research the topic for later Board consideration. No motion was made, and no change was approved.

Communities Purchasing Watersheds: Michael asked if grants are available to help communities purchase or protect land around their drinking water sources. Discussion was held about local drinking water sources, possible grant opportunities, conservation easements, and the infrastructure needed to treat and deliver drinking water. Taylor will look further into eligibility requirements and share information about possible funding through Business Oregon and the Oregon Health Authority with Rachael and Rachell. The group also discussed including source water protection in the place-based water planning process and revisiting the topic at a future meeting.

Building Lease USDA and CSWCD: Taylor reported that the updated lease was signed and approved. USDA space decreased from 1,860 to 1,364 square feet, while the rate increased from \$15 to \$25 per square foot and annual rent increased from \$27,924 to \$34,100. The layout preserves four USDA workspaces, provides the District defined space, and clarifies operations during a federal shutdown. The Board asked that the terms be documented in the minutes.

BOARD REPORTS

Paul reported that the project on his property is moving forward with funding from NRCS and the Private Forest Accord. Crystalyn is managing the riparian portion of the project. Preparation of the wetland area has included repeated mowing, with plans to lightly disk the soil and cover approximately 0.4 acre with nonwoven black fabric for one year to help control reed canarygrass before planting. Paul is also working with the Department of State Lands on removing existing drainage tiles and possibly allowing part of the area to hold water to improve hydrology. This portion of the project would be funded through NRCS rather than the Private Forest Accord.

The Board meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: *Jennifer Chavez*, Operations & Communications Manager

DRAFT

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District Treasurer's Report

SUMMARY OF ALL ACCOUNTS			September 30, 2026
Local Government Investment Pool			\$527,546.70
US Bank Account			\$70,479.31
TOTAL CASH AVAILABLE			\$598,026.01
Local Government Investment Pool			
Balance forward			\$623,306.33
<i>bank reconciliation detail attached</i>	Credit	Debit	
total deposit	\$4,240.37		\$4,240.37
total cleared transactions		-\$100,000.00	-\$100,000.00
Ending balance as of September 30, 2026			\$527,546.70
US Bank Account			
Balance forward			\$72,682.08
<i>bank reconciliation detail attached</i>	Credit	Debit	
total deposit	\$103,627.00		\$103,627.00
total cleared Checks (details follow)		-\$19,201.89	-\$19,201.89
total cleared EFT (details follow)		-\$15,415.64	-\$15,415.64
total cleared Payroll		-\$71,212.24	-\$71,212.24
Ending balance as of September 30, 2026			\$70,479.31

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

EFT Detail Report

Septemeber 2026

Transaction date	Num	Name	Description	Amount
09/03/2026	EFT	Comcast	INTERNET SERVICES	-214.74
09/03/2026	EFT	Aflac	Aflac Acc ER - EMPLOYER PAID	-139.00
09/03/2026	EFT	Aflac	Aflac Cancer - PreTax - EMPLOYEE PAID	-34.68
09/03/2026	EFT	Aflac	Aflac Hospital Pre-Tax - EMPLOYEE PAID	-37.32
09/03/2026	EFT	Aflac	Aflac Life - Post Tax - EMPLOYEE PAID	-17.16
09/04/2026	EFT	NW Natural Gas	GAS BILL	-33.57
09/04/2026	EFT	Hudson Garbage Service	GARBAGE/RECYCLE	-57.40
09/04/2026	EFT	Comcast	PHONE SERVICES	-325.18
09/08/2026	EFT	Columbia River PUD	ELECTRIC BILL	-299.38
09/08/2026	EFT	Primo Brands	WATER DELIVERY	-198.92
09/09/2026	EFT	City of St. Helens	SEWER	-27.33
09/10/2026	EFT	CIT	COPY MACHINE LEASE & IT SERVICES	-3,622.72
09/11/2026	EFT	US Bank Visa	CHARGES 08/04/26 - 09/01/26	-9,624.65
09/15/2026	EFT	US Bank	ONLINE ACCOUNT ACCESS	-32.25
09/18/2026	EFT	McNulty Water People's Utility District	WATER BILL	-76.00
09/23/2026	EFT	WEX Card	PAYMENT FOR CLOSING DATE 08/31/26	-297.34
09/23/2026	EFT	Intuit QuickBooks	QUICKBOOK FEES	-378.00
				-\$15,415.64
				TOTAL
				-\$15,415.64

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District
Check Detail Report
09/01/26 - 09/30/26

Transaction date	Num	Name	Description	Amount
08/01/2026	3260	Pershing LLC	Retirement	-3,101.19
6/30/2025	3248	Tom Baribault	Small Grant Plantings	-1,463.00
09/01/2026	3263	Clatskanie Farmer Collective	LCRWC Event	-225.00
09/03/2026	3264	SPECIAL DISTRICTS INSURANCE SERVICES	Employee insurance	-9,081.84
09/03/2026	3265	Deer Island Nursery	Wolf Creek Planting Supplies	-675.00
09/15/2026	3269	RA Barry Consulting	LCRWC Charges	-2,297.40
09/15/2026	3270	CMG Oregon	Public notices for budgets and elections	-809.58
09/30/2026	3274	Michael Calhoun	Board Mileage	-1,548.88
				-\$19,201.89
TOTAL				-\$19,201.89

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

Balance Sheet
As of Sep 30, 2026

	Total
Assets	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Local Gov Investment Pool 6/13	527,546.70
Petty Cash	63.83
US Bank (4349)	50,202.08
Total Bank Accounts	\$577,812.61
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	2,327.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$2,327.00
Other Current Assets	
Due From Other Funds	0.00
Grant Funds Received in Advance	0.00
Grant Receivable	0.00
LTD Tax Refund Due	0.00
Payroll Corrections	0.00
Payroll Refunds	38.11
Prepaid Expenses	0.00
Prepaid Payroll & Payroll Taxes	0.00
Prepaid Payroll Liabilities	0.00
Property Taxes Receivable	34,727.39
Simple Plan Overpayment	0.00
Undeposited Funds	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$34,765.50
Total Current Assets	\$614,905.11
Fixed Assets	
.Property, Plant & Equipment	
Building Improvements	1,280,568.99
Equipment	15,757.25
Land	150,000.00
Vehicles	109,308.44
Total for .Property, Plant & Equipment	\$1,555,634.68
Accumulated Depreciation	-457,239.00
Total Fixed Assets	\$1,098,395.68
Other Assets	
Earnest Money	0.00
Prepaid Insurance	30,776.56
Prepaid Service Contract	3,500.00
Total Other Assets	\$34,276.56
Total Assets	\$1,747,577.35

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

Balance Sheet
As of Sep 30, 2026

	Total
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
US Bank Visa	4,957.87
WEX Card	125.54
Total Credit Cards	\$5,083.41
Other Current Liabilities	
Accrued Vacation Pay	26,195.44
Contracts Payable	0.00
Deferred Tax Revenue	39,497.69
Direct Deposit Liabilities	0.00
Direct Deposit Payable	0.00
Payroll Liabilities	\$0.00
Accrued Wages & PR Taxes	0.00
Aflac Can Pre Tax EE	0.00
Aflac Hospital Pre-Tax	0.00
Aflac Life - Post Tax	60.06
Aflac Payable	96.71
Federal Taxes (941/943/944)	0.00
Federal Withholding	0.00
FICA Social Security	0.00
Medicare	0.00
MODA Dependent	0.00
OR Employment Taxes	1,830.69
OR Income Tax	0.00
OR Paid Family and Medical Leave	0.00
OR Paid Family Leave	714.12
OR Statewide Transit Taxes	113.70
Providence Dep.	0.00
Simple Plan Payable	355.10
State Unemployment	0.00
State Withholding	0.00
Statewide Transit Tax	0.00
WBF Assessment	0.00
Total for Payroll Liabilities	\$3,170.38
Prepaid Grants	2,327.00
Prepaid Rent	0.00
Vehicle Loan Payable	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$71,190.51
Total Current Liabilities	\$76,273.92

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

Profit and Loss
July-September, 2026

	Total
Income	
CSWCD FUNDS	1,880.00
Grant Revenue	54,230.42
Interest Earned	6,162.60
Mileage Reimbursement	459.49
Rent Income	\$2,327.00
NRCS Rent Payments	6,981.00
Total for Rent Income	\$9,308.00
TAX LEVY	
UNSEGREGATED INTEREST	91.95
YEAR 2017	24.69
YEAR 2018	24.19
YEAR 2019	23.44
YEAR 2020	43.67
YEAR 2021	56.68
YEAR 2022	1,757.03
YEAR 2023	971.80
YEAR 2024	1,171.52
YEAR 2025	8,021.61
Total for TAX LEVY	\$12,186.58
Unapplied Cash Payment Income	15,875.59
Total Income	\$100,102.68
Gross Profit	\$100,102.68
Expenses	
LCRWC	
Contracted Services	8,880.00
Dues/Subscriptions	3,024.00
Materials and Supplies	1,914.61
Registration Fees	75.00
Total for LCRWC	\$13,893.61
MATERIALS AND SERVICES	\$1,027.24
Bank Service Charges	110.25
Board of Directors	
Travel Expenses	
Mileage	1,548.88
Total for Travel Expenses	\$1,548.88
Total for Board of Directors	\$1,548.88

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

Profit and Loss
July-September, 2026

	Total
Building Operations	
Copy Machine Lease	2,049.90
Janitorial Services	2,400.00
Lawn Maintenance	1,260.00
Supplies (TP, Cleaning, etc.)	97.00
Water Delivery	392.77
Total for Building Operations	\$6,199.67
Contracted Services	
Engineering	13,471.25
Project Implementation	8,147.20
Total for Contracted Services	\$21,618.45
CSWCD Expense	1,880.00
Dues & Subscriptions	
Membership Dues	3,200.00
Web Subscriptions	7,976.04
Total for Dues & Subscriptions	\$11,176.04
Education & Outreach	
Materials & Equipment	77.57
Supplies	983.15
Total for Education & Outreach	\$1,060.72
Marketing	32.50
Materials & Supplies	\$3,954.34
Field Equipment	369.56
IT/Computer	
Hardware	4,770.00
Software	-352.80
Total for IT/Computer	\$4,417.20
Project Supplies	1,653.55
Total for Materials & Supplies	\$10,394.65
Meetings, Workshops, Events	
Food/Supplies	1,187.66
Total for Meetings, Workshops, Events	\$1,187.66
Printing & Reproduction	31.95

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

Profit and Loss
July-September, 2026

	Total
Professional Fees	
Accountant/Bookkeeper	976.00
Audit	6,670.00
Legal Fees	210.00
Newspaper Publishing	929.58
Payroll Service Fees	1,109.00
Recruitment	102.44
Training Fees	-1,300.00
Web/IT Services	6,656.82
Total for Professional Fees	\$15,353.84
Repairs & Maintenance	
Building Maintenance	259.00
Equipment Maintenance	150.00
Total for Repairs & Maintenance	\$409.00
Telecommunications	
Business Phones	1,159.36
Cell Phones	825.69
Internet Costs	600.34
Total for Telecommunications	\$2,585.39
Training & Conferences	\$348.65
Conference Registration Fees	2,513.25
Training Registration Fees	929.85
Total for Training & Conferences	\$3,791.75
Travel Expense	
Lodging	349.16
Parking/Public Transportation	26.78
Travel Meals	69.54
Total for Travel Expense	\$445.48
Utilities	
Electric	906.15
Garbage & Recycle	172.20
Gas	103.72
Water/Sewer	309.99
Total for Utilities	\$1,492.06
Vehicle	
Gas	823.15
Vehicle Maintenance	182.15
Total for Vehicle	\$1,005.30
Total for MATERIALS AND SERVICES	\$81,350.83

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

Profit and Loss
July-September, 2026

	Total
Payroll Expenses	
Taxes	9,906.69
Total for Payroll Expenses	\$9,906.69
PERSONNEL SERVICES	
Compensation	
District Manager	27,566.21
Field Technician	11,632.32
Financial Manager	25,347.14
Operations Coordinator	23,337.60
Resource Conservationist	73,698.37
Total for Compensation	\$161,581.64
Employer Payroll Taxes	3,623.87
Health Insurance Benefits	20,643.84
Supplemental Insurance	-534.39
Workers' Compensation	1,143.26
Total for PERSONNEL SERVICES	\$186,458.22
Total Expenses	\$291,609.35
Net Operating Income	-\$191,506.67
Net Income	-\$191,506.67

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District
Visa Report
09/02/26 - 10/01/26

Date	Num	Vendor	Memo/Description	Amount
09/09/2026	3379	REAL WORLD TRAINING	JC TRAINING	39.95
09/09/2026	3379	REMARKABLE	MONTHLY CHARGE	12.20
9/9/2026	3379	WFCA	JC TRAINING FORESTRY COMMUNICATIONS	85.00
09/17/2026	3379	CHATGPT	MONTHLY FEE	50.00
09/20/2026	3379	Apple	MONTHLY FEE ICLOUD	9.99
09/23/2026	3379	Dollar Tree	SALMON FEST SUPPLIES	13.25
09/28/2026	3379	ALOHA BADGES	NAME W/LOGO BADGES FOR NEW MEMBERS	32.50
09/02/2026	6889	Google	MONTHLY FEES	33.60
09/03/2026	6889	South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce	SCC CHAMBER DUES	200.00
09/03/2026	6889	Dena R Singer CPA PC	CLOSE OUT OF 2025/2026 FY	350.00
09/03/2026	6889	WARD Laboratories	FORAGE TEST FOR LANDOWNER	38.90
09/04/2026	6889	Rainwater Harvesting	EDUCATION	143.74
09/04/2026	6889	OSU Extension	TRAINING	295.00
09/14/2026	6889	CenturyLink Lumen	ELEVATOR PHONE LINE	62.27
09/15/2026	6889	WARD Laboratories	FORAGE TEST FOR LANDOWNER	38.90
09/15/2026	6889	Comcast	CELL PHONES	240.25
09/17/2026	6889	BEST WESTERN	ML BOLI TRAINING LODGING	149.19
09/17/2026	6889	RAMOS	YARD MAINTENANCE	420.00
09/23/2026	6889	Dena R Singer CPA PC	CLOSE OUT OF 2025/2026 FY	626.00
09/24/2026	6889	EVENTBRITE	MC OACD CONFERENCE REGISTRATION	348.65
09/29/2026	6889	EVENTBRITE	JC OACD CONFERENCE REGISTRATION	348.65
09/29/2026	6889	BOLI	ML ANNUAL TRAINING REGISTRATION	375.00
09/30/2026	6889	CMG Oregon	PUBLISH ELECTION NOTICES	120.00
10/01/2026	6889	Out of the Box Technology	MONTHLY PAYMENT	122.57
09/25/2026	7097	Safeway Store	BOARD LUNCH	43.45
09/25/2026	7097	Pretty Nice Deli	BOARD STRATEGIC PLANNING LUNCH	131.25

09/03/2026	7343	Sunmark Seeds	SEED	103.50
09/04/2026	7343	Heritage Seedlings	PROJECT SEEDS	484.00
09/09/2026	7343	Scappoose Express Lube	RAM TRUCK WASHED	14.00
09/11/2026	7343	Scappoose Bagel	KNOTWEED CLASS	85.39
09/23/2026	7343	Wal-Mart	SALMON FEST SUPPLIES	63.24
TOTAL \$ 5,080.44				

PUBLIC MEETING POLICY
Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

Preparation for Board Meetings

Distribution of Materials to Board Members

The agenda, chief executive officer's report, treasurer's report, and statement of bills shall be given to each member of the Board of Directors at least four (4) days prior to any regularly scheduled Board meeting.

At the same time, the Executive Director shall provide members with detailed information relative to the agenda, including existing Board policy pertinent to Agenda items.

Distribution of Agenda to the Public

The proposed agenda will simultaneously be distributed to all District offices and other facilities, local and other news media, and posted at one or more locations convenient for review by District personnel and the public.

Board Meeting Agenda

The clerk of the Board shall draft the agenda after conferring with the president of the Board. Unless modified by the Board, the agenda shall follow the following general format:

- Call to order
- Roll call by Secretary-Treasurer or designee
- Approval of the minutes
- Audience participation (testimony from citizens)
- Secretary-Treasurer's report
- Statement of bills
- Old business
- Correspondence
- New business
- Executive Director's Report
- Items not on agenda open to public, Board and staff participation
- Agenda suggestions for future meetings from Board members and District personnel
- Adjournment
- Executive Session (*include citation to statutory authority*)

Notice and Location of Meetings

Application

This policy applies to all meetings of the Board of Directors of the Columbia SWCD, and to any meetings of subcommittees, or advisory groups appointed by the Board if such subcommittees or advisory groups normally have a quorum requirement, take votes, and form recommendations as

a body for presentation to the Board of Directors.

Compliance with Law

All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Oregon Public Meetings Law, ORS 192.610-192.705.

Location of Meetings

All meetings shall be held within the geographic boundaries of the Columbia SWCD, except for training sessions held without any deliberations toward a decision. No meeting shall be held in any place where discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability is practiced. All meetings shall be held in places accessible to the handicapped.

Meetings Held By Electronic Means

All meetings of the Board, excluding executive sessions, must provide members of the general public, to the extent reasonably possible, an opportunity to:

- (a) Access and attend the meeting by telephone, video or other electronic or virtual means;
- (b) If in-person oral testimony is allowed, submit during the meeting oral testimony by telephone, video or other electronic or virtual means; and
- (c) If in-person written testimony is allowed, submit written testimony, including by electronic mail or other electronic means, so that the governing body is able to consider the submitted testimony in a timely manner.

Regular Meetings

The Board shall hold regular monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of each month. Such meetings shall be held at the Columbia SWCD Meeting room, beginning at 5:00pm, or at such other places and times as the Board may designate from time to time.

Special Meetings

The Board may hold special meetings at the request of the Chair; the Vice-Chair in the absence of the Chair; or any three members of the Board. No special meeting shall be held upon less than 24 hours' public notice.

Emergency Meetings

Emergency meetings may be held at the request of persons entitled to call special meetings, upon less than 24 hours' notice in situations where a true emergency exists. An emergency exists where there are objective circumstances which, in the judgment of the person or persons calling the meeting, create a real and substantial risk of harm to the District which would be substantially increased if the Board were to delay in order to give 24 hours' notice before conducting the meeting. The convenience of Board members is not grounds for calling an emergency meeting.

At the beginning of any emergency meeting, the officer or directors calling the meeting shall recite the reason(s) for calling the emergency meeting, and the reason(s) shall be noted in the

minutes. Only business related directly to the emergency shall be conducted at an emergency meeting. If the Board determines that the reasons for calling the meeting are insufficient, the meeting shall be immediately adjourned.

Notice of Meetings

Notice of the time, place, and principal subjects to be considered shall be given for all meetings. For regular or special meetings, the notice shall be in the form of an agenda, which shall be sent to all Board members, local media, and to all persons or other media representatives having requested notice in writing of every meeting. The agenda shall also be published or posted at the following locations within the District: 35285 Millard Rd., St. Helens, Oregon, 97051.

Written notice shall also be sent to any persons who the District knows may have a special interest in a particular action, unless such notification would be unduly burdensome or expensive. For emergency meetings, the District shall give as much notice as possible under the circumstances, but at minimum will contact local media to inform them of the meeting.

Executive Sessions

Notice for a meeting called solely to hold an executive session shall be given in the same manner as notice for regular, special and emergency meetings set forth above. The notice shall indicate the general subject matter to be considered and set forth the statutory basis for calling the executive session.

Interpreters for the Hearing Impaired

The District shall comply with ORS 192.630(5) regarding the provision of interpreters for the hearing impaired at Board meetings, in accordance with the following rules:

- The District shall make a good faith effort to have an interpreter for hearing impaired persons provided at any regularly scheduled meeting if the person requesting the interpreter has given the District at least 48 hours' notice of the request, provided the name of the requester, the requester's sign language preference, and any other relevant information which the District may require. "Good faith efforts" shall include contacting the Oregon Disabilities Commission, or other state or local agencies that maintain a list of qualified interpreters.
- If a meeting is held upon less than 48 hours' notice, the District shall make reasonable efforts to have an interpreter present.
- The requirement for an interpreter does not apply to emergency meetings.
- The Executive Director shall be responsible for developing and maintaining a list of qualified interpreters and is responsible for arranging for attendance of an interpreter at any meeting for which an interpreter is requested.

Board Meeting Conduct

Presiding Officer

The Chair shall preside at Board meetings. In the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair shall preside. If both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent, the remaining members shall select a board member to preside.

Conduct of Meetings

The Chair or other presiding officer at any Board meeting shall have full authority to conduct the meeting. Meetings shall be conducted in such a manner as to provide a full and fair opportunity for discussion of the issues in an efficient and timely manner. Any decision of the presiding officer at the meeting may be overridden by a majority vote of the Board.

Public Participation

If public participation is to be a part of the meeting, the presiding officer may regulate the order and length of appearances, and limit appearances to presentations of relevant points. Persons failing to comply with the reasonable rules of conduct outlined by the presiding officer, or causing any disturbance, may be asked or required to leave. Any individual who fails to leave the premises when asked to do so may be treated as a trespasser, and law enforcement personnel may be contacted to remove the individual.

Electronic Equipment

The presiding officer shall inform persons attending any meeting of the District Board of reasonable rules necessary to ensure an orderly and safe meeting, including rules related to the operation of electronic recording equipment. The physical comfort and safety of members of the Board and the public attending the meeting shall be of primary concern in formulating such rules.

Recording of Votes

Votes shall be recorded. Any member may request that his or her vote be changed prior to consideration of the next order of business.

Quorum Requisites

A majority of the positions on the Board (filled or vacant) shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is required to be present in order for the Board to deliberate or take any final action. If only a quorum is present, a unanimous vote shall be required to take final action.

Vote Explanations

Members of the Board may append to the record, at the time of voting, a statement indicating either the reason for their vote or abstention.

Conflict of Interest/Ex Parte Contacts

Any Board member with a potential conflict of interest shall declare the conflict for the record but may participate in discussions and vote. Any Board member with an actual conflict of interest shall declare the conflict for the record, and refrain from discussion or voting. If any member of the

Board has had any ex parte contact in a quasi-judicial matter, the member shall declare the contact prior to participating in discussion on the matter.

Smoking

Oregon's Indoor Clean Air Act prohibits smoking in District buildings and within 10 feet of all entrances, exits and accessibility ramps that lead to and from an entrance or exit, windows that open and air-intake vents. "Smoking" includes cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and the use of "inhalant delivery systems" (vaping); and other devices. The Board may adopt anti-smoking policies that are stricter than state law and prohibit smoking on District properties other than buildings.

Adjournment

Upon completion of the entire agenda, or at an hour pre-determined for the meeting to end, a board member shall make a motion to adjourn the meeting. Another board member shall second the motion, and the board chair (or acting board chair) shall declare the meeting adjourned.

Special circumstances: in the case of emergency circumstances (medical emergency, threat to public safety, etc.), the meeting may be adjourned without motion or preamble. If a loss of board quorum occurs for any reason during the course of the meeting, the meeting is considered adjourned at that point. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect how and why the meeting was adjourned.

Executive Sessions

Notice

Notice for meetings called only to hold executive sessions shall be given in the same manner as notice for regular, special and emergency meetings set forth above, except that the notice shall indicate the general subject matter to be considered at the executive session and set forth the statutory basis for calling the executive session.

No Final Decisions

The Board may fully discuss board members' views but may not make any final decisions during any executive session.

Authorized Purposes

Executive sessions shall be held only for the following purposes:

ORS 192.660(2)(a). To consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent if:

- A. The District has advertised the vacancy;
- B. The Board has adopted regular hiring procedures;\
- C. In the case of an officer, the public has had the opportunity to comment on the employment of the officer; and

- D. In the case of a chief executive officer, the governing body has adopted hiring standards, criteria and policy directives in meetings open to the public in which the public has had the opportunity to comment on the standards, criteria and policy directives.

This authority does not apply to:

- (1) The filling of a vacancy in an elective office.
- (2) The filling of a vacancy on any public committee, commission or other advisory group.
- (3) The consideration of general employment policies.
- (4) The employment of the chief executive officer, other public officers, employees and staff members of a public body when the procedures listed above have been followed.

ORS 192.660(2)(b). To consider the dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent who does not request an open hearing.

ORS 192.660(2)(c). To consider matters pertaining to the function of the medical staff of a public hospital licensed pursuant to ORS 441.015 to 441.119 and 441.993 including, but not limited to, all clinical committees, executive, credentials, utilization review, peer review committees and all other matters relating to medical competency in the hospital.

ORS 192.660(d). To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations.

ORS 192.660(e). To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

ORS 192.660(f). To consider information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection.

ORS 192.660(g). To consider preliminary negotiations involving matters of trade or commerce in which the governing body is in competition with governing bodies in other states or nations.

ORS 192.660(h). To consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.

ORS 192.660(i). To review and evaluate the employment-related performance of the chief executive officer of any public body, a public officer, employee or staff member who does not request an open hearing.

ORS 192.660(j). To carry on negotiations under ORS chapter 293 with private persons or

businesses regarding proposed acquisition, exchange or liquidation of public investments.

ORS 192.660(k). To consider matters relating to school safety or a plan that responds to safety threats made toward a school.

ORS 192.660(n). To discuss information about review or approval of programs relating to the security of any of the following:

- (A) A nuclear-powered thermal power plant or nuclear installation.
- (B) Transportation of radioactive material derived from or destined for a nuclear-fueled thermal power plant or nuclear installation.
- (C) Generation, storage or conveyance of:
 - (i) Electricity;
 - (ii) Gas in liquefied or gaseous form;
 - (iii) Hazardous substances as defined in ORS 453.005 (7)(a), (b) and (d);
 - (iv) Petroleum products;
 - (v) Sewage; or
 - (vi) Water.
- (D) Telecommunication systems, including cellular, wireless or radio systems.
- (E) Data transmissions by whatever means provided.

ORS 192.660(o). To consider matters relating to the safety of the governing body and of public body staff and volunteers and the security of public body facilities and meeting spaces.

ORS 192.660(p). To consider matters relating to cyber security infrastructure and responses to cyber security threats.

ORS 192.660(3). Labor negotiations IF negotiators for both sides request that negotiations be conducted in executive session. Labor negotiations conducted in executive session are not subject to the notification requirements of ORS 192.640.

Conduct of Executive Session

The Chair or other presiding officer shall announce the statutory authority for the executive session before going into closed session. Once the executive session has been convened, the Chair shall direct any representatives of the news media who are present not to report information from the executive session. Board members, staff and other persons present shall not discuss or disclose executive session proceedings outside of the executive session without prior authorization of the Board as a whole.

Minutes of Board Meetings

Minutes

The Board shall keep minutes of all of its meetings, including executive sessions, in accordance with the requirements of ORS 192.650. Minutes may be taken in writing or by audio

recording, and shall include at least the following information:

- All members of the Board present.
- All motions, proposals, resolutions, orders, ordinances and measures proposed and their disposition.
- Results of all votes, including the vote of each member by name.
- The substance of any discussion on any matter.
- A reference to any document discussed at the meeting.

Minutes of executive sessions shall be kept separately from minutes of open meetings.

Disclosure of Executive Session Minutes

If disclosure of material in the executive session minutes would be inconsistent with the purpose for which the executive session was held, the material may be withheld from disclosure. No executive session minutes may be disclosed without prior authorization of the Board.

Retention

Any tape recordings or written minutes of public Board meetings or executive sessions shall be retained by the District until such time as their disposal is authorized by rule or specific authorization of the State Archivist pursuant to ORS 192.105.

Availability to the Public

Written minutes of public sessions shall be made available to the public within a reasonable time after the meeting.



35285 Millard Road
St. Helens, OR 97051
Ph: 503.433.3205

www.columbiaswcd.com

10 October 2026

Dear Columbia County Board of Commissioners,

The Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) opposes the Port of Columbia County's (Port) effort to rezone 837 acres of high-value farmland at Port Westward for industrial development.

Our mission at Columbia SWCD is to inspire and assist the people of Columbia County in voluntarily stewarding our soil, water, habitat, and other natural resources. We envision a Columbia County where people have the knowledge and tools to care for our shared natural resources; a Columbia County where water is clean and abundant, soils are healthy and productive, locally grown food is abundant, and ecosystems thrive; and where we all recognize the interconnection of people and our natural world.

The proposed rezoning raises significant concerns regarding the protection of agricultural land, wetland function, watershed health, and the safety and livelihoods of the surrounding community. These concerns are directly related to the District's mission and are outlined below.

1. Loss of Prime and Unique Farmland

The proposed rezoning would remove 837 acres of agricultural land from potential agricultural use, including federally designated Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Unique Importance, and Prime Farmland if Drained. The Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) has repeatedly found that the Port and the County have not provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that rezoning this land is compatible with Oregon's farmland protection requirements under ORS 197.732(2)(c)(D) and OAR 660-004-0020(2)(d).

These high-value agricultural soils are an irreplaceable resource. Permanently converting 837 acres of farmland to industrial use would threaten local food security and long-term economic stability, particularly given the limited agricultural land available in Columbia County. The loss of this land would have lasting consequences for the region's agricultural capacity and its ability to support local food production.

2. Loss of Wetland Function

Nearly half of the 837 acres included in the rezoning proposal is estimated to contain significant wetland areas. These wetlands provide important hydrologic and ecological functions likely to be reduced or lost through industrial development. The *Columbia County Port Westward Goal 3 Exception Remand Staff Report (LUBA Staff Report)* identifies recurring failure to provide expert analysis of potential adverse impacts to natural resources from proposed industrial activities.

Similarly, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed biodiesel refinery on approximately 500 acres of the proposed development area identifies substantial concerns regarding wetland impacts. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers concluded that the development would have major cumulative impacts on wetlands, resulting in “long-term loss of wetland function, hydrologic fragmentation, and diminished habitat capacity.” The DEIS further notes that, although compensatory mitigation would offset some impacts, residual watershed-scale impacts would remain. These findings underscore the importance of fully evaluating wetland functions and cumulative impacts before proceeding with rezoning. Mitigation alone may not adequately compensate for the loss of these interconnected natural systems.

3. Cumulative Watershed Impacts

The *LUBA Staff Report* also highlights deficiencies in addressing the vulnerabilities of surrounding farms, forests, and natural resources to industrial development. Filling wetlands, increasing impervious surfaces, and altering stormwater runoff can change hydrology and historical drainage patterns. These changes may have cascading effects on agricultural drainage infrastructure, downstream water quality, and the health of the broader watershed.

The surrounding watershed, including the Columbia River, supports critical habitat for thirteen Evolutionarily Significant Units and Distinct Population Segments of salmon and steelhead listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission has provided expert testimony that industrial development at the scale intended by the rezoning would negatively affect juvenile salmon and other aquatic species.

Furthermore, millions of dollars in public funds have been invested in local restoration and water-quality improvements. These efforts include extensive tidal reconnection and wetland rehabilitation at Batwater Station, a mile from the rezoning area, completed by the District and the Lower Columbia River Watershed Council in 2017. Industrial development that compromises these restoration investments could undermine years of conservation work and jeopardize future improvements in watershed health.

4. Risk to Floodplain and Agricultural Operations

Filling wetlands and altering hydrology may also raise groundwater levels on surrounding farmland, increasing the risk of flooding, levee failure, and significant crop losses. The *LUBA Staff Report* identifies recurring deficiencies in evaluating how the proposed development could affect the interconnected network of drainage canals and irrigation water infrastructure managed by the Beaver Drainage Improvement Company (BDIC). BDIC has stated that its existing drainage infrastructure is not equipped to accommodate a large industrial development at Port Westward. Without a comprehensive assessment of these risks, industrial

development could place neighboring agricultural operations, essential drainage infrastructure, and the livelihoods of local farmers at risk.

We urge the Port and the Board of Commissioners to pause efforts on the rezoning at Port Westward until the potential impacts have been adequately evaluated and the following measures are addressed:

1. **An independent hydrological and floodplain analysis**, including review by qualified third-party experts, to assess development impacts on drainage systems and adjacent lands.
2. **No net loss of prime farmland**, including the development of a compensatory mitigation framework that preserves or enhances equivalent agricultural land within Columbia County.
3. **Wetland mitigation located outside of the Beaver Drainage District** at a sufficient ratio to ensure full functional replacement, within the same watershed, and subject to long-term monitoring and enforcement.
4. **A long-term monitoring and compliance framework** to ensure that wetland mitigation measures are maintained and effective over time.

The rezoning process has repeatedly raised unresolved concerns about whether industrial development at the proposed scale can proceed without placing surrounding communities, agricultural operations, and natural resources at risk. The continued lack of sufficient evidence demonstrating compatibility with ORS 197.732(2)(c)(D) and OAR 660-004-0020(2)(d) shows the current proposal is not consistent with Oregon's farmland protection requirements and Statewide Planning Goals.

Healthy soils, clean water, functioning wetlands, and productive farmland are finite resources essential to the well-being of our community. Their protection is inseparable from the long-term health of our local economy, the resilience of our agricultural systems, and the safety and livelihoods of the people who depend on them. The Columbia SWCD urges the Port and the Board of Commissioners to prioritize these public interests, fully evaluate the potential cumulative impacts, and protect the natural resources that sustain Columbia County. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Taylor Murray".

Taylor Murray, Executive Director, Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District

for the Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors