



**Columbia
Soil & Water
Conservation District**

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**Minutes of the
Columbia SWCD Board of Directors
Meeting October 15, 2025**

Directors Present:

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

Associate Directors:

Rachell Meyers, Scappoose Bay Watershed
Council (SBWC)
David Taylor

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

Alex Devin

CSWCD Staff:

Taylor Murray, District Manager
Jennifer Chavez, Operations & Outreach
Coordinator

Public:

Claudia Eagle
Julia Rutherford

Michael called the board meeting to order at 5:01 PM

Prior Month's Minutes: Paul moved, and Bill seconded a motion to approve the Minutes from the Board meeting held on 9-17-25, as presented. **Approved Motion passed unanimously.**

Vote Record: Approve September 17, 2025, meeting minutes as presented.

Director	Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Motion	Seconded
Paul Gibbons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Dave Freytag	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Debra Brimacombe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Bill Eagle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Michael Calhoun	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Jason Busch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

Financial Report: Bill presented the Treasurer's Report. David questioned the total Net Income shown on the Profit and Loss statement, asking if the negative amount was due to timing issues related to the tax levy funding. Taylor will follow up with Malysa for clarification.

Bill moved, and Deb seconded a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report from 9-30-25. **Approved Motion passed unanimously.**

Vote Record: Accept the Financial Report from August.

Director	Yes/Aye	No/Nay	Abstain	Motion	Seconded
Paul Gibbons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Dave Freytag	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Debra Brimacombe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bill Eagle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Michael Calhoun	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Jason Busch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

The council has two upcoming events: Fox Creek Cleanup: Saturday, November 8, from 10 am - 1 pm, and "Living with Wildfire" Community Information Session: Thursday, December 11, from 6 - 8 p.m.

- **SBWC:** Rachell Meyers reported that the council held its Fall Native Plant Sale last weekend, which drew a little over 200 attendees. She noted that the council will be participating in and hosting several upcoming fall events, including a partnership with the District at the Kiwanis Children's Fair and a Propagation Workshop, among others listed on their website. The council is also looking forward to the upcoming Spring grant cycle.
- **Staff updates:** Taylor apologized for board materials being sent out a little late this week.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Strategic Planning:** Taylor reported that Amy Stork is still waiting to connect with a few remaining Board members and complete several work group meetings before finalizing the Strategic Planning Meeting Agenda and preparing a summary from the interviews and work sessions. The summary will help define the meeting's focus, identify strengths and weaknesses, and guide the development of the District's long-term vision.
Taylor also discussed the day-of logistics, noting that dinner will not be provided but suggested that attendees meet locally afterward if possible. He reviewed the venues that had been toured and recommended moving forward with booking The Quarry to finalize invitations and meeting notices. The Board had no objections to proceeding.
- **Cyber Attack:** Taylor reported that the District will receive \$4,000 from the Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) to go toward the \$5,000 invoice from the firm that assisted with the recent cyber attack investigation. He added that, due to the attack, the QuickBooks (QB) migration from desktop to online and the audit are each about one month behind schedule. The QB migration is expected to be completed by October 24.
- **Committees:** Taylor clarified committee membership guidelines. He explained that Michael, as Chair, may attend any committee meeting as needed. To avoid creating a quorum and turning a committee meeting into a Board meeting, each committee should include no more than two Board members. There was also discussion about which committees would constitute public meetings. A brief discussion followed. Deb noted that she has removed herself from the Personnel Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Staff Position Descriptions:** Taylor explained that he has met with staff individually and in group settings to discuss the proposed position descriptions. Paul noted that he would like to see the phrase "*perform other duties as needed*" changed to "*as assigned*."

Taylor went on to explain that of the six job descriptions, all but two have changes made to them. The District Manager and the HR/Financial Manager descriptions have just been clarified and refined. The most significant change involves Amber, who is currently a Resource Conservationist and has requested to transition into more of an outreach and education role. This new role could affect Jenn and Rebekah's current descriptions, depending on Board approval. Taylor provided a packet of the proposed descriptions and letters from Crystalyn and Amber to the Board.

The Board began by reviewing Crystalyn's proposal. Paul asked why the job title and structure differ from what has been used previously. Taylor explained that the new job title provides greater clarity and aligns with neighboring SWCDs. Jenn added that the District currently has three Resource Conservationists, each with unique specialties, and that staff have expressed the need for clearer titles to help the public identify the right contact. Paul commented that while researching SWCDs, it appeared that wildlife habitat restoration was not always a focus and suggested this as a potential discussion topic for the upcoming Strategic Planning Meeting. Deb noted that SWCD work has evolved

significantly in recent years and that the proposed titles better reflect where SWCDs are heading. Further discussion followed.

Taylor then shared the current draft of the SWCD salary range chart being developed by OACD (Oregon Association of Conservation Districts), noting concerns about moving forward with job descriptions before salary ranges are confirmed. He hopes to gather more information at the upcoming OACD Conference to assist with this process. He questioned whether it would be better to wait until after the Strategic Planning Meeting to continue the discussion, in a Personnel Committee meeting instead. Paul agreed that the Personnel Committee should take the lead on this work.

Deb asked whether there could be separate votes for the position descriptions and salaries. Michael requested additional review of the position requirements, pointing out that what appears to be entry-level seems difficult, adding that the higher paid positions require minimal education.

Paul asked for input from the rest of the Board about moving the discussion to the Personnel Committee. Jason agreed, saying there wasn't enough time to fully address everything tonight and that the conversation felt repetitive. Rachell concurred, noting that salary discussions began last November. Taylor added that he plans to attend a District Manager roundtable at next week's conference and is hopeful more insight will come from that meeting.

The Personnel Committee (Bill, Paul, and Taylor) scheduled a meeting for Saturday, November 8, at 2pm at the SWCD office.

Brief discussion was held. Taylor is hopeful that this will be completed by December.

- **Annual Meeting:** Taylor mentioned that staff have begun discussing the upcoming Annual Meeting and potential venues and asked if the Board wants to hold a Board meeting on the same day, as has been done in the past. Michael explained that the Upper Nehalem Watershed Council typically holds both meetings together, while Rachell noted that East and West Multnomah SWCDs do not. Bill added that the Board meeting could have a short and simple agenda. Jenn noted that Malysa reminded staff that officer elections usually occur in January, and Paul commented that it is preferable to hold formal elections at a meeting with a larger public presence, such as the Annual Meeting.

Jenn also explained that staff are considering day-of logistics and would like the board's preferences on time of day, location, and food, noting that the timing can affect the target audience. Bill stated he wants the meeting focused on the District and does not want an outside presentation.

Discussion was held. Jenn noted that hosting the Annual Meeting in different areas of the county has been suggested in the past, though Taylor explained that timing may be limited due to weather. Further discussion followed. Paul suggested scheduling the Board meeting before the Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting Resolution will be presented at next month's Board meeting.

BOARD REPORTS

Deb explained she had a great time at the Vernonia Salmon Festival. Last weekend she washed mason bees at the SBWC Native Plant Sale and made a lot of great contacts there as well. She is looking forward to attending the upcoming Kiwanis Children's Fair.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6 :30 PM

Respectfully Submitted by: *Jennifer Chavez*
Jennifer Chavez, Operations & Outreach Coordinator