



**Columbia
Soil & Water
Conservation District**

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Ph: 503.433.3205

www.columbiaswcd.com

**Minutes of the
Columbia SWCD Board of Directors
Meeting March 18, 2026**

Directors Present:

Michael Calhoun, Chair
Paul Gibbons, Secretary
Debra Brimacombe, Director
Bill Eagle, Treasurer
Dave Freytag, Director

Associate Director:

Alison Charbonneau
David Taylor

Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS):

Hannah Isaacs, District Conservationist

CSWCD Staff:

Taylor Murray, Executive Director
Rebekah Gaxiola, Working Lands Conservationist
Jennifer Chavez, Operations & Communications
Manager

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

Rachael Barry

Public:

Claudia Eagle
Bill Etter
Jasmine Lillich, Executive Director, Clatskanie Farmer
Collective (via Zoom)

Michael called the board meeting to order at 5:05 PM

Prior Month's Minutes: Paul moved, and Debra seconded a motion to approve the Minutes from the Board meeting held on 02/18/26, as presented. **Approved Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Approve February 18, 2026, meeting minutes as presented.

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

Financial Report: Bill presented the Treasurer's Report. Debra moved, and Dave seconded a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report from 2-28-26. **Approved Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Accept the Financial Report for February.

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

REPORTS

- **NRCS:** Hannah shared that the NRCS Local Work Group meeting is scheduled for April 23 from 9 am to 12 pm and will be held virtually. She explained that the meeting is open to the public and partners to discuss NRCS programs, updates from the previous year, and community concerns. She also noted that a new part-time employee, Rachael Cleaveland, is now shared with the Hillsboro office and works in the office two days per week. Brief discussion followed.
- **LCRWC:** Rachael provided a brief overview of watershed councils and shared that the council's recent planting event at Fox Creek was successful, with 16 volunteers installing 500 plants. Brief discussion followed.
- **Staff:** Taylor reported that he attended the Scappoose Town Hall meeting with Debra, David Taylor, and Rebekah, noting it was a good opportunity to connect with local agencies, council members, and the public. He provided an update on District building improvements, including recent painting of the meeting room and ongoing bids for adding a bathroom and shop upgrades. Taylor also shared that an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) review team visited a project site along the Clatskanie headwaters, noting strong work by the project manager and coordination with LCRWC on downstream portions. Brief discussion was held regarding buffer concerns and rule updates. Taylor added that he recently met with Paul and Dave Evenson in Clatskanie as well.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Strategic Plan:** Taylor explained that he and Malysa met with Amy Stork this week to go over and complete Goal #5. The next step is for Amy to reach out to the Strategic Planning Committee to schedule a time for the Board and Associate Directors to have a half-day meeting and discuss goals and plans moving forward.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Annual Meeting Reschedule:** Taylor reported that the District is still awaiting completion of its audit, and as a result, the January annual meeting is invalid since the audit must be presented; a new annual meeting will be scheduled once the audit is received. He noted that delays appear to be common among other SWCDs. Taylor also shared plans to hire Yamhill SWCD's accountant for approximately 8 hours per week to help streamline financial processes. Discussion followed regarding the District's current and past auditors.
- **Director Positions up for Election in November:** Packets containing election information were provided to the board. Taylor recommended contacting Sandi Hiatt with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) with any questions. Brief discussion was held regarding the county's zone map, and the interactive map available on the District's website to identify zones by address.
- **Budget Committee:** Taylor read aloud the proposed budget committee that he was provided by Malysa. It was asked if the members had been asked if they wanted to participate again this year, though he was uncertain if they had. Brief discussion was held. **Bill moved, and Paul seconded**, a motion to approve the proposed budget committee. **Approved Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Approve Budget Committee

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

- **Budget Calendar:** A copy of the proposed calendar was given to the board. Discussion was held. It was proposed that the first budget committee meeting be held on May 7 at 11 am. Paul noted he will be out of town. **Bill moved, and Debra seconded** a motion to approve the budget committee meeting on May 7 at 11 am, and the budget calendar as proposed. **Approved Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Approve the Budget calendar.

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

- **Budget Officer:** Discussion was held regarding whether the Executive Director or Financial Manager should serve as budget officer and the associated duties of the role. **Debra moved, and Bill seconded** a motion to approve Malysa, the Financial Manager, as the budget officer. **Approved Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Approve Malysa as the Budget Officer.

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

- **Field Technician Position Description:** The board received a copy of the proposed job description, and Taylor provided a brief overview, noting that staff would like to include both a formal interview and a field interview in the hiring process. Bill Etter observed that the current description does not list a high school diploma as a requirement and expressed interest in serving on the hiring committee if needed. Taylor added that the position would be posted at step 3 within the District's current pay range of \$48,000 to \$67,000, and Paul commented that \$48,000 is a strong salary within Columbia County. Discussion followed. **Bill moved, and Paul seconded** a motion to approve the Field Technician Position Description with minor edits. **Approved Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Approve Field Technician Position Description

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

- **Personnel Policy:** The board received a copy of the policy in advance of the meeting. Taylor explained that several standalone policies referenced within the Personnel Policy are also being updated by him and Jennifer. He noted that the policy committee discussed increasing vacation leave accrual for employees in years one through three from 2 hours to 4 hours.

Dave left at 6:35 pm.

Paul raised concerns about language stating PTO accrual would appear on each paycheck, suggesting it may

be more accurate to reference pay periods, and recommended a legal review. Taylor and Deb clarified that HR Answers, which provided the policy template, also reviews the finalized policy. Discussion followed. **Debra moved, and Paul seconded** a motion to approve the Personnel Policy as written, with the exception that the Board has one more week to review and note any concerns. **Approved Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Approve Field Technician Position Description

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

- **Employee Leave Adjustment:** Taylor noted that, as discussed under the Personnel Policy, there is an employee currently accruing two hours of vacation per pay period and proposed increasing this to four hours. Paul asked how much annual vacation this would represent, and it was clarified to be approximately two weeks per year. Discussion followed.
- **Committee Appointment:** Taylor explained that Alex Devin had reached out to him and requested joining the budget committee. **Paul moved, and Debra seconded** a motion to approve Alex Devin join the budget committee. **Approved Motion passed.**

Vote Record: Approve Field Technician Position Description

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

BOARD REPORTS

- Deb mentioned that she will be attending Earth Day to represent both the BugNutz and the SWCD. Brief discussion held.
- Paul reported that at the previous meeting, Rachell (Scappoose Bay Watershed Council) raised concerns from FEMA regarding challenges with streamside plantings. He shared that she recently reported at the LCRWC meeting that smaller projects fall under an exception. Rachael Barry clarified that the determination is made at the county level. Discussion followed.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:50 PM

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