

Sumas Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – Regular Meeting – June 11, 2024

Attendees

“(t)” indicates presence via tele-conference, “(p)” indicates proxy vote.

| Board – Present | Board – Absent with Notice |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Al Sytsma Andy Enfield (t) Brad Rader | Terry Lenssen Keith Boon |

| Staff and Consultants | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name | Organization / Affiliation |
| Gavin Willis | Ag Water Board |
| Bill Clarke (t) | Clarke Law |
| Katie Faber (t) | AESI |
| Elizabeth Hayes | Whatcom Conservation District |
| Jay Chennault (t) | AESI |

| Other Guests | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name | Organization / Affiliation |
| Lauren Templeton (t) | Whatcom County PDS |

Proceedings

Brad called the meeting to order at 1:04pm

1. Consent Agenda

- a. Agenda was reviewed.
- b. May 14 minutes were reviewed.
- c. Financial report and voucher in the amount of \$29,953.36 was reviewed.
- d. Andy moved to approve the consent agenda. Al seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. Bill provided an adjudication update.
 - i. The initial hearing scheduled for June 26th is about 3 things:
 1. A process for attorneys to provide notice of appearance.
 2. A process for how initial motions would be sent to parties of record.
 3. Claims form and approval by court of summons.
 - a. It is unclear at the moment if ECY's proposed claims form will be filed before the June 26th hearing.
 - ii. Related to that, a few attorneys are talking to AG office about creating a case management committee, so that some of these procedural issues can be generally dealt with in committees so that everyone knows what is going on.
- b. Water rights office hours gone well so far. AWB will have more sessions in the fall, and plans to ask the legislature for funds to offer more sessions in fiscal year 2026.
- c. The local government caucus of the WMB plans to meet on June 20th.

3. FEMA Projects

- a. Gavin provided an update on the FEMA projects.
 - i. Work with FEMA to obligate the final few projects continues.
 - ii. Gavin worked with county finance staff to set up a separate finance cost center for Lower Sumas project. All project income and expenses will be run through that cost center for better financial controls and reporting.
 - iii. Kneuman Ditch project is next on the list for procurement.

4. Drainage / Habitat / Flood

- a. Fred provided a FLIP update.
 - i. There has been a lot of action north of the border. First, the federal government denied the City of Abbotsford's request for funding for flood response. Secondly, a class action lawsuit was approved against the City of Abbotsford for alleged mismanagement of the Barrowtown Floodgates in the early hours of the 2021 flood. Finally, a report out of UBC suggested allowed Sumas Lake to reform would be a cost-effective alternative to flood prevention and mitigation (although upon review it was clear that the report overlooked the vast majority of the impacts of such a move).
- b. Drainage issues were discussed. Brad noted Paatstel/Trapline as an area of ongoing concern. Gavin will connect with Dale DeVries at DID#31 to see what work is ongoing and if the WID can provide any assistance.
- c. Fred provided a buffer update. WDFW/ECY leadership and a few tribes continue to call for SPTH buffers. Other partners (and staff members at lower levels of those state agencies) don't seem to feel the same way.
- d. Beaver management was discussed. Brad noted ongoing issues on Pangborn Creek. Gavin will send Jesse's contact info to Brad.

5. Water Quality

- a. Elizabeth provided a water quality update. Basin-wide numbers in the Nooksack are looking good generally, although there were a few high counts during the last rain event. We don't have the latest results from Sumas basin yet.

6. Communications / Education

- a. Fred noted that the next WFF water rights event will be on Oct 22.

7. Next Meeting

- a. The next scheduled meeting dates are July 9th, August 13th, and September 10th. Summer meetings may be cancelled if there are no agenda items, or if it is known in advance that there will not be a quorum present.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:39 pm

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____