

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF HOOD RIVER WATERSHED GROUP

The Board of Directors met on April 16, 2024.

The meeting was held at the Oregon State University Extension Center Conference Room, 2990 Experiment Station Drive, Hood River, OR.

The meeting was called by the Board of Directors.

The notice for the meeting was given more than seven days in advance in writing via email.

The directors present for the meeting were Sam Doak, Steve Pappas, Jackie Markin, Greg Short, Lillian Dick, Hilary Doulos, Felipe Mendez, and Chuck Gehling. Alexis Vaivoda was absent.

The other people present at the meeting were Cindy Thieman, Executive Director, and Alix Danielsen, Restoration and Outreach Project Manager of the Hood River Watershed Group.

A quorum was present because at least six directors on the Board were present for the entire meeting.

Chuck Gehling, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

- I. Welcome, Agenda, & Minutes
 - a. Introductions
 - b. Additions or Corrections to the Agenda – None.
 - c. Review and Adopt February Meeting Minutes – Sam moved, Greg seconded, and the board resolved to approve the February minutes.

- II. Financials
 - a. February and March Expenses – The board reviewed expenses for February and March. Cindy explained that the computer charge and return was due to the purchase of the wrong operating system.
 - b. Treasurer report on February and March bank and January through March credit card reconciliation reports – Sam met with Cindy on April 8th to review the statements as a third check on the accounts. Sam reported that everything looked in order. Cindy noted that Sam also reviews and initials reconciliation reports.
 - c. Annual (2023) ‘Statement of Activity’ & ‘Balance Sheet’
 - i. Cindy reviewed the reports with the board.
 - ii. Cindy explained that there have been some instances where the bookkeeper has mistakenly categorized grants or other funders in Quickbooks, which has taken Cindy time to review and edit.
 - iii. Cindy noted that all the Statement of Activity expenditure lines should zero out, but some grants were mistakenly not zeroed out at the end of 2022, so this is reflected in the 2023 numbers to balance out these few instances.
 - iv. Chuck noted that it is helpful to see all the funders and projects and the corresponding breakdown on one page.
 - v. The Financial Oversight Committee will review the details of the balance sheet/statement of financial position to better explain to the board the details of

- that monthly and annual record.
- vi. Cindy shared with the board a breakdown of staff time from 2023, showing percentages of time broken out by program areas. The majority of time (45%) was spent on habitat restoration. Cindy also showed a breakdown of funding by program area (habitat restoration was 88%) and revenue sources by type (government – 56%, CTWS and other service contracts – 29%, etc.)
 - vii. The board discussed what pie charts to include in the annual report with additional narrative to explain the details.
- d. Financial Oversight Committee (Sam, Chuck, Kate Conley, Cindy)
- i. 2024 Budget – Sam explained that the committee has met once to review the budget (and a few other topics); Cindy noted that the budget presented is a final draft, but open for discussion.
 - ii. Operating Reserve Fund Policy
 - 1. Sam and Chuck explained that the financial policy states that the board shall set a reserve fund policy. The 2023 year-end balance was \$92,399, and the projected ending balance at the end of 2024 will be \$277,164. The financial committee suggests establishing a reserve fund that would be protected as a separate restricted budget line item.
 - 2. The board is in favor of the idea and the finance committee will develop a formal proposal to the board for the next board meeting.
- e. 2024 Budget
- i. Steve asked about the proposed COLA increase of 4%, noting that he does not think that 4% is enough and does not match the cost of living in the Hood River area. Felipe and others added his support for better staff compensation.
 - ii. Sam clarified the difference between a cost-of-living adjustment and a consideration of whether the staff salaries are too low in general and need to be addressed. Sam suggested that focusing on salaries is perhaps the more appropriate direction at this point.
 - iii. Cindy will work with a group of board members to gather and review current data (at the non-profit level and not specifically watershed councils) to develop a recommendation for the full board.
 - iv. Greg moved, Jackie seconded, and the board resolved to approve the 2024 budget as presented.
- f. Quarter 1 Financial Reports – Cindy reviewed the reports with the board.
- i. Cindy noted that the statement of activity by class shows several negative numbers because she decided to wait on those reimbursement requests for time efficiency reasons.

III. Personnel

- a. Watershed Technician Position – Cindy explained that the position is listed, and she has already received 7 applications. Interviews will happen in May with an expected start date of June 1st.

IV. Projects

- a. Focused Investment Partnership award update – Cindy reviewed the grant and process with the board and explained that the Hood River Basin Partnership proposal was ranked first. The OWEB board meets next week to approve the ranked recommendations. The first grant agreement will likely be for HRWG for partnership technical assistance, but there should be time for the board to review and approve the agreement.
- b. Bear Cr. Fish Passage project – Cindy explained that the construction RFP did not receive any bids, largely because of the timeline and overall budget/funding available. This will delay the project implementation until 2025, and Cindy will apply for an OWEB implementation grant in the current open solicitation round to match the existing Forest Service funding.
- c. Neal Creek Phase 3 Instream Habitat Enhancement project – Alix explained that she applied for an implementation grant for \$375,500 to supplement the existing BPA funding. The application was ranked third of seven and it's expected that the OWEB board will approve the funding award at their board meeting next week. Alix and Cindy requested approval for Cindy to sign the grant agreement when it is finalized.
 - i. Felipe moved, Greg seconded, and the board resolved to approve the Executive Director signing the Neal Creek Phase 3 implementation grant agreement.
- d. Baldwin Cr. Project – ODFW grant (board decision); Construction bids (board email decision in April)
 - i. Alix explained that she applied for an ODFW Private Forest Accords grant for \$299,146 to supplement the existing BPA funding for project implementation. The application was ranked within the funding line, and the ODFW Commission is expected to approve the funding awards at their commission meeting later this week. Alix and Cindy are requesting approval for Cindy to sign the grant agreement when it is finalized.
 - ii. Sam moved, Jackie seconded, and the board resolved to approve the Executive Director signing the Baldwin Creek ODFW PFA grant agreement.
 - iii. Alix explained that the Baldwin Creek construction RFP is currently open and proposals are due on Friday. Alix and Cindy will review the proposals early next week and select on contractor. Cindy will request approval of the construction contract via email prior to signature.
- e. Lower East Fork project – Increasing scope & budget for Tetra Tech contract (board discussion & possible decision)
 - i. Alix explained that following a site visit to the project reach, the design team (HRWG, Tetra Tech, and BPA) decided that expanding the geographic scope of the Phase 2 project reach to include the section of the East Fork downstream of the Woodworth Bridge and upstream of the existing Phase 2 boundary would significantly increase the habitat benefit of the project. Tetra Tech has provided an estimate for this additional design work and Alix and Cindy are reviewing the proposal. This additional work would be covered with Bureau of Reclamation funding, and a portion of the Phase 3 design work that is currently included in the Tetra Tech contract would likely be pushed out until 2025 and covered with OWEB FIP funding.


- ii. The board discussed the details and supports the increased scope and budget. Cindy will send out a board decision via email when the amendment is finalized.

V. HRWG/Watershed Draft Comic/Graphic Story – Cindy provided an update to the board on the development of the watershed comic and the editing rounds. There will be an increase in cost to accommodate for additional design work. The work is proceeding, and the third draft will be complete in May.

- VI. Staff Reports & Director Updates
 - a. Staff Reports – Included with board packet.
 - b. Director updates – Skipped for time.

The board discussed whether there needs to be a full board meeting in June. The board decided to convene an officers meeting instead of a full board meeting. The next full board meeting will be the quarterly meeting in July.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:58pm.

Signature of Secretary:  Date: 9/18/24
Jackie Markin