

KING CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Board of Supervisors

Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2001

1 **Supervisors Present:** Bill Niccolls, Chair, Scott Wallace, Vice-Chair, Lynn Sullivan,
2 Secretary/Treasurer, Max Prinsen, Member.

3 **Associate Supervisors Present:** None.

4 **Guests Present:** Mark Clark, Washington State Conservation Commission, Gus Hughbanks,
5 Washington State Conservationist.

6 **Staff Present:** Geoff Reed, Marla Hamilton Lucas, Brandy Reed.

7 **NRCS Staff Present:** Gus Hughbanks

8 Meeting called to order at 6:02 with Bill Niccolls, Chair, presiding. Sullivan asked to add a
9 discussion about the monthly staff reports and an article to discuss later to the agenda. Niccolls
10 asked to add a discussion on a new website, earthconnect.org.

11 Gus Hughbanks introduced himself and spoke about his background in Nebraska. Mark Clark
12 spoke about two meetings he is looking forward to hearing the results of.

13 Engineering grants are likely to be funded into the supplemental budget and they should be
14 definite by December 1st. It is anticipated that there will be big cuts in all areas of the state
15 budget as a result of economic conditions.

16 All the meeting attendees introduced themselves and spoke a bit about their backgrounds for
17 Hughbank's benefit.

18 The October 10th minutes were approved after Sullivan requested clarification of the wording on
19 line 75.

20 **S (Sullivan), W (Wallace) P a motion to approve the October 10, 2001 minutes as read.**

21 Hamilton Lucas distributed the monthly expenses for October. Sullivan asked what Dovia was
22 and B. Reed explained that it was an organization for volunteer program managers.

23 **P (Prinsen), W (Wallace) passed a motion to approve check numbers # 6201-6259 in the**
24 **amount of \$117,173.00 for the month of October.**

25 The Deposit list was distributed and Hamilton Lucas further explained that the cost share
26 expenses and how the deposit and transfers to the District are handled.

27 Hamilton Lucas passed out the Balance Sheet- explained that the District is in good financial
28 shape. Sullivan asked about the interest issue and staff explained the latest developments: G.
29 Reed stated that he has corresponded with King County on the issue and the Prosecuting
30 Attorney has stated that the interest is the districts' and that we should submit a plan to spend it

"Promoting sustainable uses of natural resources through responsible stewardship"

31 with our 2002 work plan that goes to the Metropolitan County Council. Hamilton Lucas
32 explained the assessment process for Hughbank's benefit and how the District distributes the
33 money to the cities and the watershed forums.

34 Hamilton Lucas handed out the Budget Tracking Report. Discussion ensued on several items that
35 were lower than expected.

36 Hamilton Lucas also distributed a report she had produced per Niccolls request at the previous
37 board meeting that compared the original 2001 budget with the reallocated budget as of
38 September 2001. She asked the board about their comfort level regarding budget changes
39 between the line items. The bottom line will not change without board approval but between line
40 items is the question to be decided. Niccolls said he didn't like micromanaging budgets and to let
41 the staff do the managing. B. Reed explained the 10% rule (10% of the total budget can be
42 changed) that is used on the district's non-competitive grants. Prinsen said he thought "bottom
43 line" management wasn't what he wanted to see. Wallace said the staff should have flexibility so
44 not to bog down the board meeting with minute changes to line items. Clark explained how the
45 workplan should dictate whether the budget should change. Discussion ensued regarding various
46 opinions on budgeting philosophies. Prinsen thought he wasn't comfortable because of past
47 problems at the district and felt that a 20% change to a line item was reasonable. Hansen was
48 missing and the Board wanted her input on the issue. Niccolls suggested the Board table the
49 issue until next month. Wallace and Clark said it is important to empower and trust the staff to
50 decide in order to accomplish the goals of the District.

51 B. Reed presented the Cedar -Lake Washington Watershed Forum Non-Competitive grant
52 applications. She discussed the expenditure of \$ 426,682 of KCD provided assessment funds.
53 Prinsen had two questions regarding two grants for a Cedar Chinook survey that appears to be
54 the same project for King County and Seattle Public Utilities. B. Reed explained that King
55 County doesn't want to be a pass through agency for Seattle Public Utilities. Sullivan said the
56 projects cover different areas. Wallace said we're always counting fish and the money isn't
57 available for restoring habitat. Prinsen said that the project only has to meet the requirements in
58 the RCW. Wallace said there are no "on the ground" projects and we keep funding the same
59 activity. Niccolls said the Board should keep an eye on the proportion of studies versus on the
60 ground projects.

61 Niccolls asked if there were fewer requests for project funding, B. Reed said that the Washington
62 State Department of Fish and Wildlife was having trouble funding projects. The District has a 3-
63 way agreement so we can fund non-profit entities- King County will co-sign so the District has a
64 guarantee that if the project is not in compliance with the grant funding guidelines, the District
65 will get a refund of the money.

66 Niccolls asked where was the property in Salmon Bay. Sullivan asked about the Cold Creek
67 acquisition, and Wallace said that Salmon Recovery Funding Board funding was included.

68 **W (Wallace), P (Prinsen) passed a motion to approve the Cedar-Lake Washington-**
69 **Sammamish Non- Competitive Grant Application Packet.**

70 B. Reed reviewed the Woodinville non-competitive grant application (first submitted at the
71 previous board meeting). She said she received more information in response to the board's

72 request. The reason for the project cost seeming to be lower than would be expected is that
73 Woodinville would use interns to complete the project rather than regular city employees.

74 **W (Wallace), S (Sullivan) passed a motion to approve the City of Woodinville non-**
75 **competitive grant application.**

76 B. Reed presented a revision to a Central Puget Sound Watershed Forum 2000 Non-competitive
77 grant award. King County is not willing to be a pass agency through for funding for the City of
78 Seattle Beach Naturalist program. The award will be changed so that the applicant is the City of
79 Seattle Aquarium. B. Reed will revise the King County Agreement to reflect this change.

80 **P (Prinsen), S (Sullivan) passed a motion to amend the Central Puget Sound Watershed**
81 **Forum 2000 grant award documentation.**

82 B. Reed presented the KCD-City of SeaTac Agreement for Performance of Conservation
83 Services Attachment A for enhancement of the North SeaTac Community Center wetland. This
84 is a continuation of a wetland restoration project that the District has been doing for SeaTac; the
85 funds are deducted from the assessment balances due to SeaTac. Niccolls asked if the cost for the
86 project to be deducted was the estimate or the actual costs when the project is finished. Actual
87 costs are deducted from city assessment balances.

88 **P (Prinsen), W (Wallace) passed a motion to approve the KCD-City of SeaTac Agreement**
89 **for wetland enhancement services at North SeaTac Community Center.**

90 The City of Kent asked the District to do additional vegetation monitoring at the City of Kent
91 Green River Natural Resources Area and will reimburse the District for the additional cost.

92 **W (Wallace), P (Prinsen) passed a motion to amend the KCD-City of Kent agreement to**
93 **include additional vegetation monitoring services.**

94 The Snoqualmie Forum applications were approved at the September Board Meeting. Prinsen
95 had a question regarding the habitat restoration design item- \$80,000 for design and permits.
96 King County planned a feasibility study to identify projects, but no funding source identified for
97 implementation. The plan is to go to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board with the design and
98 permits and apply for their funding for implementation.

99 The projects involved are Raging River, Chinook Bend, and Tolt River. Wallace asked why not
100 choose one first. He felt the Tolt project was questionable due to flooding concerns.

101 Prinsen asked if the District could do progress payments for projects funded by grant awards. B.
102 Reed said it was a policy decision that needed to be taken into account along with the interest
103 earned on invested assessment fund balances. Sullivan felt that design costs relate to
104 implementation costs, that the feasibility study is completed first and the winning project is then
105 designed. Niccolls asked if we are able to have input on which project is chosen. Prinsen said
106 that we couldn't judge which project is best, that we must follow the RCW. Wallace said the
107 feasibility study would flush out a bad project. B. Reed said that we would wait until the project
108 is selected and will request a new application for design funding. Sullivan wanted to know how
109 the \$80,000 is broken out - it's too much for design, are permits included?

110 B. Reed asked for feedback on the Grant Revision/ Budget Revision process. Entities are coming
111 to the District after the fact for agreement amendments. Is it possible for them to submit
112 applications with language that says they wouldn't have to ask for extensions? B. Reed would
113 like a policy to follow.

114 Sullivan suggested a range and if the agreement is extended the entity writes a memo to us to that
115 effect. B. Reed felt like she had too much autonomy in making decisions on this issue, her
116 inclination is to say no, as she gets asked too many times for exceptions to the rules.

117 Prinsen said he doesn't get any flexibility with his grants. Wallace said the reason for the delays
118 is not being able to get the permits on a timely basis. Niccolls asked B. Reed what sort of latitude
119 to make decisions on extensions she would like. B. Reed said she would like the District to be
120 able to be cooperative in these cases. Prinsen suggested having the District's attorney draw up
121 language in contract addressing delays, using standard construction industry language, rather
122 than an open-ended policy.

123 Clark mentioned that dairy waste grants get one automatic extension, and then the grantee must
124 ask the commission to approve any further extensions. Adding more hoops to jump through does
125 not make the project get finished faster.

126 Prinsen asked if entities were picking projects that were realistic. Hughbanks stated that usually
127 the final deadline is the only one the grantees see. Wallace suggested that we not grant the
128 money until the permits for the project have been obtained. Prinsen said that tonight we've
129 approved a grant application for the Cedar- Lake Washington without the necessary permits so
130 we've set a precedent, there's no parcel identification on purchases. G. Reed suggested they send
131 extension applications to the board, and Sullivan said that there would be documentation that
132 way.

133 B. Reed said she would investigate adding language to contracts addressing project completion
134 delays using language similar to that used for construction delays.

135 Hamilton Lucas explained to the board that the District's network management person (Raleigh
136 Chinn) would be leaving soon and that she had found a new network management company to
137 replace him. She said that there were two ways to contract with the company, either a flat fee of
138 \$950 for 10 hours of work per month, or \$120 per hour. She wanted to make sure the board did
139 not have any problems with the flat fee plan, although there is the possibility that the District
140 might not use all ten hours each month. She mentioned that one possibility was to use the flat fee
141 for the first few months and then evaluate whether to switch to the per hour based upon the
142 amount of hours necessary to maintain the District's network.

143 **S (Sullivan) W (Wallace) passed a motion to approve the District to contract with Packet**
144 **Drivers for network services at a flat fee of \$950 per month for the next three months.**

145 G. Reed asked the board to approve the Dairy Waste Cost Share allocations and to adopt the list
146 of farmers eligible for cost share.

147 **W (Wallace) P (Prinsen) passed a motion to approve the Dairy Waste Cost Share allocation**
148 **list.**

149 Niccolls mentioned that there was a new website for Earthconnect.net that he thought board
150 members might be interested in. The organization, of which Niccolls is the executive director,
151 wants to give farmers the ability to use the Internet to better market their products, communicate
152 with government and get environmental data.

153 Sullivan asked if the format of the monthly staff reports could be changed so as to emphasize the
154 highlights of what was accomplished by each employee. B. Reed responded that the reports are
155 based upon the workplan goals and show how the employees' activities are meeting those goals.
156 Further, the reports are used to create the quarterly and annual reports of accomplishments. A
157 discussion ensued and Sullivan asked for more description of the employee activities on the
158 reports. Clark asked if the reports were beneficial, and G. and B. Reed said they were. Prinsen
159 asked if the information was adequate for the Commission and Clark responded that it was way
160 too much information, and the Commission wants more meaningful info. Prinsen said that our
161 past problems with accountability require that we give the King County Council these types of
162 reports. A discussion ensued regarding the nature of accomplishment reports. One of the former
163 managers used to give a highlights report, and G. Reed considered compiling a "week in review"
164 (or month) for the board. Sullivan said to try it, and G. Reed said he would.

165 Sullivan distributed an article about a conservation district back east dealing with the issues of
166 increasing urbanization in their service area by providing BMP classes for developers. She wants
167 to start a dialog on what we can do as a conservation district in an urban county. Prinsen asked
168 how much resource should be used on this question, should someone be hired to address it?

169 Discussion ensued regarding the focus of the District. Clark asked when was the last time the
170 board had a retreat to discuss a long-range plan. G. Reed said he'd been working on a long range
171 planning document. Niccolls suggested putting the item on the agenda for the next meeting.

172 Sullivan and Prinsen had a discussion about how they could make the non-competitive grant
173 review sub-committee work more efficiently, as they were having trouble meeting. They agreed
174 to disband for now.

175 Prinsen mentioned that he went to the WRIA 9 meeting that discussed their budget and money
176 issues. 3 cities in the WRIA are not in the Conservation District. Federal Way walked out of the
177 meeting. B. Reed asked if they talked about cities releasing their unused assessment funds to the
178 watershed forums. Prinsen said the meetings are getting sparse, and B. Reed said that WRIA 9
179 tends to wear people out.

180 Clark wanted to remind the board regarding use of the composite rate, that vacation and sick
181 leave are not to be charged to a grant if the composite rate is used for billing. He also mentioned
182 that information regarding salaries at Districts is public information and must be given when
183 requested. Also, our documents are public and federal rules don't apply unless the document is a
184 joint CD/ NRCS product. Clark said that district employees would need to fill out any forms
185 necessary and provide the document within 5 business days.

186 **W (Wallace) P (Prinsen) passed a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:37pm.**

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190 _____
Authorized Signature

_____ Date

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Summary of Motions

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