



# Luckiamute Watershed Council Board Meeting Minutes

**May 12, 2022**

Via Zoom. Minutes by Maya Cook.

## **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Jackson Stalley.

## **Introductions:**

Board Members: George Grosch, Jackson Stalley, David Ehlers, Scott Youngblood, Karin Stutzman, Britton Castor, Jay Tappen, Nick Hazelton

Staff: Kristen Larson

Public Guests: Maya Cook

## **Approval of Minutes:**

***Jackson Stalley***

The April 14, 2022 minutes were distributed prior to the meeting (*Attachment A*).

- *The Board approved the April 14, 2022 meeting minutes unanimously.*

**Committee Announcements:** Reminder to attend 20<sup>th</sup>(+1) Anniversary celebration at Emerson Vineyards

**Public Comments:** n/a

## **Mission Moments:**

- Karin:
  - Has 7 new calves & spring upland prairie ecosystem is in full bloom at her farm – visits welcome.
  - Started new job at ODA as the Soil & Water Conservation District Lead for the state. Attending Watershed Council meetings is part of her job now & can stay on the Board to maintain partnerships. Happy to help with ODA and/or state-level SWC commission collaborations or concerns to achieve Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds (OPSW) goals & bringing watershed voices to the table.
  - Be careful of contagious avian flu in the valley. Keep domestic flocks close. If you see a wildfowl lying down dead/dying, contact ODFW - wild ducks, geese, and turkey are spreading virus via droppings.
- Dave: seeing a pair of bald eagles on 2 old-growth 80-100 y.o. trees with dead tops, maybe they're nesting?
- Kristen:
  - 110 RSVP's for the celebration event!!
  - Amanda starts temp. monitoring deployments tomorrow, just completed her masters thesis.
  - Contacted by Reser Family Foundation for site visit. We applied last year & didn't make the cut; this year there were 87 applicants & 13 site visits. RFF funds a variety of programs - not all 13 will be funded. They're looking at continuing work on Ash Creek, but asked if there are other projects we're working on (LOL yes, SO many!). Very proud of the good work we do here & it was nice to brag.
- Britton: member of the Polk Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), who recently met in person & set goals for upcoming year. Their community education goals have a lot of overlap with ours e.g., foraging class, fire mitigation, etc., so it could be good to collaborate on some events & build watershed awareness.
- Jackson lives near Ash Creek & whole flocks of Western Tanagers up & down Ash & Rickreall Creeks. Speaks to a healthy watershed. George seeing tons of Grosbeaks this year. Bird Walk RSVP closed within 48 hours! Birds currently migrating up the Willamette River & there's neat research going trying to verify migratory routes.

**Executive Committee**

***George Grosch, President***



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Sent out 4-page Annual Report for review. Ready to print, but open for corrections & comments ASAP. Going to printer tomorrow for physical copy at Saturday's event to help with conversations. Digital changes can be made on the website later.

- Major changes to layout can wait until next year's edition. Feedback welcome, staff can incorporate into future reports.
- Officers & staff listed in alphabetical order, in order to further the goal of flattening the organization.
- Volunteers & Donors list have expanded massively over time. Will probably have to go to 6 pages next year.

No changes for Suzanne raised at this time.

George nominated Jay Tappen & Nick Hazelton to the Board for 3-year terms, to no objections. **Jay Tappen and Nick Hazelton elected to the Board by consensus.** Welcome to both!

- Kristen will schedule onboarding & committee assignments for after the anniversary event.

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Discussion & Follow-up after 3<sup>rd</sup> Training

*Jackson Stalley*

It takes a while to gather thoughts to share, but let's discuss it. The training isn't the end of the road for the EDI initiative, it's the beginning of a never-ending process. We need to address & confront prejudices & assumptions we grew up with that were invisible & natural to our world. It can be difficult for each of us to see or even know what assumptions should be challenged. Reflecting on what we learned, felt, & thought about things that made us feel uncomfortable and/or made us want to learn more.

- Jackson has been through 3 separate trainings in the past 18 months. This one was particularly interesting & effective. As university employee, able to engage with a lot of diverse faculty & students, and they are mostly very patient and willing to share as long as he's willing to learn and grow even if he's not perfect at keeping up.
- Karin feels behind the 8-ball - not in a bad way as in a lot of catching up to do, but the landscape has changed so much so fast (acronyms, abbreviations, etc.), it's hard to have to bandwidth to keep up even as it's important to try anyway to be aware of what is going on with others.
- George is really enjoying the experience & appreciates level of participation, particularly on zoom, which can make it harder to feel safe. Big takeaway is to not only be aware of internal biases, but also whose voice is not at the table and not to make assumptions about those perspectives. More experience in LGBTQAI community, so it's a different angle & new processes to challenge me to do better & make changes. We're starting to attract people, which is great, but it means we have to have an environment that is welcoming to everyone. Looking forward to making that happen.
- Kristen: reminder of 3<sup>rd</sup> page of packet has group agreements adapted from Center for Diversity & Environment training. Board adopted in fall 2021. This is a safe place to talk about these things, but when things get sticky, tense, and/or uncomfortable, we know where to look for guidance vis good intentions, raggedness, corrections, etc.
- Karin: reviewing the MOA between OWEB & ODA re implementing capacity grants. Soil & Water Conservation Commission meets with group of advisors every quarter, but where is BIPOC representation? If we come across professional groups that would be willing to act as advisors for programming for councils and/or districts beyond the usual set of first thoughts, please say so.
- Jackson: Why is it important for us to think about EDI? If we're having trouble answering why we're doing this work, that says something about who we are as an organization. If we don't have trouble answering it, that can be the basis for our statement and the foundation of our internal compass for consistency.
- George: the challenge is, how do we develop a statement without the people we're developing it for at the table? So we state our intention to the community that we serve that we acknowledge that people



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have been excluded, and we want to be welcoming. Statement will evolve over time as we do, & hopefully we'll continue to build this out at Executive Committee (EC) and elsewhere.

- Jackson: healthy watershed ecosystem is a very appropriate & clever metaphor to allude to in our statement that helps maintain focus on watershed. Environmental degradation impacts marginalized communities most. Put on agenda for EC to ok process. Options:
  - 1) direct staff to develop draft EDI statement & report back to board
  - 2) form ad hoc committee of staff & board to create statement. Britton & George volunteered.
  - 3) staff drafts statement, submits to ad-hoc committee to revise draft & report back to full board
- Emily Plec has volunteered to assist (WOU Env. Communications Professor)

### Finance Committee

*George Grosch*

March 2022 Financial Report, *Attachment C*

- ¼ of the way through the year, 0% income yet. No concerns, funding is coming & we're 100% budgeted. We've only spent 14% of projected expenses, so we're in great shape.

Allocate additional funds to grow Operating Reserve, *ACTION ITEM, Attachments D, E*

**Proposed Action:** Add \$25,000 to the Operating Reserve, for \$55,000 total (approx. 3 months of funds). →

No objections. **Approved by consensus.**

- Raising incrementally, may seek to increase to \$70,000 at the end of the year. Should include rent, payroll, & other closing up costs plus possible lawyer costs & other potential dissolution expenses in case of dire situations. Release by policy process.
- Currently over insured limit in cash accounts. So once amount approved, Kristen will move it to 12-month CD, which will be separately insured. If we need to liquidate, there will be some fees associated.

### Fundraising Committee

*Kristen Larson*

- Main thing now is the anniversary celebration, which is not a formal fundraising event, though there will be opportunities to donate via PayPal QR code, slips, raffle, & merch. Reviewing setup, events, etc.
  - Board will be representing LWC via nametags, t-shirts not required.
  - All event revenue via raffles/donations/etc. will be unrestricted to help recoup costs.
- Love Your Watershed campaign (in its 4<sup>th</sup> year) is currently in the "quiet phase," which is when we gather seed money. For the public phase we should already be at 50-70% of goal. We're seeding with a combination of grants: Benton SWCD, Willamette Habitat Restoration Fund. Pre-COVID we did a small event, but we've done mailings to major donors (\$250+/calendar year). Small response so far, but we'll send another reminder. Public launch is May 23. Last year we made our \$18,000 goal - but only because we didn't make our goal & put out an appeal & we got a few big donations to put us over.
  - Community Outreach & Engagement programming - LYW, bird walks, Sips n Science, tours, workshops, etc. - is a low-key way to get people learning & connected & empowered to get involved, which is definitely good, but also leads to donations that cover things we can't fund with grant money.
  - We stopped planning in-person events more than 2 months out because of COVID, but we'd love to have some in-person or hybrid/real-time streaming LYW events this year. Outdoor summer stuff will be in person, though. It would also be good to have recordings of events for later viewing.

### Executive Director Update

*Kristen Larson, Executive Director*

Nothing to add from report (*Attachment G*) except that an Operations Coordinator – Maya Cook – has been hired. Maya starts on May 17.



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- Question for Scott about OSU/USFWS letter of support request mentioned in last meeting. They were putting together a large monitoring proposal for OWEB. Did not do letter because budget was too big, & by the time it was reduced there was no time to evaluate & write letter, so we did not. Thoughts?
  - Scott passed off to Sara, but only concern was how late they requested. Kristen was concerned about it taking all the money from everyone else, because \$750k is all the monitoring funding for the Willamette region for whole biennium.
    - Our process to decide what to support or not: ideally, Kristen will run by the Board for approval if there's time. If not, she includes the letter in the packet for review & generally the board trusts her judgment to understand impact to the organization and connection to the LWC's mission.
    - In this case, she wasn't comfortable that she was informed enough. Also, while plenty of letter of support requests come in last minute, it's pretty unheard-of to not even approach landowners to share information about the project until the last minute.
- Kristen shared a presentation on the 2/25/2022 team retreat at J2E (see *Attachment F*).
  - George asked about the Oregon Conservation Strategy. Its language informs our restoration goals.
  - Future meeting: how to incorporate human element into projects, landowner relationships, and communities in general? Ties into EDI work & resiliency.
  - Future meeting: later this summer talk about landowner stewardship guide & resulting PRC conversation about management plan.
  - Next year's team retreat vision: deeper education & planning

George: what is Board's opinion about incorporating climate adaptation? Should we also discuss assumptions about future conditions in restoration & enhancement plans?

- Karin: current Governor is pushing Climate Smart Objectives toward resiliency & OWEB is incorporating those questions into grant application. ODA is asked to add to capacity grants. So big on the radar now, but we'll see what happens after elections.
- OWEB's [Climate Related Technical Resources](#) document has some modeling links that could help us, but it's also an incredibly complex topic - can it be used to measure outcomes? What's the best way for us to use information to create efficiencies & develop better criteria for evaluating our work?
- Trees are already dying back at lower elevation. Recent Sips 'n' Science on assisted migration discussed data that shows ranges already moving.
- Britton still seeing a lot of taboo about climate change discussion in her circles (work / community).
- Karin: can we talk to our growers to see if they're changing their stocks, or is it just demand-driven?
- Karin: Commission groups are studying climate change to offer assistance to orgs like us implementing projects on the ground. Still in infancy (last 2-3 years) so ongoing conversation.
  - OACD working on a climate-smart hub for resources on crafting future grants. May be other helpful resources.
- Future Topic: More education on climate change models, what do they mean etc. Also Watershed communities' practices for evaluating restoration success or failure & what we learn from it.
- Dave recommends Doug Tallamy presentation YouTube program "[Nature's Best Hope](#): the little things that run the world" about disappearance of insect & bird populations. Suggests that everyone who has outdoor access should provide native habitat, on decks and balconies and yards to support. We could work on local urban conversion projects.