

Tenmile *draft* meeting minutes – Sep 13, 2017

Attendees: Bob M, Alan C, Hank K, Naomi M, Andy R, Debbie V, Shane V, Dick C, Dorie B

Past meeting minutes were approved as drafted. No additions were proposed to tonight's agenda.

Announcements:

- There will be no September subgroup meeting.
- **Water Week** begins Sep16 for 10 days; see www.whatcomwaterweeks.org for the complete lineup, including info meetings like [*Baker to Bay Symposium*](#), a film festival, food & [*Seafeast*](#), tours & field trips, family fun – and more!

Meeting Notes

As in August, this was already planned as a “business” meeting, so again these notes will include a summary of a few other subjects; then an update to the latest draft of the [*Grant Proposal Outline*](#), which was approved with minor changes in this meeting (final version attached.)

Water Quality:

We reviewed the latest version of the County's standard format summary report, including data up through August (attached.) All Tenmile sample points continue a 12mo trend down, with a couple exceptions on Deer Creek. All results continued typically low & stable for summer months. The glaring & notable exception in recent data is the DC1 Deer Creek sample in August. (1582 FC/100ml) This continues a pattern of occasional spikes at DC1, so we had considerable discussion of possible causes, with no resolution. In particular, this will be an obvious target for a planned future effort to discipline our case-study of specific areas, with documentation, bracketing and mitigation.

Laurel WID meeting: Andy, Hank & Debbie attended the WID meeting and could comment on those discussions. *These highlights may include some not mentioned at our meeting:*

- Jason VanderVeen was present to request WID contribution to the **Drainage District #3** (Fourmile) project to clear willows from the creek and restore with appropriate buffer plants. He emphasized cost estimating is very rough due to complex & multiple variables; starting cost is ~ \$30k; the WID is considering a \$10k contribution; our project budget has a placeholder for a small contribution. Work will begin before month-end. WID discussion ranged broadly to consider their budget, assessment level & various ideas about how drainage costs should be shared with the District, where some landowners are now arguably assessed by both entities for the same category of work.
- The **annual farmer rally** will be on November 2; details TBA.
- Aneka handed out the schedule for the **WCD speaker series** this year (attached.)
- Bertrand WID is preparing to begin **augmenting creek instream flow** from groundwater, after years of addressing issues & obtaining permits.

- The **Scott ditch DNA profiling pilot project** is underway; cost estimated ~ \$18k, funded by WIDs and hopefully some grant money.
- Aneka & Fred **reported on ZAPS**: the Fishtrap analyzer is tracking very well, while the PUD location is still spiking; most involved believe Fishtrap's clearer water explains its reliability; focus is on the issue of turbidity at the PUD location with ideas for fixing it. Installation is proceeding with the other two Lynden area sites. The landowner has denied access for the only identified Tenmile location so that plan is on hold.
- We heard mixed reports on **Portage Bay Partnership** progress: bumpy road but benefit of relationships means parties are still talking.
- Two **WID board positions** are open for nomination & election by WID members. Rich Appel & Mike Boxx were nominated by fellow board members to continue in their current roles.

Unfinished Business, not addressed in this meeting:

We have not yet planned a program or agenda for our **October meeting**. Hank will coordinate email discussion to address this. The following other unfinished business argues for another business meeting. However, we could also plan a subgroup meeting for these items, and opt for an October program for the membership. Stay tuned.

Similarly, we did not discuss the **Charter amendments** draft circulated after the July meeting (a “replacement” option with much new language.) This will be a high priority after our grant application is submitted, so we have a clear governance path as we begin the project.

And finally, we have not allowed discussion time for the idea of establishing an **annual meeting schedule** that incorporates speakers & programs; business meetings; and seasonal variations in focus & interest. As we are now into another seasonal cycle, with new focus to our work, this should have high priority also.

Draft project & grant proposal:

As stated in the published agenda, the outline for our application to the Community Foundation (**draft version 6!**) was proposed for approval at this meeting.

All of the page one text was accepted as written. Discussion included:

- Objective #4, “build a sustainable organization...” – is this realistic for an all volunteer group, or will some level of paid staff always be necessary? Conceding this is a challenge, the group was persuaded to leave the phrase “without paid staff” unchanged, as a worthy aspiration to drive our work, even if we find it unattainable.
- NSEA’s role as fiscal sponsor; explanation of that role was requested and given. Did we consider other org’s for that role? Yes (a list of ~6-8) but did not go far on the list when NSEA agreed and was considered a good partner. What about the WCD as an option? Due to constraints with both the CD budget and decision process, which we learned about when inquiring about hosting our web site, we chose not to pursue this larger commitment, assuming the same circumstances. Did we consider the Farm Bureau? No,

but wish we had at least inquired, for a number of reasons. Such oversights are a regrettable part of volunteer orgs and a reason to broaden participation for more ideas!

We then spent time considering the outlined budget. Hank described two recent developments requiring discussion:

1. Clarification from NSEA that the **5% overhead cost** is based on one year's administration; a longer term would raise that cost. Based on that, the 2 year project is now framed as a "year one" that is fully funded by the application amount of \$52k, thus retaining the 5% rate. Year two will require additional funding, and thus activity in year one to seek & obtain those funds (adding a task for the Coordinator.)
Hank recommended budget details that conform to this approach, and these were accepted by the group (now incorporated in the attachment.)
2. Explanation of the **Drainage District #3 project** described in the WID report above, and consideration of whether our project will contribute to that one, with a share of our grant funds. Points discussed included technical details about the work; how closely that aligns with both our organization goals & the stated project goals; the complete independence we have to choose both amount & timing for a contribution; how much drainage maintenance actually contributes to water quality; and how this work relates to fund-source issues raised at our spring Stakeholder conference. In the end we agreed to keep the \$3000 "placeholder" amount in the budget and revisit the question later, persuaded by one member's statement that this can be seen as *"commitment to community involvement as envisioned in our grant project."*

Other discussion points:

- A member suggested "grant writing" as a budget detail may not be viewed favorably by grant reviewers. The detail has been deleted, with extra time & funding added to the Coordinator contract, anticipating this work.
- Another suggestion has also been adopted: make dollar-value estimates for donated time or materials, to quantify for grant reviewers the support we receive from other sources.

This significant addition to the Minutes addresses an oversight in first draft; this is written for "version 2" of these Minutes, for subsequent approval by members who were present at this meeting (Oct 11, 2017.) As already noted on page 2 of these minutes, comments refer to version 6 of the grant outline, which included this statement regarding the Coordinator position:

"Long-time TCWP member Andy Ross has agreed to serve in this role (approximately half-time), if approved by the membership."

Following is a summary of discussion on this point:

What is the best course for designating someone to fill the Coordinator role? Some members advocate for an open & transparent selection process, seeking an unassailable outcome with high integrity, and the possibility (however slight) of finding a 'better' candidate. Others present are comfortable with an internal consensus process, citing partner agreement, an excellent internal candidate and the utility of a low-cost & quick

process amidst circumstances that drive urgency. NSEA & WCF both express no advice, preference or requirement, and so would easily accept the latter.

In a consensus decision, the members agreed to the internal process, which would proceed in purpose & timing roughly as follows: await approval of our grant application; draft a written job description for review & approval by the subgroup; with NSEA, create a draft contract for a self-employed candidate for the one year period of our grant.

The subgroup will then reconsider the proposition of designating the internal candidate based on that job description, while the candidate can make a final decision of interest based on the proposed contract. Assuming agreement is reached among all parties, and is consistent with the stated intent of these Minutes, the selection can be finalized and the contract executed. If the subgroup deems it necessary, the decision will be returned to the membership.

After discussion and changes accepted as described, the outline was approved unanimously by members present.

Next Steps:

We are in an excellent position to now process our application by month-end or soon thereafter. **Hank** will be facilitating that process with **Lee's** help, working with **Rachel** at NSEA (who actually submits) and **Pamela** at Whatcom Community Foundation. Note was taken once again of the potential need for our flexibility and creativity in composing the application, consistent with our outline. Any questions that may stray from that trust will be returned to members for consideration.

Other tasks:

- **Hank** will distribute a **copy of our application** to subgroup [inserted in version 2 of these minutes] members before final submission (as requested in this meeting.)
- **Hank & Andy** will draft & circulate a **"Coordinator" job description** for member review. Understanding this will be our "best attempt" based on a rough outline of work, and that circumstances will likely require flexibility and adjustment, we are seeking a form that is suitable for getting work started. That said, this will be the basis for Andy to make a decision whether to accept the position.
- First priority for the **Coordinator** will be **drafting a project plan** with priorities to direct our work. Hopefully we will spend time at our next meeting discussing that draft.

Attachments:

Grant Proposal Outline (updated & approved at this meeting.)
Water Quality data summary
WCD Speaker Series schedule

Next meeting is Wednesday Oct 11, 2017.