

Ag Water Board

Minutes of Regular Meeting December 15, 2021, 1 pm

Ag Water Board office, 204 Hawley Street, Lynden

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89307307056?pwd=VFpJRnNNTTE56RzdUaEhUQUZXSjVXdz09>

Meeting ID: 893 0730 7056 Passcode: 499137

<u>AWB Board:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Andy Enfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Marty Maberry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brad Rader
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Boxx	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeff De Jong	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greg Ebe
<u>Alternates:</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vern Vande Garde	<input type="checkbox"/> Terry Lenssen	<input type="checkbox"/> Scott Bedlington
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rich Appel	<input type="checkbox"/> Landon Van Dyk	<input type="checkbox"/> Rod Tjoelker
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jon Maberry	<input type="checkbox"/> Kevin Te Velde	<input type="checkbox"/> Keith Boon
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rod Vande Hoef	<input type="checkbox"/> Rolf Haugen	<input type="checkbox"/> Larry Stap
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ed Blok	<input type="checkbox"/> Pete Vlas	<input type="checkbox"/> Harmon Brar
<u>Others:</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fred Likkel	<input type="checkbox"/> Chris Elder	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Henry Bierlink
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bill Clarke	<input type="checkbox"/> David Haggith	<input type="checkbox"/> Steve Jilk
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gary Stoyka	<input type="checkbox"/> Paula Harris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dillon Honcoop
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jay Chennault	<input type="checkbox"/> Atul Deshmane	<input type="checkbox"/> Corina Cheever
	<input type="checkbox"/> Alex Jeffers	<input type="checkbox"/> Megan Evans	<input type="checkbox"/> Val Davis
	<input type="checkbox"/> Kelly Hamilton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

x = present o = absent with notice t = teleconference

- I. Minutes - Review & Approve – September 20, 2021

Greg moved to approve the minutes including the corrected AWB budget table, Mike seconded, motion carried unanimously.
- II. Financial/Administrative
 - A. Financial Reports – Henry reviewed the balance sheet and noted the Legal Reserve account was being used to fund water right analysis work with AESI. Greg moved to approve the financial report, Mike seconded, motion carried unanimously.
 - B. Contracts – from Legal Reserve Fund
 - AESI - \$27,040 for WID support, water rights list, gw/sw investigation, and project list - Mike moved to approve this contract, Greg seconded, motion carried unanimously.
 - Reichhardt & Ebe – surface to ground conversion cost estimates for 10+ farms - \$20,000 - Jeff moved to approve this contract, Mike seconded, motion carried unanimously.
 - Fred noted that WFF had been invoiced by attorney’s Ramsey and Paul for consultations with the AWB Water Supply Committee. The Board agreed these would properly be AWB expenses.
- III. Water Quantity/Supply
 - A. Bill Clarke report – Bill addressed the discussion with attorneys Ramsey Kropf and Paul Simmons who have extensive adjudication experience in western states. They are also experienced with federal water settlement agreements. They are preparing a draft scope of work for AWB with a range of options and costs. AWB intends to use this firm to provide educational and informational materials for the AWB and state water right holders based on their experience in other water right adjudications, and how adjudication issues can be addressed through the federal settlement process. These efforts are understood to be educational, transparent,

and publically available and to support, and not detract from, any legal work done to support farmers' individual water rights. The AWB will also be contacting firms with expertise in federal issues and appropriations, to assess opportunities for federal project funding.

- B. 2022 Legislative Session – Bill does not expect significant water legislation. The main focus will be on Ecology's draft budget and its request for adjudication funding in 2023. The board remains extremely disappointed with Ecology's singular focus on adjudication in the Nooksack ignoring all other solutions which are much more promising for fish, farms and the community. Efforts to educate legislators as to Ecology's careless and community damaging position will be a high priority.
- C. Solutions Table – Gary reported the contract with Jay M and Maia B is in place and efforts to begin the Solutions Table are underway with an expectation of beginning in January/February. The expectation is that the main table will be limited to a small group.
- D. AESI support – contracts were approved for continued support for:
 - Water rights list for each WID
 - Project list for both WIDs and AWB
 - Proposed Scope of Work and Budget for an analysis of how all ag use during low flow times could be offset or mitigated
- E. Project List – Henry asked if the project list developed this fall could be made public. Instructions from the Board have been to keep it private until we improved the costs estimates and had dialogue with the Tribes about mutual concerns. It was decided to strip the cost estimates from the public list and check with the wisdom of releasing it with the Solutions Table consultants.
- F. Drainage Based Management – Chris noted the recent meetings of the DBM team which included:
 - South Fork Targets and Actions Workshop – storage was often mentioned.
 - Seeking agreement of overlap of projects in January
 - Workshop in Drayton and Bertrand in first QTR 2022
- G. Streamflow Restoration Grant application – surface to ground conversions, gw model testing – grant is due February 1st – Henry, Jay, and Dale are preparing the application on behalf of AWB

IV. Water Quality/Drainage/Flood

- A. Implications of recent flooding on water policy. - Recent WID meetings considered the question of "what can the WIDs do to help?" This led to extended discussions of both the immediate response and the need and plan for long-term water management changes. Fred has been extremely busy in the emergency response. He commended the County EMS response headed by Sheriff Department appointee Wallace Kost. The discussion has now shifted from EMS to Public Works as the emergency efforts are minimized and long-term response planning and actions must take precedence. The WIDs recognized the need for sediment management in the river but also recognized this is just one tool, must be done in conjunction with other management tools, and is not helpful to be the prime argument from ag on priority management changes. Upland storage of some nature seems to be a priority for both flood management and summer low flow issues. Telling the full story of the impacts of this flood and the need to address long-term management changes caused the Sumas WID to allocate \$10k to identify needed actions to

alleviate flood damage and improve water management. The SWID intends to begin building support for this work by collecting images and stories to support a media presentation to advance these goals. And seek partnerships with local cities, Abbotsford, BC farmers, and the Watershed Management Board to further this effort. The South Lynden WID agreed and plans to contribute to the effort in January. Leadership in this effort will be key.

- B. Manure Transport – Corina and Fred called attention to funding that could assist farmers in moving manure/dirty water to alternative storage.

V. Communication/Education

- A. Media Relations report – Fred noted 19k visits on the WFF page.
- B. REAL campaign – many successes, Jeff commended WFF for the school education program at the NW Fair facility.
- C. AWB flyer draft – a draft of the flyer explaining what AWB has done and plans to be doing was reviewed. The board was urged to continue to suggest edits. The plan will be to send this, along with a brief cover letter, to all WID property owners in early February.
- D. Family Farmers Rally – February

VI. New Business

- A. Atul announced that Steve Jilk will be transitioning from General Manager to a consultant helping the new Manager with transitioning and ongoing water issues for the foreseeable future. This will occur February 1st. A reception honoring Steve’s service is being planned after the January 25th PUD Board meeting. Likely around 11am. Farmers are encouraged to attend.

VII. Adjournment - Next Meetings

Brad adjourned the meeting at 2:35. Next meeting is March 16.

Respectfully submitted by Henry Bierlink, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____