



P O Box 95 Monument, OR 97864

MEETING MINUTES

December 04, 2026

Monument Senior Center

Monthly Board Meeting

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 4:59 PM by Andy Watkins

Board of Directors in attendance – Lisa Atkin, Andy Watkins, Brain Campbell, Jim Bahrenburg (arrived late 05:10) and Jeff Thomas (via phone),

Associate Directors in attendance – None in attendance.

Staff – Erik Rook (District Manager) and Emily Schmidt (Project Manager).

GUEST LIST: John Volle, Maria Snodgrass (ODA)

District Minutes:

A motion was made by Lisa Atkin to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2023 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Andy Watkins. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

AGENCY/ORGANIZATION REPORTS

ODA: ODA: Mara Snodgrass announces personal changes at ODA. The organization has hired a new Ag Water Quality Manager, Kevin Fenn, an internal hire with experience at ODA. Mara expresses confidence that he will be a good fit. Additionally, ODA has hired a new Director, Lisa Hanson, a former ODA employee returning to the organization.

There are New AQ water quality grant funds covering work related to the Willamette Basin Mercury Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Furthermore, the Bureau of Reclamation, under the WaterSMART initiative, is addressing high nitrite levels in the Lower Umatilla. The primary goal of this effort is to enhance irrigated agriculture and prevent the leaching of nitrates into groundwater.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No Comment provided

DISTRICT BUSINESS

1. District Manager Report: Erik Rook provided an update on current projects. A copy of the detailed report is available at the MSWCD office. Erik informed the board of the change in auditor associated with Barnett and Moro. ODA. The board agreed with the direction the district was headed in regards to funding the weed program. Erik provided the .

2. Financial Report: Erik Rook, filling in for Todd Hoodenpyl, presented the Monthly Fiscal report along with supporting documents. The Board has opted to wait to pass motion to approve report until Todd's return.

3. Project Report: Emily Schmidt provided the Board with an update on projects that staff have worked on throughout the last month.

OLD BUSINESS

Annual Meeting-

Erik Rook asked the board about the speaker or subjects they would like to cover during the annual meeting. The board highlighted the significance of addressing issues related to forest and wildfire prevention, as well as water scarcity. Suggestions for potential speakers included a stewardship forester and a forest hydrologist.

Additionally, it was proposed to invite partners such as JDPP (John Day Basin Partnership), CTWS, and NFJWC to provide brief 5-minute presentations. The meeting would be structured to allow for questions, with the option for attendees to submit questions in advance to ensure the panel is well-prepared.

NEW BUSINESS

MSWCD Weather Station:

MSWCD Weather Station: The new Campbell Scientific weather station is now live! It records various data, including current temperature, daily wind speed, percent humidity, barometric pressure, monthly rain, and today's rain. The station will be added to the website and eventually connected to the NOAA weather station. The new location in the field, instead of the asphalt parking lot, should improve accuracy

Review Personal Policy – Sick Leave

Erik Rook proposed adding 40 hours of sick leave to the policy to encourage employees to take sick time and avoid spreading illness in the office. The current policy includes Paid Time Off (PTO), but there is no specific allocation for sick time. The proposed 40 hours of sick leave could not be carried over and would expire each year, without the option to be cashed out.

Lisa mentioned Oregon State law regarding sick time, prompting the decision to review the policy further before proceeding with any changes in the process.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 4:47 pm

MEETINGS: Next MSWCD board meeting to be held at the Monument Senior Center on January 08, 2024 at 5pm.

Approved by:

Chairman/Vice Chairman

Date

Recorded and submitted by

Date

Definitions

MSWCD: Monument Soil and Water Conservation District

NRCS: Natural Resources Conservation Service

NFJDWC: North Fork John Day Watershed Council

OWEB: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

ODA: Oregon Department of Agriculture

SIA: Strategic Implementation Area

AG: Agricultural

CTWS: Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

BLM: Bureau of Land Management

ODF: Oregon Department of Forestry

ODFW: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife