Okanogan Conservation District
1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102 Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: June 23, 2026; Special Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: Okanogan Conservation District Office, Okanogan, WA and Remotely via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference
FROM: Natalie Torres, Administrative Specialist

PRESENT:
Lorah Super, Chair
Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair
Steve Colvin, Supervisor
Phil Dart, Supervisor
Michelle Martin, Supervisor
Ivan Oberg, Associate Supervisor
Craig Nelson, Executive Director
Natalie Torres, Administrative Specialist
Eli Loftis, Forests & Wildfire Lead
Thomas Lecicester, Range Planner
Celeste Acord, NRCS
Scott Noble, SCC

Meeting Call to Order: Steve Colvin called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM. He completed a roll call of Supervisors, Associate Supervisors, staff, partners, and the public.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes: May minutes were not reviewed or approved during the July Special Board Meeting.

Treasurer's Report #877, which covers the checking account activity from May 1, 2026, to May 31, 2026, inclusive, was presented for the Board's approval. The following checks/payroll/direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

The payroll deposits for this period include two direct deposits: one covering May 1-15, 2026, in the amount of $34,472.24, and another for May 16-31, 2026, totaling $31,307.47. The combined total of payroll deposits is $65,779.71.
Payroll deductions for this period amount to $40,698.63. The HCA payment check (13134) totaled $16,592.56. Altogether, the total payroll-related transactions for this period amount to $123,070.90.

Checks issued during this timeframe include numbers 13135 through 13161. The total claims for checks amount to $89,836.10. Additionally, EFT debits, general ledger adjustments, and credit card payments total $308,097.11. The combined total of claims paid or processed is $397,933.21.

Outstanding expenses remaining total $103,743.71.

The beginning balance of the checking account was $228,544.33. During this period, deposits totaling $554,584.57 were made, and reconciled withdrawals amounted to $478,837.38. After accounting for all transactions, the ending balance in the checking account is $304,291.52.

Craig Nelson presented the Treasurer's Report #877. Lorah Super moved to approve Treasurer's Report #877. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans:

Work Order 2026-01: Okanogan Wildfire Ready Home visits – Jordana shared with the board that the Okanogan Conservation District and the City of Okanogan are partnering to reduce wildfire risk and strengthen community wildfire resilience. This work is funded by the Washington Department of Natural Resources through the Okanogan Conservation District and is carried out under Interlocal Agreement #2026-OCD OK, executed on May 12, 2026. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve Work Order 2026-01 under the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Okanogan. Lorah Super seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Work Order 2026-02: Okanogan CD Equipment Storage – Jordana informed the board that the Okanogan Conservation District and the City of Okanogan are working collaboratively to reduce wildfire risk and improve community wildfire resilience. On May 12, 2026, the parties entered into Interlocal Agreement #2026-OCD OK to support these shared conservation efforts. Work Order 2026-02 authorizes the Okanogan Conservation District to store its large wood chipper at the City Shop at no cost, providing a mutual public benefit by supporting wildfire mitigation and community resilience efforts. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve Work Order 2026-02 under the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Okanogan. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Gebbers Wildlife Friendly Fence – Thomas briefed the Board on the proposed Gamble Land & Timber Ltd. fencing project. The property, managed by the Gebbers family, was impacted by the 2014 Carlton Complex Fire, leaving damaged fencing that poses entanglement risks to both wildlife and livestock. The project will remove hazardous fencing and install approximately six miles of wildlife-friendly fence to improve habitat connectivity for mule deer, moose, and elk while supporting the property's rotational grazing operation. Improved grazing distribution is expected to enhance plant diversity, rangeland health, and livestock performance. The project is funded through the Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WSRRI), which requires a 100% cost share. The total estimated project cost, including the required match, is $215,000, with all work to be completed by June 30, 2027. Lorah Super moved to authorize the Executive Directo to sign the land-owner cost-share agreement with Gamble Land and Timber Ltd once it is ready for signature. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Water Bank Update – Jordana provided an update on the Water Bank program. She reported that the first acquisition is nearing completion and remains in the third-party appeal period, which ends July 21. Although the acquisition paperwork is ready for submission, the Department of Ecology has indicated it will not begin processing until the appeal period concludes on July 22. Staff have completed all eight grant prerequisites and are working to streamline the process by having required documents reviewed in advance.

Jordana also explained that Ecology does not allow more than one Payment Request and Progress Report (PRPR) to be active under a single grant at the same time. To avoid delays, staff plan to submit a partial quarterly PRPR (excluding June) so it can be processed before the acquisition PRPR is submitted following the close of the appeal period.

Jordana reported that she, along with representatives from Aspect Consulting and Confluence Law, met with Kelsey Collins of the Department of Ecology to advance development of the Master Trust Water Right Agreement, which will govern operation of the Water Bank. The meeting was productive, and Ecology requested an example mitigation allotment template to support completion of the agreement. Confluence Law is preparing that template.

Finally, Jordana discussed a discrepancy involving the BIC acquisition and the associated point of diversion. Conflicting deed language could reduce the Water Bank's service area by approximately 3.5 river miles, affecting roughly 110 parcels, including 25 irrigated agricultural properties. Aspect Consulting has prepared technical justifications, and staff plan to work with Ecology to retain the original primary reach within the Water Bank's service area.

Board Governance:

Decision Matrix – Craig presented the proposed decision matrix, which was previously reviewed by the Board in April and May. The matrix outlines the approval, responsibility, consultation, and notification roles for the District's routine operational and administrative decisions. Its purpose is to provide clarity regarding roles and responsibilities while improving the efficiency and consistency of decision-making.

Craig requested Board feedback on any revisions needed to the assignment of approval, responsibility, consultation, or notification roles. He also asked the Board to determine who should have the authority to amend the matrix in the future. Craig reiterated his recommendation that the Executive Director be authorized to update any portion of the matrix that does not involve the Board or a specific Board position, while any changes affecting Board roles or responsibilities would require approval by the full Board.

Craig also noted that while designated individuals or groups may delegate tasks to staff they supervise, the assigned position or group remains ultimately accountable for ensuring those responsibilities are fulfilled. Lorah Super moved to approve the decision matrix and authorized the Executive Director to make changes to any cell that doesn't list board or a board position and must notify the board at their next meeting. All other modifications require board approval by motion. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Board Committees – Craig presented a draft Board Committee Policy identifying the District's three standing committees—Finance, Personnel, and Legislative. The proposed policy defines the purpose and scope of each committee and specifies who has the authority to call committee meetings. Craig asked the Board to review the draft policy, recommend any desired revisions, and consider adopting it as part of the District's governance policies. Lorah Super moved to approve the proposed Board Committee Policy as amended. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Board Agenda Format – Craig presented two draft Board agenda formats for consideration, both of which incorporate a consent agenda to streamline approval of routine administrative items that typically require little discussion. He explained that this approach would allow more meeting time for substantive discussion without increasing the overall meeting length.

The proposed agendas also move decision-making items earlier in the meeting and place reports toward the end, allowing the Board to address items requiring greater deliberation while members are at their freshest. In addition, both formats include program lead presentations twice each year, providing an opportunity for program leads to update the Board on completed work, current projects, and upcoming priorities.

Phil Dart and Lorah Super had initially motioned for a test trial of option 2 for our upcoming July meeting. Phil Dart moved to approve the proposed agenda Option 1 for the July board meeting. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Finance Reports – Craig emphasized the importance of providing the Board with timely, transparent, and understandable financial information. Staff's goal is to provide the appropriate level of detail to clearly communicate the District's financial position without being overwhelming. Craig requested Board input on priorities for financial reporting and proposed working with the Finance Committee to develop a recommended financial review process and reporting format for consideration at the July Board meeting.

The Board discussed preferences for the monthly financial reports, requesting grant funding timelines, budget-to-actual comparisons, and progress toward financial goals. Steve and Phil expressed support for continuing the allocation spreadsheet, and the Board agreed that detailed financial information should remain in the financial report folder.

New Business:

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Board Positions – Craig reminded the Board that following certification of the annual supervisor election, the Board selects the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Auditor for the upcoming 12-month term at the first Board meeting each year. Jerry Asmussen moved to appoint Lorah Super as Chair, Jerry Asmussen as Vice-Chair, and Steve Colvin as Auditor. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Tree Seed Collection and Propagation – Craig reported that wildfire risk remains high for Okanogan County through the summer and early fall. If severe impacts occur and natural regeneration is insufficient, communities may need resources to support future reforestation efforts.

Craig noted that the current cone seed crop appears strong, presenting an opportunity to collect seed for future propagation. He shared that the District has historically collected seed and partnered with nurseries to grow seedlings for restoration efforts. A potential program could support local reforestation while helping offset costs through the sale of seedlings. Phil Dart moved to authorize staff to enter into the necessary contracts for the collection of tree seeds and propagation of said seeds into seedlings to be offered to the public. Lorah Super seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

IT Intern Employee Approval – Craig reported that the District's IT needs have exceeded current staff capacity due to increased operational complexity and technology demands. While the District explores future IT service options, he requested Board authorization to hire Austin Nelson, a Cybersecurity student, as a summer intern to provide IT support. Craig recommended that Kim Kogler oversee all assignments, supervision, and personnel matters related to the position. Jerry Asmussen moved to authorize Kim Kogler, Operations Director, to hire Austin Nelson as a temporary Internet Technology Intern and have all supervisory authority related to his employment. Michelle Martin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin adjourned the meeting at 7:27 PM.

Summary of Motions

Lorah Super moved to approve Treasurer's Report #877. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve Work Order 2026-01 under the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Okanogan. Lorah Super seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve Work Order 2026-02 under the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Okanogan. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to authorize the Executive Directo to sign the land-owner cost-share agreement with Gamble Land and Timber Ltd once it is ready for signature. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super moved to approve the decision matrix and authorized the Executive Director to make changes to any cell that doesn't list board or a board position and must notify the board at their next meeting. All other modifications require board approval by motion. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

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7/14/26

Lorah Super　　Date
Chair

7.14.26

Natalie Torres　　Date
Administrative Specialist