



Harney County Watershed Council

Meeting Minutes – October 20, 2020
Harney County Community Center & meeting by Zoom
Hines, Oregon

Membership & Attendance:
(those in attendance will be highlighted)

Landowner positions:

Alvord –
Donner und Blitzen – Fred Otley
Guano –
Harney/Malheur Lakes – Joe Witzel
Silvies – **Rachel Beaubien**
Silver Creek – Angie Ketscher
Drewsey – Tyler Harris
Landowner General – **Pat Sharp**
Burns Paiute Tribe – **Brandon Haslick**

Concerned Citizen positions:

Burns/Hines – **Brenda Smith**
At Large – **John Thelen**
General - Mark Owens
Sportsman – **Ben Cate**
Education – Dustin Johnson
Environmental – Alexa Martinez
County Court – Kristen Shelman
Harney SWCD – Shannon Brubacker
BLM – **Jamie McCormack**

Advisory Positions

ODF & W – Dave Banks
Malheur National Wildlife – **Jeff Mackay**
NRCS – Zola Ryan
EOARC – Chad Boyd
OWRD – JR Johnson
USFS -

Staff

Coordinator – Karen Moon,

Guests – Linda Beck

Mission of the Harney County Watershed Council

Local economic and ecological prosperity depends on watershed health and the availability and quality of ground and surface water.

Therefore, the Harney County Watershed Council provides a framework of outreach, coordination and cooperation between private landowners and all interested parties to promote watershed conditions that benefit people and the environment. The Council works to improve watershed health through education, action plans based on scientific assessments and enhancement projects.



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The meeting was called to order at 5:33pm. Chairman Brenda Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the agenda and asked each member to share a short update on what is new in each person's area that they represent.

Each member gave a short update. Chairman Brenda Smith shared a new program to support Harney County Businesses, the website ShopHarney.com. This program offers e-gift cards that can be used at 30 local businesses for your purchases. Thinking about Christmas presents? Check out the website to see all of the offers available!

Continuing project updates/action items

Community Based Water Planning update:

Community-Based Water Planning Updates- July – September 2020

Coordinating Call update was given by Brandon Haslick. Brandon talked about the work the CC is taking on to begin to rank and refine the strategies that have been developed.

Update from Holly Mondo was read by Karen Moon

- Twenty-seven, 33, and 29 people attended the Full Collaborative Zoom meetings on July 29, August 26, and September 23, respectively. During the July meeting, an updated timeline was shared with scheduled deliverables and three strategies were drafted. During the August 26th meeting, participants drafted one of the last two strategies in the workflow, discussed the strategy refinement process, and started conversations on what “reasonably stable” means for the basin. During the September meeting, Collaborative members heard a presentation from Justin Iverson (OWRD) on groundwater statutes and rules and also set goals to work towards throughout fall 2020 which include: 1) complete groundwater management (Phase 1) workflow; 2) continue building/ implementing groundwater management (Phase 1) refinement process; 3) continue discussion regarding managing groundwater levels (*reasonably stable*); 4) hold a consensus event and make a Collaborative decision on the submission of a legislative concept to develop a fund for domestic well users.
- The next Collaborative meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 28th from 4:00-7:30pm. There will be an in-person option at the Community Center as well as an online/call-in option via Zoom.
- Holly Mondo (CBWP Project Manager), Brenda Smith (CBWP Co-convenor), and Ken Bierly (CBWP Technical Consultant) continue to work with communications professional, Ryan Gallagher, to develop community outreach materials based on the draft groundwater plan. This work has bolstered the creation of a new website (harneywaterfuture.com) that will launch on the date of the October meeting. *The website calls for photographs of the basin- if Collaborative members/Watershed Council members are willing to freely share their photographs for such purposes, they will be acknowledged on one of the pages on the website. Please send any photographs to Holly (holly@hcwatershedcouncil.com).*



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- The Ecological Working Group continues to make progress on their Step 2 and 3 drafts. During their July meeting, Holly Mondo (CBWP Project Manager) updated the rough timeline of deliverables to ensure progress lines up with the OWRD grant agreement. The drafters of the Working Group participated in an “accountability call” on September 8th at 10am. (These calls are meant for drafters to come together to discuss where they are in terms of progress for their respective drafts). The EWG met again on October 7th where their timeline of deliverables was updated again. The next accountability call is scheduled for November 12th from 10am-12pm. Drafters are hoping to have their documents completed by the end of 2020.
- The Vegetation Management Working Group received edits back from OWRD on their draft Step 2/3 Report. Each drafter will be editing his/her sections based off OWRD feedback and will complete this work by November 13, 2020.
- A consensus event was held during the September meeting on the proposed recommendation for the CBWP to give its support to submitting a legislative concept to establish a fund for domestic well users which would be used to cost share the remediation of loss of groundwater for domestic purposes caused by groundwater level declines. Consensus was reached with the notion that the current language will be edited throughout the legislative process. Participating Collaborative members were eager to get the legislative concept submitted and “get it in the queue.”
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has a grant agreement in-hand from the Bureau of Reclamation and OWRD for the feasibility study on water markets for the Harney Basin and have issued a RFP.
- Holly Mondo and Ken Bierly will start working with a cartography class at the University of Oregon this week! The students will be making maps that illustrate groundwater and surface water appropriations over time in the Basin. It is the hope that such maps can be housed on the new website and/or other outreach and educational purposes.

There was a question on the status of the “Irrigator” group and the work they have been doing. Brenda shared that the group is now ramping up to finish developing their outreach materials now that haying season has come to a close. Part of the development is resurrecting the local Hay Growers Association. Outreach materials, to update other irrigators on the what has been happening with Water Planning are being prepared for publication.

Brenda also shared that Council members have access to the new website that is being developed for Community Based Water Planning. Harneywaterfuture.com will be the website. When the website launches there will be more public announcements.

Strategic Planning -

The Strategic Planning Prep team met by Zoom to work on developing a new Mission and Vision for the Council. The previous mission was very long. Adrienne shared a worksheet with criteria for developing a mission and vision. The prep team held a 5 hour work-session on September 30th to further define these and to begin to identify priorities for updating our Strategic plan. Brenda Smith, Pat Sharp, Karen Moon and Jamie McCormack were the prep team and will each



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talk thought the “Strategic Planning Retreat Notes” document that was included with the board packet. There was discussion on the Mission and Vision and the group worked through a few changes. After discussion a motion was made by Rachel Beaubien and seconded by Ben Cate to update the Mission and Vision to the following:

Mission

Harney County Watershed Council works to improve watershed health for the benefit of our communities and the environment.

Vision

People in Harney County are working together to ensure healthy watersheds and thriving communities.

Karen and Jamie talked about the development and prioritization of the Overarching Strategies, the two topics that floated to the top of the priority list included Outreach/Public Relations/Communicating with the Community and Funding. Jamie talked about how we worked through a beginning action plan. Members of the Council are encouraged to participate in a two to three hour workshop, most likely over Zoom to continue working on actions to fill out the action plan with regard to the Outreach and Funding priorities, sometime before the November meeting. Ben Cate and Rachel Beaubien volunteered to help with this development.

New Business

Presentation and request from Linda Beck representing the Harney County Opportunity Team. They are putting together grant applications to update the technology in the Community Center meeting room. Linda challenged the Council to meet the \$1000 donation that the High Desert Partnership has committed to the project. The Watershed Council is one of the biggest supporters of the meeting room, holding our Community Based Water Planning meetings there on a monthly basis. (pre- and post Covid). The group is proposing to purchase two OWL units and to improve the wiring in the meeting room. After discussion, Pat Sharp moved to donate \$1000 towards the technology upgrade with 50% dollars coming from CBWP and 50% from Council admin dollars. Rachel Beaubien seconded and the motion passed.

Minutes: Minutes for the August meeting were reviewed. Financials for the Council were reviewed. Rachel Beaubien moved to approve the August minutes (note the September meeting was cancelled) and the financial report, Pat Sharp seconded and the motion passed.

During the discussion on the financials John Thelen asked about the results and data from the Groundwater Monitoring project. Karen will put together a presentation of the grant after the final report is completed and submitted.



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Chairman Brenda Smith talked with council members about our board member terms that will be up at the end of the year. Pat Sharp, Rachel Beaubien, John Thelen and Ben Cate's positions will all expire. Brenda has talked to Pat and she is up for another term with the Council. We also have two members who do not wish to participate further with the Council, these include the Landowner positions for the Drewsey area and the Harney/Malheur Lakes Sub-basin.

It was also noted that our Officer position terms are up at the end of December as well and Chairman Brenda Smith stated that she will be stepping down as Chairman.

Items for next agenda on November 17, 2020 include: Continued work on the Strategic Plan, working on mapping out plans for 2021 meetings, hopefully summer field trips again!!

Meeting adjourned at 7:05pm
Karen Moon, Coordinator