



Harney County Watershed Council

Monthly Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, January 16, 2024
meeting by Zoom & HCWC office
Hines, Oregon

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

Landowner positions:

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

Concerned Citizen positions:

Burns/Hines –
At Large –
General - Rep. Mark Owens
Sportsman – **Sam Artaiz**
Education – **Dustin Johnson**
Environmental – Alexa Martinez
County Court – Kristen Shelman
Harney SWCD – **Susan Doverspike**
BLM – **Jamie McCormack**

Advisory Positions

ODF & W – Dave Banks
Malheur National Wildlife – Jess Wennick
NRCS – Rachel Beaubien
EOARC – Chad Boyd
OWRD – Dally Swindlehurst
USFS -

Staff

Coordinator – Karen Moon

Guests – Jason Kesling, SWCD

Mission of the Harney County Watershed Council

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

Vision of the Harney County Watershed Council

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



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The meeting was called to order at 5:32pm.

Chairman Jamie McCormack welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the agenda and asked each member to share a short update on what is happening in their world.

Members shared that quarterly billing and reporting was going on. They talked about putting out weather stations being put out in Drewsey. The SWCD is working on a Strategic Implementation Area for water development and in field repairs. EOARC is gearing up for the Society for Range Management conference the end of the month. The Riparian Assessment documents have been released and are official now. Sage Grouse implementation teams are able to incorporate into plans. The Tribe is happy that a settlement on the Federal license for the Hells Canyon Plan will offer mitigation to help with salmon recovery. Karen reported that quarterly reporting and billing, along with year end needs for the Council have been keeping her busy.

Continuing project updates/action items

Community Based Water Planning update:

Brandon gave an update on the water planning collaborative. At the December meeting, members reached consensus on all four of the working groups Step 2 & 3 documents, and almost reached consensus on the Critical Issues list for surface water. The next steps will be to prioritize the issues and to start working on solutions and strategies for the issues. During the last coordinating call the group reviewed accomplishments of 2023.

Membership:

There was discussion on the positions and what positions are open. Some of the landowner positions have been difficult to fill. There was discussion on reaching out more and making sure people know that Zoom is an option if they live farther out of town. When the weather breaks a bit we will discuss visiting other areas of the County for meetings. There was discussion on doing more newspaper articles.

With Water Planning winding down there is the possibility of more projects being identified.

There was discussion on how to transition from planning to implementation.

It was suggested to get on the phone and invite more people to the meetings.

Other Projects:

- a. Five Mile Dam agreement is complete – There is a meeting planned for February 7th with ODF & W and the State Fish Passage person to discuss needs for a replacement structure and what would be required for fish passage or screening.



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- b. Beaver Habitat project – the contract with University of Minnesota is being worked on.

New Business

Table sponsor for Chamber Awards Banquet:

Deanna at the Chamber asked Karen if the Council would be interested in sponsoring a table at the Chamber Awards Banquet on February 3rd. Requirements are to provide a centerpiece that is given away to someone sitting at the table, 8 place settings with a small gift for each place. After discussion a motion was made by Dustin Johnson to sponsor a table, and authorize Karen to spend up to \$300.00 Susan Doverspike seconded the motion and the motion passed. Karen, Angie and Sam will design the table.

Ag Water quality biennial meeting from December:

Karen shared the update that the group worked on during the meeting. This was a lite review and the purpose of the update to the Department of Ag was to highlight projects and work that has been done over the past two years. There was a lot of discussion at the meeting about finding ways to include work done on private lands that has not been grant or publicly funded.

Division 512 Rulemaking

Karen shared about the sub-areas that the Department had shared at the last RAC meeting. There was a lot of discussion on whether to recommend that the Department move forward with their 15 sub-areas or to reduce it to the three main areas that people are used to in the basin. The next meeting is scheduled for January 24th at 1pm at the Community Center. Several more meetings are being scheduled as well as moving the timeline back to December rather than trying to finish and present to the Water Resources Commission at their September meeting.

Range Camp:

Range Camp is being planned for April 25 through 28th. The Email has gone out to college groups. We are tentatively planning for another camp in May that would focus on resource people and teachers.

Small Grant Bylaws and Priorities:

The group reviewed the bylaws and priorities that the Small Grant Team had developed. Everyone agreed with the priorities that the team had identified and the projects listed for grants that would be accepted. Susan Doverspike moved to approve the bylaws and priorities. Pat Sharp seconded and the motion passed. The documents will be sent to OWEB for their approval and signing of the grant agreement to get the program started for the 23/25 biennium.



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Strategic Planning:

Karen presented a “track changes” with some initial updates of our previously completed Strategic plan. Discussion was held on whether Karen should make more changes to the plan and then bring back to the group or if we should hold a special meeting to work on the plan? Results of the discussion was to continue to work on the plan as a group, however to reduce the agenda items and to move the work on the strategic plan up within the agenda so it is not the last item of the evening. There was discussion on removing the “background” information from the plan and move it to more of a “yearly workplan” type document. Karen had explained that when this was an OWEB project that the background information was required at that time. Direction for future program projects was discussed. A review of the water planning issues will hopefully bring new projects to light.

Minutes & Financials:

Minutes for the November meeting were reviewed (there was no meeting in December) Susan Doverspike moved to approve the November minutes. Dustin Johnson seconded and the motion passed.

Financials were reviewed.

Items for next agenda: Next meeting will be February 20, 2024. The main focus of the meeting will be to work on the Strategic plan.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm
Karen Moon, Coordinator