

# Drayton Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – Regular Meeting – September 17, 2024

## Attendees

“(t)” indicates presence via tele-conference, “(p)” indicates proxy vote.

Board – Present	Board – Absent with Notice
Jeb Miller Scott James Greg Ebe	Marty Maberry Rod Tjoelker

Staff and Consultants	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Gavin Willis	Ag Water Board
Trevor Gearhart	Whatcom Conservation District
Sarah Faubion (t)	AESI
Bill Clarke (t)	Clarke Law
Fred Likkel	Whatcom Family Farmers
Jay Chennault (t)	AESI

Other Guests	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Mike Love	BBWSD

## Proceedings

Scott called the meeting to order at 3:06pm.

### 1. Consent Agenda

- a. Agenda was reviewed.
- b. Minutes of June 18 meeting were reviewed.
- c. Financial reports were reviewed.
- d. Voucher D.Gen.0724 in the amount of \$3,440.00 was reviewed.
- e. Voucher D.Gen.0824 in the amount of \$8,259.50 was reviewed.
- f. Greg moved to approve the consent agenda. Jeb seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

### 2. Administration

- a. Greg will represent the WID at the next AWB meeting.

### 3. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. Bill provided an adjudication update.
  - i. ECY has filed their proposed claims form. Hearing scheduled for Sept. 26 to review it, doesn't appear to be any objections filed. Seems to be improved over previous drafts, especially related to stockwater uses. If approved, service will likely be at the end of the year, into early 2025, which would set the deadline for claims filing for early 2026.
  - ii. Court has created a steering committee for the case. Ramsey applied but was not selected, likely because she is not a member of the Washington bar. Unfortunate, because she has more adjudication experience than anyone else on the list. However,

she has connections with other attorneys who are on the committee, and she may be able to provide assistance to them.

- iii. Looking at a few ideas for 2025 legislative session, including technical assistance funding, funding for WMB to investigate a settlement process, and a claims reopening.
- b. Gavin noted that AWB is hoping to contract with a federal lobbying firm for 2025, and is seeking feedback from the WIDs before setting the budget. Feedback from the board is that it is important to have someone advocating for ag interests, and that this is a good use of WID funds.
- c. Fred noted that a group of landowners in the Sumas basin have retained an attorney and are seeking to be excluded from the adjudication process on the basis that they are not in the Nooksack watershed.

#### **4. Drainage / Habitat / Flood**

- a. Jay provided an update on the augmentation project. Moving forward with the water right application for the project under the cost reimbursement program. WDFW has stated that they do not oppose the project if the water is not used for mitigation or offset for other purposes.
- b. Greg noted some beaver issues in the South Fork of Dakota Creek. Gavin will follow up with USDA to contract for beaver control.
- c. Seems to be some inconsistency in roadside ditch mowing. Fred will follow up with the county.
- d. Greg noted that it would be beneficial to spray some ditches where Reed Canary grass is taking over. Likely too late to address this year, but Gavin will note that it would be desirable to do it in future years.

#### **5. Water Quality**

- a. Trevor provided a WQ update.
  - i. July 29<sup>th</sup> rain event showed high counts throughout the watershed with a few exceptions.
  - ii. Aug 14<sup>th</sup> testing did not have rain, but had some high count areas. Do not appear to be associated with agriculture.
  - iii. Portage Bay Shellfish beds have been upgraded. Approx. 360 acres opened to year-round harvest, and seasonal closures have been reduced from 4 to 3 months. Unfortunately all the beds are currently closed due to PSP.
- b. Gavin noted that if you see significant waterfowl activity in your fields, text him a picture and the location and he will add it to the Whatcom Wildlife Tracker.

#### **6. Education / Communications**

- a. WFF will be hosting another water rights info evening on Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> at NWWF.
- b. WFF will be hosting their annual farmer rally on Nov 20<sup>th</sup> at NWWF.
- c. Signups for water right office hours are now open on the AWB website.

#### **7. Next Meeting**

- a. Next meeting scheduled for October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Meeting adjourned at 4:02.

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_

