

## **TSCC Meeting Minutes**

**May 12, 2020**

Via Telephone conference call

Commissioners Barringer, Ofsink, Norton, Wubbold, and Quiroz were present as were Executive Director Craig Gibons, Budget Analyst Tunie Betschart all via telephone conference call.

Chair Barringer convened the TSCC Regular Meeting at 12:35

1. Chair Barringer approved the May 6 meeting minutes with one addition concerning questions to send to Multnomah ESD.
2. The question was asked if there was unfinished business left from the previous meeting held May 6.

Executive Director Gibons had sent a response to the commissioners from Mt. Hood CC about the college's expenditures. The staff at the college stated that they do not anticipate budget changes. TSCC Commissioners decided this needs to be discussed at their hearing since they are going to be over-appropriated. They decided the question should be "at what point will you ask the board to modify the budget?"

The response from MESD about the fund balance policy was also emailed to the commissioners. After some discussion it was decided that there was no action needed at this time.

3. The review for East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District was next on the agenda. It was noted that they are waiting on a new Executive Director. Many activities are on hold or scaled down while they search for a new person in the lead role. The budget is pretty status quo. Personnel costs were discussed. It was reported that they are adding two temporary employees which increased the Personal Services category \$123K.

The commissioners decided on the following questions to be considered at the East Multnomah SWCD hearing:

- 1) In the current year ending June 30, is the district expecting any year-end budgetary problems arising from revenue shortfalls or unanticipated expenditures due to the Covid-19 situation? What impact will this have on the district's ending fund balances that are not yet reflected in upcoming budget?
- 2) For the upcoming FY 2020-21 budget year, should the economy remain stalled, where are the district's greatest vulnerabilities? How will the district monitor and respond timely if revenue collections go off track or if unanticipated service requirements continue?

## TSCC Meeting Minutes

May 12, 2020

Page 2

- 3) How is the search for a new Executive Director going? What is the time frame for the hire and what is on tap for the new person to address?
- 4) The District has been developing a long-range plan. What is the status of that plan and how is it reflected in this budget? Has the absence of a permanent Executive Director impacted district's long-range planning?
- 5) The district has had three cohorts of farmers move through the farm program. What are the results? Have the graduates moved on to active farming careers? Are the success/or challenges of all participants tracked?
- 6) Last year's budget document mentioned a possible Diversity/Equity/Inclusion position. The position is not in this year's budget. Tell us how your DEI program is evolving.
- 7) Has there been a change in the thinking about land acquisitions and sales for easements to protect properties? How did the last recession impact this activity and what do you think will happen to the program if a recession develops?

Commissioners would like to carry over to the next year the prepared question about the establishment of a contingency for climate change related events. If this subject is mentioned during the budget presentation the commissioners might discuss this during the questions as a follow-up to the presentation.

It was also suggested that Executive Gibbons ask the districts to keep the overview presentation of the budget brief, identifying issues and not budget amounts.

4. The newly formed district, Urban Flood Safety & Water Quality District was discussed at length. At the hearing the commissioners would like to introduce the district to the services offered by TSCC for the districts we oversee. There was discussion on relationship UFSWQ will play in connection with the drainage districts, Levee Ready Columbia and how all of this will impact the landowners' flood insurance.

Commissioners decided on the following questions for the UFSWQ hearing:

- 1) We would like to understand how the work of the District will evolve over the next few years. Will the district be assuming oversight of the duties of the four drainage districts or actually taking on those duties? What is the time frame for any of these changes?

- 2) What is the relationship of the district to the Levy Ready organization? What activities is Levy Ready undertaking now and will those duties transition to your district? How will the district board be constituted?
- 3) The legislature authorized the formation of your district during the 2019 session. Did that authorization include all the authority that the district framers requested?
- 4) The district has the authority to assess constituents for its services and to levy a general obligation property tax. What funding models are you developing and what is the time line for implementing them?
- 5) If FY21 goes as planned, what will be the main things the district will want to discuss at this hearing next year?

Next on the agenda was the review and certification of Corbett Water District's Budget. Their budget included a test well for a water storage aquifer for a backup system. They will not be replacing any system as this will be used only for a back-up system. They will continue to do maintenance on all ponds within their current system. The line item in Personnel Services "PERS unfunded liability" used as a place holder in the event the State of Oregon requested a payment on their PERS UAL was discussed. Executive Director Gibons suggested he talk with staff at Corbett Water District and suggest a better way to consider this expenditure. Commissioners agreed this would be a good way to deal with this. However, if it is not changed in next year's review, they will want to add a recommendation to the certification letter.

*Commissioner Wubbold moved to certify that the Commission had no objections or recommendations with regard to Corbett Water District's 2020-21 Approved Budget and their budget process. Commissioner Quiroz seconded the motion which passed with a unanimous vote.*

Old business: (This was discussed earlier but moved here for continuity)

Acquiring signatures for use on the certification letters was discussed. Executive Director requested each commissioner send him an image of their signature via email and he would adapt it to be used on certification letters for each of the larger districts. Chair Barringer will send his via USPS.

New Business:

The script used when opening the TSCC's 2020-21 budget hearings was discussed. Commissioner Norton had emailed the following suggestion to commissioners and staff prior to this meeting:

Originally, we talked about using the intro to pitch the TSCC's 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. I'm thinking now that we need more to acknowledge that this year's hearings -- in addition to the technology --are also unlike our past hearings. We could express some appreciation for how our member jurisdictions have stepped up operationally in meeting the current public health crisis, each according to their mission. And we could express an understanding that forecasting the budget for next year, and beyond, is a challenge right now for everyone, and will require extra effort as the year and the future unfold which is why the TSCC hearing and questions may also be different than past years.

The only change suggested was to move away from saying the TSCC hearing and questions may be different this year. The purpose of TSCC has not changed so the commissioners do not want it to seem like the oversight of the district has changed in anyway. The taxpayers' interest is still of upmost importance. Executive Gibons and Chair Barringer will work together to come up with a suitable opening prior to the hearings Tuesday.

The schedule was reviewed.

May 19<sup>th</sup>: TSCC will conduct 2 hearings on that date: one with East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District at 3:30 p.m. via GoToMeeting; and one with Multnomah Education Service District at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom meeting. The invitations have been sent with instructions on how to attend. Commissioners and staff were encouraged to login early to allow them some time to get familiar with the way the various platforms work prior to the opening of the hearing.

The letter previously prepared to send to the board members encouraging participation in the TSCC Budget Hearing was discussed very briefly. It was decided to put this on hold for this year due to all the changes already taking place.

Executive Director Gibons will inform the commissioners who will be attending each hearing. He will encourage the districts to ask board members to be present and participate during the hearing.

Chair Barringer closed the meeting at about 2:00 p.m.

[Approve by Commission at its May 21, 2020 meeting](#)



[Craig Gibons](#)