

Sherman County Soil and Water Conservation District

MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2025

8:30 AM

USDA Service Center Conference Room
2004 First St., Moro, OR 97039

Board Present

Jess Stutzman
Josh Hilderbrand
Ryan Thompson
Brian Simantel

Others Present

Amanda Whitman, District Manager
Marylou Martin, Office Assistant
Taylor Bullock, Watershed Technician/Coordinator
Joan Bird, County Commissioner
Brent Smith, ODA
Dean Dark, CWMA
Misty Strayhorn, NRCS
Kara Lanthorn, FSA

I. ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 8:32 am by chairman, Jess Stutzman

II. REVIEW/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

To discuss the November meeting under Other Business

III. MINUTES

Brian moved to approve the minutes from the June 10th, 2025 meeting and Josh seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Ryan moved to approve the minutes from the June 30th Special Meeting and Josh seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. GUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Joan talked about meeting with Representative Bentz, discussing the Farm Bill and solar. She also informed us that the new County Planner is Amy Phelps.

V. TREASURERS REPORT

Financials for FY 24-25 and July were presented. Josh moved to approve financials and Brian seconded, motion passed unanimously. Bank statements were reviewed through August. July-September bills were reviewed. Brian moved to approve the bills and financials as presented and Josh seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. STAFF UPDATES

- District Manager – See attached
 - a. Assisted Taylor with CREP grant/budget
 - b. SIA

*Documents/attachments mentioned in minutes can be obtained by request

- Submitted and received fund request
 - Monitoring Plan-Submitted (additional \$25k)
 - Assisted Marylou w/education grants/budgets
 - Submitted ODA SOW final report and fund request
 - Submitted 1st fund request for new ODA grant
 - Lower John Day Ag Water Quality report
 - LAC Meeting October 1st
 - Worked on getting documentation to auditors
 - District Manager Meeting
 - Weekly Staff Meetings
 - Working on Small Grant Team 15 grant for team leader (~\$20K)
 - Updated CCS Application
 - Working on updating range drill lease agreement
 - My schedule/leave
- Office Assistant—See attached
 - a. Community Outreach
 - Citizen Reporter
 - SWCD Newsletter
 - Streamline Website (100% accessible)
 - b. Education Outreach (CAP)
 - 4H Camp (grades 4,5,6)
 - Library Summer Reading (16 kids)
 - Sherman County Fair
 - Display Table
 - Games and crafts in Old Beef Barn
 - Met with school staff: Amanda Bagwell and Ashley Macnab
 - Starting up homeschool classes again
 - c. Grants
 - Ford Foundation-received
 - Roundhouse Foundation-turned in final report, applied for another one
 - Sherman County Cultural Coalition-turned in final report
 - Gray Family Foundation-applied
 - Autzen Foundation-applied
- Watershed Technician—See Attached
 - a. Large Grants
 - Funded full amount (\$202,535.77) from OWEB
 - b. Small Grants
 - 16-24-008-Water Development completed 6/11/25
 - c. CCS

*Documents/attachments mentioned in minutes can be obtained by request

- 8 field visits
 - 5 applications
 - 3 certification checks
 - Provided technical assistance on haul road
- d. Outreach
- Library Program-6/26/25
 - Fair Activities-partnered with Prevention and Wasco SWCD
- e. Conferences
- Attended the OWEB Board meeting
- f. Other
- Scheduling FAA Flight Test
 - Assisted Herb with Gilliam County SWCD-drone flight residue treatments
 - NRCS Planner Certification
 - CREP Renewals

VII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel

a. Staff schedules

- i. The staff would like to try a flex schedule-9 hours per day with every other Friday off, still getting 80 hours in the two-week pay period. We will try it for 1 month and see how it goes.

b. Vacant position

- i. The board is going to have a work session/Special Meeting on Monday, September 15th at 9:00 to discuss long-term planning regarding hiring another staff member.

c. Retirement

- i. The board discussed 2 options for additional retirement savings: A Roth IRA or a 457, which would use a third party and charge the employer fees. Ryan moved to add the Roth IRA option to the retirement, Josh seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

B. County Cost Share

a. Application

- i. Amanda presented the County Cost Share application with edits. The board discussed the edits. Josh moved to accept the new County Cost Share application with the edits, Ryan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

b. 2 new applications

- i. Boundary fence—pictures and maps were presented. Total cost is \$44,772.13 for 9,347 feet. SWCD 75% cost share is \$15,000. Brian moved to approve and Josh seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- ii. Boundary fence—pictures and maps were presented. Total cost is \$25,214.56 for 5,264 feet. SWCD 75% cost share is \$15,000. Ryan moved to approve and Brian seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- C. Payroll/Bookkeeping
 - a. Amanda acquired 2 quotes from potential companies to do the payroll and bookkeeping: Connell & Associates, LLC in Hermiston and Accurate Bookkeeping Inc. The Board discussed the 2 options. Brian moved to switch payroll and bookkeeping to Connel & Associates, LLC, and Ryan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- D. Board Public Meeting Training
 - a. SDAO will come out to us to conduct training for the Board. The training should last about 2 hours. Mid-January will work best for the Board members; Amanda will get some possible dates.
- E. OACD Dues & Conference
 - a. This year’s OACD dues are \$1,000. The conference takes place October 21-23.

VIII. AGENCY REPORTS

- A. ODA—
 - a. Brent-ODA Ag Water Quality Specialist for about 1 year. He talked about the upcoming LAC meeting on October 1st in Condon at noon which will cover updates on projects. LAC is always looking for new members. Brent also works with us on SIA projects and will work with DEQ on John Day TMDL replacement. ODA will be required to do an implementation plan for TMDL, not just an AgWQ plan.
- B. CWMA—
 - a. Dean-treated 52-53 net acres on the Sherman County side near the river. Seasonals were used to float the river to hit the Wasco side. He started spraying the first of March, 66 total days, 54 on Skeleton Weed. Applied for a BLM grant 2 times and may have to apply again. Covered 1000 gross acres in Sherman County. Dean is working on another grant—the Private Forest Accord (5 year grant), restoration for salmon habitats. ODA wants to treat micro populations.
- C. NRCS—
 - a. Misty-IRA CSP contract cannot be modified for any reason. Any changes will result in a cancellation. There are 20-30 applications in the county. There will be some changes to EQIP—1 funding pool per geographic area. This is not affecting Sherman County at the moment. Making CSP payments now, get paperwork in ASAP. Can still get the 2025/26 payment unless you are in the last year of your contract, then just the 2025 payment.
- D. FSA—
 - a. Kara-SDRP payments are in stage 1. If you make any changes to your farm, make them early in the year, at least by June 1st. The way your crop is

*Documents/attachments mentioned in minutes can be obtained by request

ensured has to match up with how you are signed up with FSA and how your grain is delivered. The ECAP deadline has come and gone, will hopefully pay 15%. ARC/PLC might be 2024 payments. CRP isn't in the Farm Bill right now. Marketing Assistant loans are available at 5% interest for 9 months.

- E. OSU Extension—
 - a. Not Present

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

The Board discusses Amanda's schedule. Also, the Board discusses having the November meeting on Wednesday, November 12th, since the second Tuesday is Veterans Day.

X. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is October 14th at 8:30 am in the USDA Service Center conference room.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business the board meeting was adjourned at 11:02 am.

Respectfully,

Nick von Borstel, Secretary

Approved by the Board of Directors October 14, 2025:

Jess Stutzman, Chair