



## **January 2023 Board Meeting Minutes**

Calapooia Watershed Council held their regular Board of Directors Meeting on Wednesday, January 11th, 2023 at the Brownsville Library's Kirk Room and via Zoom.

The following members were present:

Jim Wagner	Jim Merzenich	Joe Deardorff	John Joiner	Sharon Crowley
Matt Mellenthin	Mark Running	Dee Swayze	Shannon Richardson	

The following were also present:

Collin McCandless, Executive Director

Cris Salazar, Habitat Restoration Program Manager

Fiona Julian, Operations Coordinator

### **Approval of December 2022 Board Meeting Minutes**

Matt moved to approve the December 2022 meeting minutes as written. John seconded the motion. The motion was approved 8:0.

### **Approval of Q2 22-23 Financials**

Collin stated that the council had a positive net revenue ending last fiscal quarter and were under budget for payroll. Collin asked what everyone thought now that we have moved to a quarterly presentation of financials with greater detail. No comments were made. Jim W moved to approve the Q2 '22-'23 Financials. Jim M seconded the motion. The motion was approved 8:0.

## **Banking Research Review**

Fiona stated that she hoped everyone found the comparison and impact reports sent helpful as they provided a lot of good information. Fiona continued that her findings regarding the concerns raised at the December meeting found that Beneficial State admittedly does not have physical branches in Linn County, whereas Umpqua reports providing four jobs in Linn County at their Albany branch. Fiona explained that as larger banks compare, Umpqua has good statistics in many areas, but that Beneficial remains the only financial institution in Oregon not investing in fossil fuel, and is a B-Corp. Fiona stated that the move could be accomplished without loss or negative impact to the council. Fiona said she had not personally reached out to nonprofits that bank with Beneficial yet, but was informed that along with The Freshwater Trust, the Oregon Clean Water Advocates, and Organically Grown Company also bank with Beneficial. Fiona offered that the account manager at Beneficial would be more than happy to talk with anyone, anytime with questions. Fiona shared that she had just learned that Umpqua Bank is merging with Columbia Bank to comply with an order to divest their stocks after antitrust allegations. Fiona continued that there is also a class action lawsuit in progress against Umpqua for financing PONZI schemes. John stated that he spent a couple of minutes on the FDIC website reviewing banks and learned that Umpqua has 72 branches in Oregon compared to Beneficial having just 3 which are all in the Portland area. John also stated that the security information for Beneficial was incomplete. John explained that according to Bauer Financial [who rates bank security], Umpqua scores 5 stars and Beneficial scores 4. There was a mention that the council didn't want to be in a position to not make payroll. John stated that Umpqua are heavily invested in mortgages and hardly the backbone of oil and gas. John continued that besides the trim and frosting, the council needs a bank that is safe and secure and that he was not inferring that Beneficial was not safe, just small. Joe shared that he was encouraged by The Freshwater Trust which is a very respected organization in his industry, and that they were working with a much larger budget than CWC which suggested they were secure enough which bodes well. Joe continued that he was interested in learning more about what the security ratings were based on. Mark stated that if we have contacts at TFT we should do our due diligence and discuss their experience. Mark additionally said that the comparison report information sent to the board was 121 pages long which he could not knowledgeably compare. Mark stated that it might feel good [to switch to Beneficial] but that the board was legally obligated to ensure the financial stability of the council and needs to be as

confident with both sides of Beneficial's operations. Matt asked if this suggestion to switch banks was initially a DEI initiative and Fiona responded that it was primarily their environmental commitments and performance, in addition to the DEJI aspects of their business model. Sharon stated we should definitely reach out to TFT and that we should look closer at the Umpqua merger and how that could affect things. Sharon shared that her previous experience in the finance industry taught that mergers affect things in different ways such as banking practices, and what might change for customers so it would be prudent to look at Umpqua a little more closely. Jim W confirmed that Fiona will reach out to TFT for their experience and what inspired their move.

### **Restoration Update**

Cris provided a presentation for the most recent grant application to OWEB for Oak Creek explaining that the council had submitted three prior unsuccessful applications over the past six years, and continued that he has spent time researching what went right or wrong with each one. Cris explained that this current application covers 24 acres and also provides an Oregon Conservation Strategy opportunity which is looking to fund oak restoration projects. Cris continued that the project site is public property with a trail system and means working with the City and neighboring Oak Meadows HOA, which could provide lots of volunteers to help increase awareness of the oak legacy in the Willamette Valley.. Jim M said maintenance would be needed forever. Cris responded that the City of Albany has committed to the mowing maintenance for this project site (once established) provided they maintain a Natural Resources staff, which he stated was realistic considering the City is working to renew its investment in public use and natural areas. Cris stated that the planting design would factor in the maintenance logistics and restrictions. John stated that it takes about ten years for oak trees to be robust. Cris stated that One Tree Planted will provide funding for up to 80% of the initial planting. Jim M stated that oak trees are very hardy and only really vulnerable to browsing and grazing. There was a brief discussion regarding transplanting oak. Cris reviewed a powerpoint presentation covering the technical aspects of the project and announced the tour review was being held this coming Friday. Jim M shared that he recalled in the fifties there was water flowing year 'round in Oak Creek and contained lots of cutthroat trout, but it was then channelized and Jim asked if there has been any thought of undoing some of the channeling and getting natural channels to develop. Cris responded that he was not aware of any such initiatives and reviewed the service area in reference. Jim

M shared that NRCS has a different perspective on the channeling but that he will ask them at the next meeting if there are plans to undo that work. Cris offered that he would absolutely be interested, and mentioned this is his first venture into Oak Creek. Jim M questioned how the water has been affected through to Albany and that there used to be six foot deep pools you could float in during August. Mark stated it had been dredged along the fence and property lines. John stated it runs on soil whereas it used to run on river cobbles and gravel. Mark mentioned agriculture and single purpose farming may have contributed to reduced summer water levels.

### **Membership Meeting Update**

Collin reminded everyone that board elections are approaching and provided the following tentative schedule for those and other objectives mentioned at the December meeting.

- March- Board Elections for all officers and Odd Year members (John Joiner, Matt Mellenthin, Mark Running, Jim Wagner, Jim Merzenich)
- May- Tub Run Field Trip
- June-Upper Calapooia Field Trip/Annual Budget Review

The meeting was adjourned at 6pm.