
July 10th, 2019 Board Meeting

Pierce County Noxious Weed Control Board
9200 122nd St E, Puyallup WA 98373
Olympus Conference room, 9:00am

In attendance: Morgan Heilesen, Chelli Pogue, Melody Meyer, Tom Bertram, Erick Balstad, Terry Wade, and Jim Kropf.

January 9th, 2019 Board Meeting minutes reviewed and accepted. Tom Bertram motioned to adopt the January 9th, 2019 minutes, Terry Wade seconded the motion.

*Board member Terry Wade was presented with an award plaque, as this is his last Board meeting before retiring from his 2nd term on the Board. Terry's valuable insight and support will long be remembered and will be very missed; thank you Terry!

Program Director's Report

Office & County Business:

- 2019 Rehiring: Seasonal rehiring was conducted at the beginning of January; Jim Towslee, Ken Jensen, Patti Iverson, Melody Meyer, Bev Ivy, Mary Brzezinski, Mike Biever, Jim Berry, Jack Coffey, and Jim Bjorgen all returned this year to work the 2019 Season, as well as assisted at the Tacoma Home & Garden Show scheduled January 24th - 27th.

*It was noted the new managers ('Marketplace Events') in charge of the Home & Garden Show are raising their education booth rates from \$250 to \$600 for a 10'x10' booth in 2020; Morgan will approach Marketplace Events to see if they will adjust the rate, as the number of contacts the Weed Board receives during the H&G Show does not warrant future participation with such an increase.

- Financial Reporting: Board members were asked what kind of detailed financial reports they would like at Board meetings in the future; Board members agreed the current quarterly expenditure reporting was sufficient, along with the current end balance and any other significant changes.
- County Badges for Board Members: Board members may obtain a County Badge for gate access instead of utilizing the Visitors parking lot and entrance if they wish. Tom Bertram was interested in obtaining a badge, background check paperwork/photo ID was provided and submitted.
- Community Outreach & Education Specialist position: An ad was placed in both the Tacoma News and WorkSource (online affiliate) for the position of Community Outreach & Education Specialist, taking applications from January 11th through January 25th, 2019. 5 applications were submitted, and 4 applicants were interviewed on Monday, February 25th by Morgan Heilesen, Tom Bertram, and Chelli Pogue. After the initial interview, 2 applicants were asked to come back for a 2nd interview on Friday, March 1st with Beki Shoemaker, Morgan Heilesen, and Chelli Pogue. After careful consideration, Melody Meyer was offered the position of Community Outreach & Education Specialist. Melody will be on a 9-month work probation (6-months required by the County, 9-months required by the Weed Board) until her Environmental Science degree is complete. Melody has already shown to be a great asset, creating and presenting educational presentations, assisting the Field Inspector's, inputting paperwork, etc.
- CVWeb 2.0 Training: Field Inspector's attended training for CVWeb 2.0 May 2nd to learn how to use the new application. CVWeb 2.0 is an improved version of the County's spatial data system. The upgrade makes CVWeb more user friendly, faster, less wait time, and adaptable for use on mobile devices in the field.
- The 2020 Assessment was submitted Tuesday, June 4th: Assessment documents were submitted to the Executive's office, as well as emailed to Denise Johnson, Clerk of the Council in preparation for the 2020 assessment.

An adjustment from \$1.70 to \$1.79 per parcel and .15 to .16 per additional acre was submitted. This will bring an estimated \$640,000 revenue next year.

- Noxious Weed Control Specialist Leads: 2 new positions are under consideration to add to the current noxious weed program; an east and west side Noxious Weed Control Specialist Lead to cover both sides of the county. The lead positions will extend 9 months out of the year, from March through November, working between 30-40 hours a week. Duties will include a supervisory role, assisting Field Inspector's, working with landowners, and surveying lands. The lead will also be responsible for a Field Inspector area of the county as well. The two Lead positions would be instated in 2020, mainly depending on available program funding. A preliminary job description has already been drafted.
- Thun Field reimbursement, 1st half taxes, & Investment funds: *\$125,000 was repaid from Thun Field remodeling expenses; 1st half taxes received by May 1st, bringing the total revenue to approx. \$483,874.51. We also currently have \$100,000 in investments; the County is now allowing us to leave investment funds in the account without having to resubmit each month.
- Vehicle Replacement program: After purchasing the 2019 Ford Escape, Mike McGee (Equipment Services supervisor) approached Beki about participating in the Pierce County Equipment Replacement program. The program prorates a monthly cost for 15 years (estimated time of replacement), based on historic costs including: insurance, fuel, repairs (parts & labor), and vehicle replacement. A cost analysis was done with Weed Board records on both the Ford Explorer (2004) and Ford Escape (2009), from 2012 - 2018. After reviewing the cost analysis and considering the pros and cons, Chelli Pogue was asked to read Resolution 2019-3; Erick Balstad motioned to accept Resolution 2019-3, and Terry Wade seconded it.
- County policy tuition reimbursement for eligible employees: Resolution 2019-2 regards Pierce County tuition reimbursement policy available to Career Service employees. Employees who meet the eligible criteria may receive up to \$3,000 per year in tuition reimbursement. Resolution 2019-2 was read by

Chelli Pogue, Secretary to the Board; Tom Bertram motioned to accept Resolution 2019-2; Terry Wade second the motion.

State Business:

- After working with SAO support help and Pierce County Chief Accountant Brandon Kirkwood, Chelli and Morgan were able to complete and submit the 2018 Annual Report to the State Auditor's Office on April 22nd.
- WA State Vegetation Management Conference call meetings: As a member of the Board of Directors for the WA State Vegetation Management Association, Morgan participated in two conference calls January 11th & March 8th, 2019 to plan the November Weed Association Conference. Morgan also attended the May 10th Board Meeting and will be attending the July 19th meeting.

The Weed Conference is a three-day event; Melody Meyer, Bev Ivy, & Mary Brzezinski attended in 2018, as well as Beki & Morgan.

- Flowering Rush: Jen Parsons from the DOE sent Beki and Morgan an email in May inquiring about the status of Flowering Rush infestations discovered a couple of years ago downstream from JBLM. Jen assumed the infestations were possibly on Federal land, creating the potential to match funds for weed control, but the Flowering Rush was actually found on private land. Field Inspector Patti Iverson has been working directly with landowners to eradicate the two main Flowering Rush infestations; Morgan will also be monitoring the sites.
- 2019 Coordinator's Survey: County coordinators were asked to complete a survey by the State Noxious Weed Control Board regarding revisions made to RCW17.10 before submitting to legislation. The survey asked for input regarding overall changes and possible additional funding options. Beki and Morgan completed and submitted the survey.

*Janet Spingath contacted Beki (see email dated June 5, 2019) asking for a letter of support regarding the submitted changes to RCW17.10; Beki

responded she needed the most current information regarding the changes before offering a letter of support.

Fairs, Presentations, Workshops, and Newspaper Articles:

- Wilbur-Ellis Seminar at the WA State Fairgrounds: Melody Meyer staffed the Weed Board booth on January 9th at the Wilbur-Ellis seminar, held at the WA State Fairgrounds. 62 visitors stopped by the booth between 6:30am and 1:30pm to pick up noxious weed literature and have an opportunity to ask questions and visit with Melody.
- Presentations and workshops given by the Community Outreach and Education Specialist:
 - March 25th: Pierce County Conservation District meeting, Puyallup. 15 people in attendance. (Morgan presented)
 - April 30th: WA Conservation Corp Crew presentation, Lacey; 47 people attended. (Melody presented)
 - May 7th: Pierce Conservation District for Farmers, Spanaway; 13 people in attendance, Melody presented.
 - May 23rd: WSU Forestry Class presentation, Buckley, WA. Melody presented, 17 attended.
 - July 8th: City of Tacoma training, Tacoma; 18 people in attendance, Melody presented.
- Upcoming Training:
 - July 12th: STEM Outreach Youth Camp, Pierce College campus
 - July 16th: Puyallup Indian Tribe
- Newspaper article, “The Real Aliens in our Backyard”,

published March 11th, 2019, in ‘The New York Times’.

This article highlights an organization initiated in 2015 in Tennessee called “Weed Wrangle”; Weed Wrangle’s three-fold mission coordinates volunteer efforts to eradicate invasive plants in public parks and natural areas, educates the public concerning invasive species, and replaces invasive plants with natives. ‘Weed Wrangle’ coordinates a yearly one-day event for volunteers, which has expanded to include 60 cities within Tennessee and 12 other states- another great public awareness and education effort to help eradicate and stop the spread of invasive and/or noxious weeds.

Here in our own backyard, the Pierce County Metro Parks Dept has coordinated volunteer efforts since 2003 to eradicate invasive plants in public parks & natural areas. Metro Parks ‘Chip in!’ invites and encourages the public to volunteer to help improve parks, trails, and green spaces. The “Chip In!” mission statement reads: “We’re asking you to ‘chip in’ by investing your time and talents to help us improve parks and green spaces, protect neighborhood buildings and promote a healthy environment while helping to build a stronger community.” ‘Chip in!’ includes the following yearly volunteer events:

1. “Parks Appreciation Day”, Saturday, April 27th, 2019. ‘Get involved in this year’s event and add your name to the growing list of those who appreciate the value parks bring to our communities.’ Over 2,000 volunteers participate in Parks Appreciation Day each year.
2. “Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service”, held Monday, January 21st. “A way to honor Martin Luther King, Jr’s life and teachings by engaging in community action that continues to solve our social and environmental problems.” This year’s project focused on three Pierce County parks, ‘Devoting time to community endeavors and habitat conservation.’
3. In conjunction with ‘National Trails Day’, “Trails Day” is held at Pt Defiance State Park on Saturday, June 1, 2019. “Volunteers will help with trail maintenance to increase safety and accessibility, path repair and maintenance, vegetation pruning, removal of accumulated brush piles, and downed limbs”.

4. “Day of Caring”: Friday, September 27, 2019. “Corporate groups and individuals are invited to get involved in local community projects”.
5. “Green Tacoma Day”: TBA (usually in October): “The Tacoma Green Partnership invites people of all ages to get outside, have fun, and engage in Tacoma’s green spaces”. www.greentacomaday.org

Park volunteers can also check the Calendar of Events tab to see what other volunteer efforts are needed; each year several parks are slated for additional service. Oak Tree Park, Pt Defiance Beach, McKinley Park, Blueberry Park, Wapato Lake Park, China Lake Park, and Ryan’s Park have several Saturday’s scheduled throughout 2019 for additional volunteer work.

Tom Bertram adjourned the meeting at 9:57am.

Report respectfully submitted by Chelli Pogue, Secretary to the Board.

Tom Bertram, Area 5

Erick Balstad, Area 4

Janet Azevedo, Area 1

Beki Shoemaker, new appointee, Area 3