

TRI-COUNTY HWR STEERING COMMITTEE

**Meeting
Date:**

Wednesday March 10th, 2021 9am-11am

Virtual Meeting meet.google.com/epg-dkhx-dpa Phone Number (US)+1 219-390-9318 PIN: 545 470 573#

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ↓↓↓

Place ☒ next to
your name & sign

***All Guests Participated Remotely
in Response to COVID**

GUESTS ↓↓↓

Please PRINT
name below

Steve Kramer Present

Laurie Gordon, DEQ

Kevin Liburdy Present

Jenni Bergemann, Chenoweth School

Jacob Powell Present

Tyler Stone,
Wasco County Administrative Officer

Mike Matthews Present

Mike Middleton,
Wasco County Finance Director

Gordon Zimmerman Present

Nichole Biechler,
Wasco County Human Resources Director

Mike Foreaker Present

Jim Winterbottom, Waste Connections

Linda Miller Present by Phone *14

Greg Valitchka Present

Merle Keys Present by phone *53

GUEST (please print name)

↓STAFF ↓

↓NON-VOTING MEMBERS ↓

X David Skakel Present

☐ _____

X Angie Brewer Present

X Bruce Lumper Present

☐ _____

☐ _____

Summary of Actions Taken

Kevin Liburdy made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Linda Miller second.	
Vote	9-0-0
Yes	Steve Kramer, Kevin Liburdy, Jacob Powell, Linda Miller, Greg Valitchka, Mike Matthews , Mike Foreaker, Gordon Zimmerman, Merle Keys
No	None
Abstained	None

Merle Keys made a motion to approve the financial report; Linda Miller second.	
Vote	9-0-0
Yes	Steve Kramer, Kevin Liburdy, Jacob Powell, Linda Miller, Greg Valitchka, Mike Matthews , Mike Foreaker, Gordon Zimmerman, Merle Keys
No	None
Abstained	None

Linda Miller moved to approve the amended budget; Kevin Liburdy second.	
Vote	9-0-0
Yes	Steve Kramer, Kevin Liburdy, Jacob Powell, Linda Miller, Gordon Zimmerman, Greg Valitchka, Mike Matthews , Mike Foreaker, Merle Keys
No	None
Abstained	None

Gordon Zimmerman made a motion to approve the grant request; Linda Miller second.	
Vote	9-0-0
Yes	Steve Kramer, Kevin Liburdy, Jacob Powell, Linda Miller, Gordon Zimmerman, Greg Valitchka, Mike Matthews , Mike Foreaker, Merle Keys
No	None
Abstained	None

Action Item	12/9/20 Quarterly meeting minutes approved.
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Action Item	Approved Financial Report.
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Action Item	FY2021.22 Budget approved.
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Action Item	Agreed to seek independent legal review of Wasco County's decision not to prepare a new market salary survey for the Program Coordinator position.
Action Item	Requested David Skakel and Jim Winterbottom prepare a proposal to address refrigerant needs in our communities.

9:01 am Welcome

Chair Kramer opened the meeting at 9:01 am and confirmed a quorum was present. He introduced new Steering Committee member Greg Valitchka, representing the city of Mosier. Chair Kramer introduced other guests, including Laurie Gordon from DEQ and several Wasco County staff: Administrative Officer Tyler Stone, Human Resources Director Nichole Biechler, and Finance Director Mike Middleton.

Schedule future meetings

- June 9th *Confirmed*
- September 8th or 22nd? *September 8 Confirmed.*

Minutes

- Quarterly Meeting Minutes 12.9.20

Chair Kramer called for any discussion or corrections to the December 9, 2020 meeting minutes; there were none. Kevin Liburdy made a motion to approve the minutes as presented by staff, Linda Miller second the motion. Chair Kramer called for discussion, there was none. Chair Kramer called for a vote: 0 Nays, 9 in favor. Motion passed 9-0.

Financial Report

Point to documents provided in the packet, David provided an overview of the current financials, clarifying the Sherman County contribution was recently received; Miscellaneous Receipts revenue is high as a result of unexpected environmental contributions; Reimbursements for mailers should be fully paid out this fiscal year. He also noted we are a bit behind in surcharge from the landfill; David provided an overview of how this impacts the program. The slowdown is presumably related to the slowdown in the economy. Expenses in advertising and promotion is at 35%; we are spending less than last year but we should be at 50k at years end – right on budget. Supplies line item Office expenses captures a multitude of costs, including sharps disposal. Capital funds for Hood River site are not likely to be spent this year. David asked for questions, there were none. Merle Keys made a motion to approve the financial report; Linda Miller second. Chair Kramer called for discussion, there was none. Chair Kramer called for a vote: 0 Nays, 9 in favor. Motion passed 9-0.

HWR Program- Staff recruitment and compensation

(Nichole Biechler, Wasco County Human Resources Director)

Chair Kramer introduced the discussion, framing that the lead agency would like to provide an update on recruitment and compensation for both positions and provide the Steering Committee with an opportunity to ask questions. Angie Brewer added the presentation was intended to follow up on concerns previously expressed by the Steering Committee and that today would be an appropriate time to seek clarification.

Nichole Biechler provided an overview of the HR Answers recommendation. She shared that the county must review all positions through the lens of the county's compensation philosophy and pay equity regulations. Comparable characteristics and market salary survey were evaluated. She was asked to re-evaluate the solid waste program coordinator; the review resulted in a recommendation from HR Answers that no change for pay equity was warranted. As a result, a new market analysis was not recommended.

Nichole shared a pay equity "cheat sheet" and the county salary matrix (Attachments 7 and 8). Six characteristics used to score job profiles (comparable character) which assist with identifying placement on the salary matrix for internal consideration. Tyler Stone added this type of compensation management (pay equity) is not a choice, it is law and the county must abide by it. Wasco County adjusts for cost of labor, not cost of living. Nichole noted the Program positions are unique (uncommon), so there are not many market drivers that would increase the salary threshold.

David asked whether there is a trigger or threshold that warrants a new market analysis. Nichole shared the Coordinator position was evaluated for market two years ago with the larger salary survey. A market analysis was not conducted this year because no substantive changes have occurred. David asked if it was subjective decision of HR or if it was HR answers recommendation. Nichole clarified.

Chair Kramer shared we have spent significant time working on updating job descriptions and recruitment to address Steering Committee goals and directives for recruitment and retention.

Chair Kramer called for questions or further discussion; there was none.

Budget

- Draft FY2021.22 Budget
- Work Plan/Budget Summary

David shared a graph illustrating expenses over revenue. He summarized the large carryover being due to an unspent grants fund, and vacant position for the last several years. He is comfortable with the accumulation of funds given the intent to fill the position and programming in the work plan. The surcharge for next year's CPI and revenue at the landfill are going down slightly. David projected a conservative number in light of these factors. He noted an increase outreach and marketing costs with the addition of new, dedicated staff to this part of the program. Postage is proposed to double as a result of doubling the volume of mailers expanded education requirement of DEQ reporting or other efforts. Grants and Mini Grants were increased. Contracted Services increased due to accommodate additional participants and possibly an added event in Celilo Village this July. Funds were retained for the possible study,

depending on Steering Committee direction. Funds have been identified to address the disposal of refrigerant; Jim Winterbottom has provided metrics to support this cost and elaborated on options. David and Jim will prepare a proposal to be considered by the Steering Committee at their June meeting. Chair Kramer shared support for this work and asked for questions. No questions or concerns were raised.

David provided an update on outstanding capital projects, including the added costs of hiring a general contractor to help us make progress and allow David to shift time to training and managing new staff. No questions or concerns were expressed.

Mike Middleton confirmed the options to pursue contingency funds if the need arises. Mike also shared the total resources and expenses have a mismatch of \$120,000, there may need to be an adjustment. David suggested adding the missing funds to unappropriated so it is balanced and accurate.

Chair Kramer suggested the Steering Committee watch Senate Bill 466 for implications to our work. David shared the bill sponsor (Chuck Thomsen) is based out of Hood River and he has intentions to meet with him soon.

David and Chair Kramer reviewed the proposed budget line by line. No questions or concerns were expressed for the revenue budget. Kevin Liburdy asked whether or not the salary numbers shared today are what would be used for future recruitment if needed – Angie answered yes. Bruce Lumper observed the decision by Human Resources was subjective and proposed to the Steering Committee they consider getting an independent legal opinion; Kevin Liburdy voiced support in obtaining a third opinion. Chair Kramer called for discussion. Using a “thumbs up” and voiced support, there was unanimous support to obtain legal review of position and salary. Chair Kramer confirmed legal costs will come from program’s contracted services and that he would report back by June or before. Kevin Liburdy inquired about code enforcement officer costs; David shared the new position will replace some of the current need, but three people at events are necessary due to the increased participation. David and Angie confirmed the code compliance number is still accurate.

Chair Kramer summarized modifications to the expenses budget and asked for questions. Linda Miller inquired about the increased mailers, seeking to better understand the need. David responded that it would have twice the impact and would allow for expanded campaign work. Chair Kramer added there are several EPR bills in session that may impact these funds.

Mike Middleton shared his recommendations to balance the budget. He suggested using the unappropriated funds and leaving the contingency funds as they are shown. Chair Kramer confirmed the changes would be made in time for the Budget Committee Meeting on March 12.

Chair Kramer called for a motion to approve the amended budget. Linda Miller moved to approve the amended budget; Kevin Liburdy second. Chair Kramer called for discussion, there was none. Chair Kramer called for a vote: 0 Nays, 9 in favor. Motion passed.

10:12 AM

Grants

- Gorge Rebuild-it Center
- Chenoweth Elementary School

David shared an overview of the Chenoweth Elementary School grant request (Attachment 5). Jenny Bergemann explained the project has three parts: (1) remove old fiberglass greenhouse (safety hazard), (2) replace the greenhouse, (3) garden compost program. All of this is centered around what is good for the students and what the students can do. Lessons include how to grow food, how to manage it without chemicals, and how to manage the waste. The work would start in September of 2021. Linda Miller shared her personal experience and noted the value of children having access to a garden, and knowing how to garden. She said she supports it fully. Bruce Lumper thanked Jenny for her work and echoed Linda's comments. Kevin Liburdy asked for clarification about which grant fund this will come from; David said it is up to the Steering Committee to determine which fund to pull it from. Gordon Zimmerman made a motion to approve the grant request; Linda Miller second. Chair Kramer called for questions; Jacob Powell asked whether the waste and compost would be recycled on site or taken home to personal gardens? Jenny said it will be used on site, but leftovers could be taken home to their personal gardens. She noted that the future plans for the larger school complex may include a community garden – and the program could be expanded in that way. Chair Kramer called for a vote: 0 Nays, 9 in favor. Motion carries and the grant was approved.

10:27am

Miscellaneous

- Contracts & Agreements

David shared a reminder that we agreed to review the contracts and agreements on an annual basis; Staff will report to Steering Committee on this topic at the June meeting.

- Hazardous Waste Collection

David will bring a PowerPoint presentation to the June meeting. The meetings have continued to attract a steady level of participants, even during Covid.

- Legislative Update

A large number of bills continue to move forward. There are two bills that are central to our program's mission. SB-582 is "EPR " (extended producer responsibility) legislation that culminates two years of effort by the DEQ-hosted Recycling Steering Committee. This product stewardship bill is comprehensive. Among other things, it would provide a needed infusion of monies into Oregon's recycling infrastructure, mandate truth in labelling about the recyclability of packaging, create a statewide recycling list, and establish a reimbursement for transportation costs of recyclables to market, vehicle allowing local governments and haulers autonomy in their decision making. David recognized Chair Kramer's efforts to champion and support this legislative work.

There is also an EPR bill for HHW (HB-2955) that would change our core program by reducing our disposal costs for hazardous waste. There is a right-to-repair bill, a mattress EPR bill, and several others worth watching, including the aforementioned bill sponsored by Senator Thomsen pertaining to removal of abandoned RV's. David asked whether there were any questions; there were none.

- Awards (NAHMMA, and Call2Recycle)

David shared recent awards to the program from NAHMMA and Call2Recycle for program innovations and operations. He also highlighted that Bruce Lumper received an award for the formation of the program.

- Other?

Chair Kramer encouraged commissioners to participate in legislative session.

Kevin Liburdy thanked the Budget Committee and the work and for the Wasco County staff for joining to provide today's meeting to allow for a better understanding of the salary and recruitment information.

11:00 am Adjourn