



Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District  
Budget Committee Teleconference Meeting Minutes  
Hybrid Meeting: In-person and via Teleconference  
May 13, 2026

**Directors:** Phil Kaser                      Bob Krein                      Shawn Sorensen  
Jeff Crump (teleconference)

**Appointees:** Chuck Covert                      Brian Tuck                      Lacy Underhill  
Jerod Warnock (teleconference)

**Staff:** Shilah Olson, District Manager and Budget Officer  
Dana Woods                      Abbie Forrest                      Allie Marker

**Guests:** None

**10:00 AM Call to Order**

SWCD Vice-Chairman Bob Krein called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda. Introductions were made around the room.

Budget Officer Shilah Olson reviewed the budget message and asked the committee if they had any questions. None were asked. She then went through the budget detail sheets. Given the downward trend of interest rates since 2024, a conservative 3.0% was used for budgeting purposes.

The proposed FY26-27 budget includes \$270,730 for early phases of the planned shop expansion, which is one component of the District’s Long Range Plan. Loan financing remains an option for the remaining expansion costs.

Shilah noted the SWCD’s assumption of the Lower Deschutes CWMA in 2024, along with the new designation as Wasco County weed management entity represent program expansion. The program has grown to include seasonal weed technician positions which expands our capacity to address education, outreach, early detection/rapid response and cooperative weed control policies.

All technical assistance type grants are included as resources and expenses in the General Fund. There are 9 pending grant applications included in the proposed budget. If additional grants are obtained during the year, appropriate budget amendments will be submitted to the board for approval based on Oregon Budget Law requirements.

Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) contribution percentages are budgeted at the same level as the current budget. PERS updates their rates biennially and the current rates are valid through June 30, 2027.

Personnel Pay Scale for this budget is based on the 2026 (POR) GS Schedule. Step increases are budgeted for 4 staff members based on time in grade. A promotion is budgeted for 1 staff member.

Shilah noted that there are no proposed changes in financial policy or basis of accounting for FY26-27.

Bob called for public comment. No public comments were made.

*Brian moved that the budget committee approve the budget as presented in the amount of \$7,185,398; Lacy seconded. Motion carried with Phil, Shawn, Bob, Jeff, Brian, Lacy, Chuck and Jerod all voting in favor.*

*Chuck moved that the budget committee approve a tax levy in the amount of \$0.25/\$1,000 for operating purposes in the General Fund; Shawn seconded. Motion carried with Phil, Shawn, Bob, Jeff, Brian, Lacy, Chuck and Jerod all voting in favor.*

**Adjourn 11:40 AM**

Dana Woods