

**South County Health District
Regular Meeting November 26, 2024
340 Hwy 203, Union, OR**

Call to order 4:12PM by President Susie Wirkkala

Roll Call: Present –Debbie Clark, Susie Wirkkala, Gerry Zastrow, Tyler Griffiths, Chris Power, and District Manager Adina Ferguson. Beth Callison joined the meeting after roll call.

Approval of Minutes: Chris Power made a motion to accept the October 29, 2024 minutes, Gerry seconded the motion. Passed unanimously by Debbie, Susie, Gerry, Tyler and Chris.

Conflict of Interest Policy: Debbie explained that in preparing the minutes from October she discovered that the board had agreed to adopt the new policy but did not take a vote to that effect. Chris made a motion that the new conflict of interest policy be adopted, and Gerry seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous with those present.

Roof Update: Adina announced that the roofer has completed the job of repairing and sealing the roof. They did more work than what was agreed upon. They had to remove an exhaust fan which was the source of the leak and repair the roof. They also used sheet metal to repair the gutters and sealed those. Adina verified the work and paid them for the job as directed by the board.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms: Adina announced that the staff have all completed their annual conflict of interest forms and have been given copies and training on the policy. Tyler and Gerry returned their forms to the District Manager and the remaining board members turned in their forms.

Progress on Grants for Clinic Remodel: Adina as District Manager and Debbie as Grant writer for the district recapped their work since the October meeting to identify grant opportunities so the district could proceed with the clinic remodel project.

11/6/24 – Adina, Debbie and Chris met with Nick DuCote. Nick explained that he wrote grants for several other groups trying to build or expand clinics in Eastern Oregon and none received any funding. Focus of the federal government has shifted to housing and support of the influx of new arrivals to our country. He suggested that our best bet – if we can possibly afford it – would be to look at borrowing as large an amount as possible and fill in the shortfall with government and foundation grants. Adina brought up Business Oregon and Nick thought that was a great idea. He has a good working relationship with Business Oregon Rep Brian McDowell and can get us a meeting with him to get started. If they will loan us the funding, SCHD can then go back to the Congressional Appropriations Grant and ask for a smaller amount, then do the same with the Oregon State annual funding. Once we have about 80% funded, we can go to Ford Family Foundation, Roundhouse Foundation and a few others to raise the shortfall or reduce our debt load on the loan.

11/7/2024 – Adina and Debbie met via Zoom with Rebecca from Roundhouse Foundation to talk about SCHD, our clinic remodel and our mission. Rebecca was enthusiastic about our district, promised to help financially when we are ready to move forward and sent out introductions to key players who can help us with funding or mentorship in our work to help our community.

11/13/2024 Meeting with Brian McDowell: Nick DuCote, Adina, and Debbie met with Brian McDowell. He felt SCHD has a very good chance of qualifying for a loan through Business Oregon. He and Nick suggested that SCHD go for \$800,000. The district could take less than that if they can obtain several smaller grants. That would decrease the amount that would have to be paid back. The repayment would be on an annual basis and Brian was sure that interest is only compounded annually, saving us money on the repayment amount. This was confirmed on 11/25/2024 when a follow-up meeting was held to verify that SCHD does not qualify for the infrastructure grant and to request the loan inquiry application.

Debbie shared with the group that the entire board will be needed moving forward to make contacts with local partners to secure letters of support, meet with the staff from our federal and state legislatures and to make contact with several partners who can support our efforts.

The board discussed the information and agreed that the loan would be an excellent idea to secure the money needed to build our new clinic before our current situation gets any more critical. The board has been made aware that the manager of the GRH medical clinic has been unhappy with our staff.

The board agreed to pursue any possible grant that will offset the total amount of the loan. The state grant submission is Jan-Feb, Congressional Appropriations is due February and Nick will submit those. Once we hear back on the loan we will have sufficient funding to approach FFF, Roundhouse and several others. At that point we can get the bidding process started for the remodel. Beth made a motion that SCHD pursue the loan and grants as recommended by our Grant consultant, Nick DuCote and Tyler seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

Staff Christmas Lunch: The board agreed to do a potluck for the dental clinic staff at the new building on Dec. 19th from noon to 1PM. The board will provide the food.

Sponsorship of Catherine Creek Community Center Lunch: District Manager has arranged for SCHD to sponsor the Dec. 13th community meal at the community center. Staff members and any board members who are available are invited to help serve the lunch to attendees.

Meeting adjourned at 5:25PM.

Next meeting will be December 31 at 4:00PM.

