

Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

May 2, 2022

In Attendance: Lauren Weston (District Manager), Richard Noel (Chair), Carissa Stein (Supervisor), Molly Magnan (Supervisor), Sarah Larose (NRCS District Conservationist)

Conducted at Franklin County Field Days site – 294 Airport Road, Highgate, VT.

Minutes recorded by Lauren Weston

Minutes:

9:00 am: NRCS update from Sarah Larose.

- Round 1 of EQIP is in obligation
- EQIP CIG and CIC – applications for these programs are low (due June 10th). There may be options to move some money from these pools to general EQIP.
- Round 2 of EQIP – both ranking deadlines in May/June
- Lauren Gibson has taken on the GS9/11 position previously left open from Sarah Larose's move to District Conservationist.
- NRCS will be hiring for a forestry or rangeland specialist
- Tucker Malone's position has been advertised and closed on April 27th – this position will work out of the Morrisville Office in statewide attempt to reduce single person offices.
- Two Pathways will be starting soon – 1 engineer and 1 soil conservationist.
- Mariah Choiniere will be serving in the Central Zone of VT for this summer.
- Caitlin Sibling is the new VACD Program Assistant
- Holly McClintock is moving on to a position with VHCBC.
- Renee Bolduc starts mid-May/June with NRCS in St. Albans
- NRCS is going back to the office using their new telework agreements – roughly half time in the office.

District needs to sign off on a CREP contract – JBB3 LLC, Richard Noel signs and returns to Sarah Larose. There may be more CREP contracts to review in the future.

9:19 am: Update from Richard Noel about NRCC/VACD. Holden Sparacino left and his position has been filled – 2 grants/program managers hired. Montpelier and legislature is beginning to understand who NRCDs are, the lobbying efforts seem to be working. NRCDs serve as the outreach arm and facilitation for State and USDA programs. NRCS staff would be interested in helping to host outreach events.

9:41 am: Lauren Weston reviews requirements of Open Meeting Law and posting minutes.

9:42 am: Board discusses recruitment of additional board members – associate supervisors.

9:44 am: Board reviews and votes on 2022 February 23 Board Meeting Minutes and 2022 March 22 Board Meeting Minutes - no quorum. Carissa Stein makes a motion to approve both sets of minutes; Molly Magnan seconds. All approve, motion passes.

9:45 am: Lauren Weston review FY22 Finances to date through end of March. Richard Noel makes a

motion to approve Profit and Loss and Balance Sheets; Molly Magnan seconds. All approve, motion passes.

9:53 am: Board reviews and discusses Board Member position description; decide to each review before June Board meeting and sign and return descriptions to Lauren Weston.

9:56 am: Lauren Weston reviews recent FCNRCD successes to keep Board up to date.

- Planted 1300 trees and shrubs on Earth Day – thanks to Mariah Choiniere at UVM.
- FCNRCD successfully working through Vermont Pay for Phosphorus Program with 11 farmers.
- FCNRCD received increase in AgCWIP – agricultural clean water funding for the coming 4 years.
- FCNRCD is the boots on the ground – how can we help farmers with new reseeding, soil tests, recommendations for amendments (and liming and leaching) – this type of work creates the initial relationship with farmers and gets you on the farm.
- Working on starting up Basin Water Quality Councils as a part of the implementation of Act 76.

10:29 am: Discuss that every region of Vermont has an agricultural field days site and how important they are.

10:31 am: Brainstorming ideas about alternate locations to host the tree sale if the Franklin County Field Days site is moved. Some ideas include Hudak, the Christmas Tree Farm on 108 and 36, Doe's Leap Farm (central locations for Franklin County residents). Previously, District Managers rented a refrigerated tractor trailer truck to keep at the Field Days site. Boucher on Gore Road has cold storage.

10:46 am: Discussion about how to get involved in existing fairs and events in agriculture in Franklin County. Franklin County Field Days – Laurie Locke at FSA takes the lead. Maple Festival – Stefan Tatro and Cecile Branon are main organizers. Dairy Festival – Pierre Parent (ask Phil Parent about this connect). In the past, District hosted a bus tour for the public and agency staff to show off manure injection, compost/waste, stream bank stabilization projects, manure pits, dams – when small turnout – just rented a van. Try to also get involved in the UVM Field Days and events at Borderview Farm; attend Farmers Markets and table. SAWA Bay tables. There was a Dairy Expo put on by the Historical Museum at Taylor Park with pictures competition.

Planning Fall Crop Field Day for NRCD staff – try to get in at corn silage harvesting timeframe – watch how the bunk gets filled, discuss cover crop timing. There's a two-week timeframe in Franklin County for corn harvest. Could line up with hay cutting 3rd or 4th cut. Perhaps also go to an equipment facility to look at the machines.

10:58 am: Discussion about potential farm hosts for upcoming events – suggestions include Larry Gervais, St. Pierres, Tim Magnant, farms that may be transitioning (Tom Machia), Fortins.

11:04 am: Scheduling next District Board meeting at the St. Albans Police Barracks for June 16th from 9 am to 11 am.

11:14 am: Richard Noel makes a motion to adjourn the meeting; Carissa Stein seconds. All approve, motion passes.