

Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2023

In Attendance: Lauren Weston (District Manager), Mel Auffredou (new Project Technician), Richard Noel (Chair), Carissa Stein (Supervisor), Molly Magnan (Supervisor) arrived at 3:16, Dan Pipes (Supervisor), Vicky Drew (Treasurer) joining via Zoom, Phil Parent (Associate Supervisor) arrived at 3:10, Sarah Larose (NRCS Zone District Conservationist)

Conducted at St. Albans Free Library, St. Albans
Minutes recorded by Lauren Weston

The written minutes are a synopsis of the discussion at the meeting. Motions are as stated. Minutes will be subject to correction by the Board. Changes, if any, will be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the Board.

Minutes:

3:07 pm: Meeting called to order. Quorum present.

3:08 pm: NRCS update from Sarah Larose, NRCS Northwest Zone District Conservationist.

- one 401 planner position application, Logan Reese, accepted the tentative offer, other one declined as they took another job.
- P.A. position yet to be advertised, as well as Soil Con Tech and 401 planner position.
- no engineering pathways, they declined, don't know why.
- IRA EQIP and IRA CSP funding rounds this FY23, more information to come.
- RCPP working through the workload, overall state received way more applications than expected. Screening will be put into place to help manage the huge workload.
- planners working through EQIP and CSP applications from Round 1
- briefly discussed ACT NOW, a quick sign up and turn around into a contract process, VT going to start exploring.
- working on Local Funding Pool and gathering and compiling information to have ready for FY2024 funding pool
- Lauren Gibson is taking a detail as the State Biologist in Colorado, likely to be a 90 day detail.

3:10 pm: Phil Parent, Associate Supervisor, arrives.

3:16 pm: Molly Magnan, Supervisor, arrives.

3:18 pm: Mel Auffredou, new Project Technician with FCNRCD introduces herself to board.

3:27 pm: Mel Auffredou leaves meeting.

3:28 pm: Richard Noel shares about NRCC meetings he has attended including the work the Clare Ireland has been doing on the NRCC budget and updates about grants FCNRCD will be receiving.

3:34 pm: Vicky Drew shares updates about VACD Board Meetings she's been attending including her role as Vice Chair of the executive committee, a reminder about the upcoming board meeting that all

supervisors are invited to, and that Linda Corse is our NACD representative for Vermont. Vicky will bring back updates from Linda on the National meeting to share with the group.

3:38 pm: Lauren Weston shares about updates on cold storage for the tree sale – no luck with a reefer unit yet, but we do have somewhere to store trees for tree plantings.

3:41 pm: Supervisors review minutes from January 11, 2023 meeting. Dan Pipes makes a motion to accept minutes as written, Molly Magnan seconds, all approve, motion carries.

3:53 pm: Lauren Weston reviews FY23 financials (Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss by Month, Bank Statements, and Project Income Spreadsheet). Since the last board meeting, the following grants and contracts have been approved by the Board Treasurer, Vicky Drew:

- AgCWIP contract with VAAF
- Ag Resource Specialist Training
- Lake Carmi BMP project with DEC
- DIBG – Dead Creek Bridge Removal Implementation
- DIBG – Missisquoi Trib Erosion Mitigation
- Trout Brook Reservoir Dam Removal Feasibility Study
- Monument Road MNWE Riparian Planting
- Trib to Hungerford Brook Riparian Planting
- Boneyard Farm Riparian Planting

Carissa Stein makes a motion to accept FY23 Financials to Date; Dan Pipes seconds, all approve, motion carries.

3:57 pm: Lauren Weston share a brief update about the Self Audit recently performed at the request of DEC and the findings and resulting changes/actions to be taken for grant management.

3:59 pm: Carissa Stein and Lauren Weston discuss potential benefits and challenges to switching FCNRCD staff from hourly to salary positions. Vicky Drew offers to bring this discussion to VACD and NACD to see if there is some existing policy that we can follow; will report back at next board meeting.

4:10 pm: Dan Pipes provides an overview of the forthcoming Strategic Planning process lined out by Andy Crossman earlier today. Hoping to partner with FCNRCD staff to start process and bring ideas and next steps back to the board at regular intervals. Will work on mission statement validation and strategic themes. Sarah Larose offers to share the NRCS strategic plans for reference. Vicky Drew will return to VT by end of April and board hopes to have an in-person dinner meeting once she's back.

4:24 pm: Lauren Weston discusses the idea of applying for FCNRCD to serve as a host site for an ECO AmeriCorps member starting in Sept 2023. Group discusses potential NRCS seating constraints and need to iron that out in advance of a new member joining. Carissa Stein makes a motion to approve FCNRCD with applying for an ECO member, Dan Pipes seconds, all approve, motion carries.

4:30 pm: Lauren Weston shares some updates from efforts by other supervisory unions of NRCDs in VT to reengage and consider their roles. Group discusses these ideas and decides that no changes will be made currently to the supervisory union that FCNRCD is a part of.

4:34 pm: Carissa Stein shares about the Civilian Conservation Corps of Northwest Vermont which is a new entity aimed at using a thrift store to fund conservation projects and youth training in a similar model to VYCC. Carissa Stein asks if any supervisors are interested in serving as strategic advisors for that process.

4:45 pm: Lauren Weston proposes Thursday, March 23rd at 3 pm for next board meeting at St Albans Library.

4:50 pm: Lauren Weston shares some updates on grants and programs including high enrollment of Franklin County farmers in Pay for Phosphorus program and funding for maintenance of tree plantings. Lauren Weston also reviews list of folks reached out to for willow sources, board members agree to reach out to the folks that they know to ask about access.

5:10 pm: Carissa Stein makes a motion to adjourn meeting, Molly Magnan seconds, all approve, motion carries.