

Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

In Attendance: Lauren Weston (District Manager), Katy Dynarski (Projects Coordinator), Megan Walker (Project Technician), Kate Wettergreen (ECO AmeriCorps Member), Richard Noel (Chair), Phil Parent (Vice Chair), Adrian Rainville (Supervisor), Molly Magnan (Supervisor)

Conducted at Richard Noel's house in Highgate, VT

Minutes recorded by Lauren Weston

Minutes:

9:02am: Richard Noel calls meeting to order.

9:03 am: Introductions of new staff at the District. Megan Walker – previous experience on a vegetable farm in Monkton, worked at DFA and Coop in the lab and in the store, will be starting off working on NMPs. Katy Dynarski – moved to VT in 2019, previously worked as a soil scientist, has experience with educational programs. Kate Wettergreen – serving as ECEO AmeriCorps member, graduated from UVM in 2020, originally from Pittsburgh

9:09 am: Board Member introductions to new staff. Phil Parent – lives and works in Enosburgh and Sheldon, ran a dairy for 38 years, sold cows last year. Now working at the Cheese Plant in town. Been on the Board since 2000; also part of the Lyons in Enosburgh. Adrian Rainville – from Highgate. In 1985, bought a dairy farm, sold cows this past winter. Richard Noel – hosting this meeting on his retirement farm. In dairy for over 35 years. Went organic in 2006 at the big farm which is located in the center of the Rock River. Ditch system there is 2 miles.

9:15 am: Discussion about Tactical Basin Planning and the Missisquoi Bay filling up with sediment and phosphorus

9:18 am: Will need to post Election Notice for Richard's position on the Board as his 5-year term is up. Want to keep dairy farmers on the board. Ideas: Vicky Drew, Danny Fortin, Tyler Webb.

9:26 am: Molly Magnan arrival and introduction.

9:39 am: Notification that Eileen Trudell has formally resigned from the Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors. Resignation approved by all Board members present. Eileen Trudell removed from Board.

9:40 am: Minutes from 2021 August 16 Board Meeting put to vote. Phil Parent makes a motion to approve; Adrian Rainville seconds. All approve, motion passes.

9:41 am: FY22 Q1 Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet discussed. Net positive \$11,000 for the quarter. There was a lot of billing that happened in the month of October too, will see that at our next meeting. Discussion about what falls under deferred revenue.

9:46 am: FY22 Q1 Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet reviewed - Molly Magnan makes a motion to approve; Phil Parent seconds. All approve, motion passes.

9:53 am: Review of updated Personnel Policy; Lauren Weston describes changes made since previous policy was written. Rewritten to include up to date legal information and behavioral policy. Richard Noel makes a motion to approve; Phil Parent seconds. All approve, motion passes.

10:00 am: Lauren Weston presents discussion around NRCDs request to Vermont State Legislature for baseline funding of all Districts in equitable manner. Board discusses interest in expressing support during testimony, reaching out to our representatives on the Appropriations Committee, etc. Lauren Weston describes how District is currently all grant funded and this would provide stable support of programming.

10:05 am: Board discusses their frustration around NRCS and State processes to work with farmers only once a resource concern has been identified – retroactive and not proactive.

10:08 am: Board discusses issues with Lake Carmi, interest in the aeration system, how lakes fill in over time due to natural geologic processes.

10:14 am: Discussion from Lauren Weston and Megan Walker about Conservation Practice Surveys being done to document farmer funded practices. Adrian Rainville expressed interest in doing the survey. Discussion around the need of farmers to buy in to a practice to actually pay for it themselves; they really need to believe in it. This type of work could help improve the reputation of farmers around water quality.

10:20 am: Lake Carmi Discussion – Adrian Rainville was on the Franklin Zoning Board for many years. There was a draw down of the lake in 1975 and you could see the pipes from the camps going directly into the lake. Discussion around the upcoming proposal for work that the District is working on. Influence of so many seasonal camps changing to year round camps without adequate septic. Denna Benjamin might be interested in joining the District board again due to connections to Lake Carmi possibly?

10:27 am: Discussion of Events Completed since past Board Meeting – State House to Farmhouse, Bioblitz (20% of observations were research grade, 730 observations. Discussion about native species.

10:36 am: Discussion of partner meetings hosted recently: VAWQP regional meeting, Tactical Basin Planning meetings, public comment is open if anyone would like to submit. Discussion around which trees we should be planting.

10:48 am: Molly Magnan leaves meeting.

10:48 am: Discussion of current Grants that the District is working on applying to. Specific interest in dam removal scoping project – Town of Highgate has dam rights to the Highgate and Swanton dams. Is Cover Crop funding coming to an end through State? Should taxpayers be paying for implementation of Best Management Practices on private roads around Lake Carmi – needs to be an ongoing discussion about how public funds are used on private lands.

11:23 am: Quick discussion about fall projects that the District is working on.

11:25 am: Next Board meeting will be Nov 17th at 9 am at Richard Noel's home

11:30 am: Motion to adjourn meeting made by Richard Noel; Adrian Rainville seconds, all approve, motion carries.