

Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2020

In attendance: Philip Parent (Vice Chair), Eliza Letourneau (ECO AmeriCorps Cons. Tech.), Wynea Buford (NRCS District Conservationist), Brodie Haenke (Conservation Specialist), Jeannie Bartlett (District Manager), Doug Lantagne (Treasurer), Richard Noel (Chair)

Conducted via teleconference.

Minutes recorded by Jeannie Bartlett, Brodie Haenke & Eliza Letourneau

Minutes:

3:25 Meeting called to order.

3:26 Doug makes a motion to approve the minutes from 2/6/2020. Phil seconds. Motion carried.

3:27 NRCS Update from Wynea. No face-to-face meetings in the office unless by appointment, and even then by a minimum. A person who tested positive for COVID-19 has been in our office, so we are not in the space until it is deep cleaned. We are hoping 1-2 people can be back in the office starting tomorrow. Staff having been working on Conservation Activity Plans for 27 customers. Staff are working with new online tools for applications, planning, contracting, etc. Timeline for NRCS programs may be adjusted due to COVID-19. NRCS staff are deemed essential by USDA and will continue to meet producers on-site, practicing social distancing and not entering homes.

3:32 Review of financials, including Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet. Doug asked Jeannie to share the cash flow spreadsheet she's been working on. Treasurer accepts profit and loss as written at this time. Treasurer makes a motion to approve the Profit & Loss Sheet as printed. Phil seconds. Motion carried.

Review of Balance Sheet. Total equity of \$41,000 as of March 23, so it's looking good.

3:38 Jeannie wants to make sure we are following District financial policy by getting formal Board approval for our open grants and contracts. Open grants and contracts valued above \$1,000 should get board approval. Board is discussing whether they can give a blanket approval or need to do each one individually. Richard suggests approving all at once. Doug seconds. Phillip approves. All in Favor. Approved.

3:42 Richard asks if the board needs to approve contractors the District works with. Jeannie confirms that is the case. Doug makes a motion to approve. Phillip seconds. All approve. Motion carries.

3:44 Scholarship discussion. Richard asks about a scholarship applicant with a familiar family name. Richard asks if we awarded a scholarship last year? Jeannie confirms that we did not last year. Board would consider awarding two years of scholarship awards to one applicant if we only received one applicant for those two years. Jeannie: If we award this scholarship, then it would be the end of the scholarship the District manages. Doug thinks that she is an excellent applicant and makes a motion to award \$1,000 to the applicant. Phillip seconds. All in favor. Motion carries.

3:49 District updates. Jeannie has been working on tree plantings for the spring, financials. Richard wants a few days heads up about the tree sale because they might move buildings.

3:51 Tree sale. Can we hold our tree sales this spring? Other District Managers are discussing this and if a "Stay at Home" order from the State would allow anyone to pick up their trees. Richard suggests they could pick up trees one-at-a-time. No folks in the building. Brodie suggests staggering pickups by last name or by town they're from; possibly stretching-out pickup over a few days. Doug also suggests considering delaying a couple weeks. Richard will check and see if there is a wedding going on at the barn around the time for the tree sale.

4:01 there are a few other events that are coming up that may be up in the air. Mushroom workshop may be postponed. Tree plantings might be less in the air because they are smaller groups, but there is still uncertainty. They would be exempt if they are considered Forestry, but Jeannie needs to still figure out

4:03 Eliza reports that she's been working on our Water Quality Monitoring report for the 2019 season, as well as the report for Lake Carmi water sampling that the Franklin Watershed Committee conducted in 2019.

4:03 Brodie reports that he made a site visit yesterday to pick up documents from a farmer for whom he is helping write a VHCB water quality grant. He was initially planning to write three, but the other two farmers dropped their interest - in part due to COVID-19. The grants require significant financial information from the applicants.

4:06 Next meeting set for Thursday May 7th at 3:00pm. To be determined whether it is in person or via teleconference.

4:07 Meeting adjourned.

Follow up:

- Board requests that Jeannie send a reminder the day before the next board meeting
- Richard will contact the Field Days buildings supervisor to see what flexibility they might have on dates
- Jeannie will share her draft cash flow worksheets with Doug for his review, discussion