

Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

April 7, 2021

In Attendance: Lauren Weston (District Manager), Brodie Haenke (Conservation Specialist), Katherine Helmer (ECO AmeriCorps Member), Richard Noel (Chair), Phil Parent (Vice Chair)

No Quorum: no voting or motions put forward.

Conducted via Zoom online meeting platform

Minutes recorded by Brodie Haenke and Lauren Weston

Minutes:

9:33 am: Meeting called to order.

9:33 am: Board customs. Richard can make motions as Board Chair. Assistant supervisors can vote, but it should be planned in advance. Lauren will be submitting Board reimbursement checks for everyone this week.

9:34 am: Wynea Buford NRCS Update. They currently have 37 applications that have been approved that will be moving to contracts in Franklin County. Hope to have these obligated by June. More than 130 applications were received.

37 applications that have been preapproved in Franklin Co.

11 Cropland

8 FMP - plans

7 Forestry/Wildlife – practices to be implemented

4 Farmstead

3 NMP – to be written

2 High Tunnel

1 Grazing

EQIP=\$300,000.00 some of those are also part of RCPP (below)

RCPP= \$112,609.42

EQIP

Round 3 applications deadline for Forest Management Plan needing to be written- Written is June 18, 2021 –All customers wanting to have plans written prior to April 1, 2022 should apply for assistance by the above date.

We will have Round 1 contracts obligated by June 4 and Round 2 & 3 Obligated by August 13, 2021.

CSP

Application deadline is April 23, 2021

Obligation deadline is August 13, 2021

AMA

Application deadline for High Tunnel is May 14, 2021

Obligation deadline is August 13, 2021

Wynea will be leaving the NW Zone and will be the Assistant State Conservationist in Colchester.

9:42 AM: Review balance and Profit and Loss Sheets - was not voted on because no quorum.

The District has sold out of trees completely twice.

The District will be getting a grant from the State for Project Development this week. We may confirm it via email and may wait until next month.

9:48 am: Dam update.

Designs are complete. Looking for implementation in July – September. Currently in permitting processes.

UVM CAP (archaeology) – completed an initial assessment and report, but now will be digging test pits around the site in areas that were identified as areas of potential sensitivity for precontact Native American sites; District is currently working through that contract

Pre bid site visit occurred last Friday - 16 different contracting companies showed up from all over the state!

Bid amendment Q&A on Friday

Bids are due on Wednesday next week – Lauren will be in touch with all Board members to approve Contractor selection and approve contracting documents for that business.

Lauren and Brodie are working on figuring out payment schedules

9:55 am: Board Recruitment Update – please continue to send Lauren ideas about who else might be a good fit for the Board so that we can reach out to them.

9:56 am: The District got approved for an AmeriCorps member for next year. Lauren is considering hiring the AmeriCorps member before they start serving so they can be trained by Katherine Helmer – pending financial analysis.

9:59 am: Willow staking project along the Browns River funded by the DEC. The District harvested over 1100 willow stakes on Monday and installed all of them on Wednesday last week. Several ECO AmeriCorps members joined in the afternoon. The willows were harvested from the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge. In two weeks, the District will return to plant bare root trees along a 35 ft. wide buffer.

10:05 am: Willow Nursery. Richard Noel may be able to host a willow nursery for the District for future willow staking projects. Lauren will visit Richard's to take a look at the potential site soon.

10:06 am: Trout Sale. Where should the trout be picked up? Richard: The Highgate field days may be the best location. Richard shares a phone number for Lauren. Other options might be the Park and Ride in Highgate or the Armory parking lot in Enosburg.

10:11 am: Lake Lessons Update: Lake Lessons is an environmental education series for 4th grade elementary school students hosted in partnership with the St. Albans Museum and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture. It is usually in-person, but with COVID – they are creating online content and potentially

also planning an in person event if possible. Katherine is developing two lessons plans and the District may have its own “table” at the event. The District’s lessons will focus on cover crops and soil sampling.

10:18 am: Project Updates: Largest tree sale ever! Over \$35,000 in sales! Lauren sent around pick up times to customers. The District used volunteers in years past, but that will be difficult this year. Do any Board Supervisors want to volunteer? Richard helps with getting water set up.

10:25 am: Discussion of AOP culvert project with the NRPC. Katherine worked with the NRPC to identify 15 culverts in the Tyler Branch and Trout River watersheds where there are native brook trout populations. They will hire an engineer consultant to review their work and make additional recommendations on which projects may have the best potential. Katherine will be assisting the Orleans County NRCD with a similar project identification project.

Discussion about the importance of focusing resources on headwater streams and development in those areas – because it influences everything downstream.

10:35 am: Discussion of Board Meeting times and dates to maximize attendance; looking forward to getting back together in person.

10:43 am: Set next meeting for May 19 @ 9:30am.

10:46 am: Meeting adjourned.