

Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

September 27, 2022

In Attendance: Lauren Weston (District Manager), Richard Noel (Chair), Carissa Stein (Supervisor), Molly Magnan (Supervisor), Vicky Drew (Treasurer), Sarah Larose (NRCS Zone District Conservationist), Dan Pipes Associate Supervisor)

Conducted at Northwestern Counseling & Support Services, 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:

3:33 pm: Meeting called to order, all present.

3:35 pm: NRCS update from Sarah Larose, NRCS Northwest Zone District Conservationist.

- FY23 program deadlines, CSP- 10/21, EQIP/AMA/RCPPP14- 11/18, RCPP18 -1/13, one round of funding this FY
- Civil Engineer Technician interviews are tomorrow 9/28 – applicant cancelled.
- Civil Engineer position to back fill behind Xav will have to re-advertised, no one made the panel.
- the 401 series planner GS7/9 position was advertised, have not heard anything back, this back fills one of the Soil Con positions.
- new Outreach Coordinator Josh Allen, promotion for him, was a Soil Con.
- Public Affairs Specialist position Andrew Thomason is serving in a detail capacity.
- asked if communication efforts on NRCS' part was working for the District
- CARP Payments – high tunnels added

3:46 pm: Discussion about FCNRCD Board Supervisor – Position Description. Group suggested adding language to clarify that Supervisors may only miss up to four (4) board meetings per calendar year or be subject to review and possible removal or reinstatement as only an Associate Supervisor; extraordinary circumstances may be grounds for an exception to this policy. Motion made to change the language in the Position Description and retroactively clarify the language so that previous Supervisor signatures and agreements to the Position Description are still valid. Richard Noel makes a motion to this effect, Vicky Drew seconds, all approve, motion carries.

3:55 pm: Richard Noel indicates that he has not attended any NRCC meetings since the past Board Meeting.

3:56 pm: Discussion about rental options for refrigerated trailers for the tree sale and spring tree and willow planting projects. Richard Noel presents research he's gathered; suggestion from others to look into Greens rentals. Board discusses varieties desired for the tree sale.

4:06 pm: Board review 2022 August 30 Board Meeting Minutes. Richard Noel makes a motion to approve minutes as written, Vicky Drew seconds, all approve, motion carries.

4:07 pm: Lauren Weston presents FY23-to-date financial reports. Carissa Stein makes a motion to accept FY23 Profit and Loss, Balance Sheet, Bank Statement, and Projected Income Spreadsheet; Vicky Drew seconds, all approve, motion carries.

4:23 pm: Group reviews suggested changes to the Financial Policies and Procedures of FCNRCD. Proposal to add language into Section 5. Contractual Obligations – “In lieu of a full Board vote, the Board Treasurer may approve contractual obligations between \$10,000 and \$150,000 with a report out back to the rest of the Board at the next monthly meeting”. Additional changes include clarifying language in Sections 8 and 10. An updated Policy will be posted to the District website. Carissa Stein makes a motion to approve changes to Financial Policy and Procedures; Molly Magnan seconds, all approve, motion carries.

4:43 pm: Group discusses future needs for strategic planning process as FCNRCD. Dan Pipes notes that he has experience in this field and a close friend who may be able to help. Board notes that 3-7 pm on Mondays, last Tuesday of the month, or Thursdays are good times for trying to meet in larger chunks of time. Lauren Weston will connect with Dan Pipes to scope a Strategic Plan.

4:52 pm: Group reviews proposed changes to the Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District Personnel Policy. Changes to be reflected in the document posted on FCNRCD website. Major changes include ability to carry over up to 160 PTO hours across calendar years, annual trainings on discrimination and harassment, inclusion of short term, long term disability and life insurance, as well as the tuition reimbursement program. Carissa Stein makes a motion to approve the changes to the Personnel Policy; Molly Magnan seconds, all approve, motion carries.

5:20 pm: Vicky Drew leaves meeting; quorum still intact.

5:25 pm: Lauren Weston shares dates and information about upcoming events involving the District

October 5th (required for all board members) - DEIJ Zoom meeting from 2 - 4:30 pm (info for Zoom and required pre-reading before the meeting is included at the bottom of this email)

October 12 (for interested farmers) - Capital Equipment Assistance Program workshop 10-1 at the St. Albans American Legion: <https://www.franklincountynrcd.org/post/capital-equipment-assistance-program-info-session-workshop-10-12-st-albans-american-legion>

October 25th (required for all board members) - Legislative Meet and Greet Event with Grand Isle NRCD at Richard Noel's House - 3308 Gore Road, Highgate, VT. 5:30 - 7:00 pm (Lauren will be sending more information about this including talking points and a formal invite once it's ready)

November 1st (for interested farmers) - Pay for Phosphorus Info Session 3-5pm at Hard'ack Recreation Area - Greg Brown Lodge or on Zoom: <https://www.franklincountynrcd.org/post/tuesday-nov-1-pay-for-phosphorus-info-session-at-hard-ack-recreation-area>

November 1st (for the general public, would like board members to attend) - Local-Led Conservation Meeting 5:30-7:30 pm at Hard'ack Recreation Area - Greg Brown Lodge: <https://www.franklincountynrcd.org/local>

November 29th (required for all board members) - Regular Board Meeting from 3-5 pm. (Location TBD - stay tuned).

5:41 pm: Richard Noel makes a motion to adjourn, Molly Magnan seconds, all approve, motion carries.