

Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

June 27, 2024

In Attendance: Lauren Weston (District Manager), Richard Noel (Chair), Carissa Stein (Supervisor), Vicky Drew (Supervisor), Dan Pipes (Supervisor)

Conducted at St Albans Free Library, St Albans VT
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:

3:16pm: Meeting called to order. Quorum present.

3:17 pm: Richard Noel shared that our AgCWIP request was funded by NRCC. Clare Ireland with VACD/NRCC is out on family leave until the fall.

3:18 pm: Lauren Weston shared updates from Sarah Larose, NRCS District Conservationist

- Not much to update with NRCS right now, working through the remainder of the FY24 preapprovals.
- We did get some late preapprovals and are moving those forward also.
- Sign up deadline for FY2025 August 23, 2024.
- Minimal discussion about the Local Funding Pool so far, Keith (ASTC-Field Operations) stated she needed to discuss further with Travis.
- One recommendation I heard was that instead of having a separate funding pool, since some of the Local funding pool requests seem to mirror other pools already offered would be to have local questions in the rankings.

3:20 pm: Lauren Weston shared a request from the Franklin County Field Days board to send a letter of support for them to attempt to purchase their current property by the airport. Carissa Stein made a motion to approve sending a letter of support, Vicky Drew seconds, all approve, motion carries.

3:22 pm: Vicky Drew shared an update related to progress on VACD committees. Vicky Drew also shared high level summary of VACD's end of session report from Action Circles.

3:27 pm: Supervisors review minutes from May 30th, 2024 meeting. Dan Pipes makes a motion to accept minutes, Carissa Stein seconds, all approve, motion carries.

3:28 pm: Group discusses future office space. Interest in a few properties in St Albans for potential purchase, Richard Noel and others may be available to visit properties with Lauren Weston. Several board members have strong connections to local community members who may be able to help with a purchase.

3:44 pm: Lauren Weston shared that the 2024 FCNRCD Tree Sale financial analysis is complete. Total hours worked in 2024 was 465, comparable to 2023 and 2022. There was \$86,591.25 in income for the

tree and trout sales, \$50,970.24 in non-staff expenses, and with staff expenses included, the overall net income for the sales was \$20,819.58

3:52 pm: Lauren Weston presented a letter drafted by FNLC, MRBA, and FCNRCD to consider to be sent to the Lake Champlain Basin Program regarding shared concerns over the timelines of their contracts and grant agreements. Vicky Drew made a motion to send the letter to LCBP and NEIWPC expressing concern and follow up with a request to discuss this issue further in person; Dan Pipes seconds, all approve, motion carries.

3:57 pm: Lauren Weston shared that 401K plans are nearly set up, except that the Employer Contribution still needs to be determined. Board discussed options and decided to follow the Traditional Safe Harbor plan which is a 3% match for 3% of employee contribution and an additional 0.5% for the next 2% of employee contribution up to 5%. Dan Pipes makes a motion to select the Traditional Safe Harbor plan with payments during each pay period, Carissa Stein seconds, all approve, motion carries.

4:08 pm: Carissa Stein announces to Board that she will be moving to Maine in September, so her final board meeting will be the August meeting. Board discussed potential new members who might be able to fill in some gaps in our current board's knowledge. Also discussed the possibility of adding in extra members as associate board members to increase capacity. Carissa Stein committed to drafting a board member skill matrix to help better understand future needs. Lauren Weston will create a prioritized list of needs for the District to be working on.

4:55 pm: Board discusses wages for new staff offers - \$23.25 for Maria Burnett, \$24.04 for Morgan Pratt, \$23.25 for a new position, and \$24/hr for Kerry Brosnan – current ECO AmeriCorps Member. Current staff at FCNRCD besides Lauren Weston and Kate Wettergreen who are hourly, full time, and do not yet have a position termination end date will receive a 10% pay increase for the pay period starting June 23, 2024. This means that Mel Auffredou will receive \$26.97/hr and Dorothy Kinney-Landis will receive \$26.11/hr. Other staff will remain at their existing wages. Lauren Weston, as a salaried employee, will be moved to a December/January salary negotiation period off from the June/July review period for hourly staff. Vicky Drew made a motion to accept the above listed wages for new and existing staff, Carissa Stein seconded, all approve, motion carries.

4:56 pm: Next board meeting will be July 23rd at 3 pm at St Albans Free Library.

5:24 pm: Carissa Stein makes a motion to adjourn the meeting; Vicky Drew seconds, all approve, motion carries.