

## Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

July 23, 2024

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

Conducted at 431 Franklin Park West and 579 Lake Street, 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:

3:05pm: Meeting called to order. Quorum present.

Members visited potential rental location at 431 Franklin Park West. Follow up items will be to gather more information about potential monthly utilities costs.

3:54 pm Sarah Larose shares NRCS updates:

- Local Funding Pool approved as submitted for 1.5 million, with 2nd sign up deadline of October 31st.
- Iliana Freiday is on a 100% detail in VT assisting the Wetland Team.
- Renee Bolduc is on a remote 20% remote detail assisting Washington state with their CREP workload.
- Nancy Allen is retiring in March of 2025.
- NWZ is finishing up obligations, there is potential for a few more late preapprovals.
- 7/24-7/25 Sarah is headed to Concord, NH for a DC Summit meeting, this meeting is intended to get all the New England DC's together to discuss IRA successes.
- NRCS All Employee meeting on July 31st, August 1st in Fairlee, VT, FY2025 programs information will be rolled out as well as other updates and awards.
- State Office positions are being filled:
  - Phyllicia Moore, ASTC-Field Operations, White River Junction – Start Date: 7/28/24
  - Cheyanne Rico, Outreach Coordinator, State Office – Start Date: 8/25/24
  - Adam Dellinger, RCPP Coordinator, State Office – Start Date: 9/8/24
  - Diana Dellinger, ASTC-Programs, State Office – Start Date: 9/8/24
  - Public Affairs Specialist, Trevor Saylor, State Office – Effective: 9/22/2024 leaving VT NRCS
  - Program Analyst position has been announced, this is due to Matt Perry retiring from the position.

4:00 pm: Vicky Drew and Lauren Weston share about the progress being made by the VACD Capacity Building Committee to select a consultant to assist with the VACD/NRCDs relationship and efficiencies. Richard Noel does not have updates from NRCC.

4:03 pm: Supervisors review minutes from June 27th, 2024 meeting. Vicky Drew makes a motion to accept minutes with correction made to update the date listed from 'July' to 'June' 27 2024, Carissa Stein seconds, all approve, motion carries.

Cariss Stein clarifies that this will be her last meeting as a board member.

4:08 pm: Lauren Weston shares a list of priorities for herself and the board to be working on related to governance, finances, planning, and more. Vicky Drew has begun outreach to try to recruit a new board member with skills needed based on the Board Matrix that Carissa Stein drafted.

4:23 pm: Board discusses Proposals submitted by 4 firms for The Branch Stream/Floodplain Restoration project in Enosburg. Dan Pipes makes a motion to select Fitzgerald Environmental Associates because they have the lowest cost, have a good track record of success with the Franklin County NRCD, and have an approach that addresses all aspects of the original Request for Proposals. Vicky Drew seconds, all approve, motion carries.

4:25 pm: Lauren Weston notifies board that she unintentionally violated the District's Conflict of Interest policy in April when she hired Carissa Stein (an active board member) without Board review to assist with the Lake Champlain Basin Program funded Developing Skills of TAPs to Assist Farmers with Soil Health Strategies grant. Carissa Stein Consulting was paid: \$1585.25 to assist with farm visits and soil sample collection at 3 farms around Vermont. The Board acknowledged this violation and will work to improve policies and systems to reduce potential for this type of occurrence from happening again. Lauren Weston will work to notify the Lake Champlain Basin Program of this error. The board of FCNRCD will take all recourse steps to address this concern as needed.

4:30 pm: Next board meeting will be scheduled via email.

Board visits property at 579 Lake Street in St Albans.

Board meeting adjourned.