

## Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2021

In Attendance: Lauren Weston (District Manager), Brodie Haenke (Conservation Specialist), Richard Noel (Chair), Phil Parent (Co-Chair), Eileen Trudell (Secretary), Molly Magnan (Supervisor), Adrian Rainville (Newly approved Supervisor), Nancy Allen (NRCS)

Conducted via Zoom online meeting platform

Minutes recorded by Brodie Haenke and Lauren Weston

### Minutes:

9:38am: Meeting called to order. Quorum present.

9:39am: Review of minutes from 1/6/2021. Phil makes motion to approve, Eileen seconds, all approve, motion carries.

9:40am: Introductions of all present for Adrian Rainville and Lauren Weston.

9:49am: NRCS Update from Nancy Allen. NRCS funding levels are down this year, there's a couple new programs being looked into. NRCS is in the middle of contracting.

9:54am: Consideration of Adrian Rainville being added as a Supervisor on the Board. Phil makes motion to approve, Eileen seconds, all approve, motion carries. Adrian Rainville joins the board.

9:58am: Balance sheet and Financials. Lauren and Jeannie worked together to put together this balance sheet, but Lauren will work on it alone next time. Discussion on the grant-funded nature of the Conservation District and balancing the budget over the entire fiscal year. Richard notes that the District also runs an annual tree sale that is independent of any of our state and federal grants.

10:02am: Profit and Loss. The District was at a net loss in January, but the District submitted several large invoices within our existing grants to be paid in coming months which will increase income levels. Molly moves to accept the financial statement, Phil seconds, all approve, the motion passes.

10:05am: Eileen Trudell, Phil Parent, and Adrian Rainville need to sign some paperwork so that Lauren Weston can become a new signatory for the District's bank account.

10:07am: Brodie Haenke gives an update on some Conservation District activities including the 2021 Nutrient Management Planning class and the Johnsons Mill Dam removal specifically regarding the archaeology report from UVM.

10:15am: Board Recruitment discussion. With Adrian Rainville joining the board, the District has met its requirement for board recruitment but the District should still be looking for new and on coming Assistant Supervisors due to the likelihood of board member retirement. A list of potential Assistant Supervisors was reviewed and next steps identified - letter or phone call outreach.

10:26am: Open ended discussion of Conservation District goals for the next one to five years. Richard Noel thinks that clean water and efficient nutrient management should continue to be the main goals of the District, especially as they relate to dairy farmers in Franklin County. Eileen Trudell agrees with Richard Noel that clean water should be a main priority for the District. Eileen Trudell and Richard Noel agree that there are opportunities for the District to work with the increasing number of maple sugar producers in Franklin County on things like forest management planning and perceived image. Eileen Trudell thinks there is an opportunity to improve the image of farmers in Franklin County regarding the ecosystem services and land stewardship that farmers provide. Eileen Trudell brought up the importance of agritourism and the impacts that COVID have had on that business. Brodie Haenke brought up the ongoing Signs of Conservation project being run by the District. Richard Noel brought up ideas of stream improvements and the need to combine on-the-land education, understanding of historical context, and college education to create solutions. Discussion about wind power in Franklin County and lack of grid connections to utilize that electricity. Molly Magnan is interested in moving towards paying farmers that farm and agricultural land provide with consideration of biodiversity. Molly Magnan brought up the Terraton Challenge (Indigo Ag) to get farmers making money somewhere other than their consumable products. Brodie Haenke brought up the Pay for Phosphorus grant opportunity from the State and will follow up with Molly Magnan about it; also brought up the legislative PES working group and progress. Richard Noel inquired about payment for carbon sequestration. Adrian Rainville says that there has been a newfound appreciation for local farmers and local food because of COVID. Adrian Rainville discussed the blue green algae outbreak in Burlington this past summer from developed areas and the potential to continue to improve water quality in Franklin County. Brodie Haenke brought up opportunities to connect more with Northwest Regional Planning Commission and City of St. Albans to work more on stormwater quality projects. Eileen Trudell inquired about surface waters and streams in St. Albans and asked for a presentation and updates from those partners in upcoming Board meetings. Lauren Weston shared that the District will be the VAWQP Northwest Regional Coordinator for all partners, coming soon. Richard Noel supports all board members to continue to speak up in future board meetings and discussions.

10:51am: Next Board Meeting scheduled for March 10 at 9:30 am.

10:53am: Meeting adjourned.