

## Franklin County NRCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

June 18th, 2020

In attendance: Wynea Buford (NRCS), Eliza Letourneau (ECO AmeriCorps Cons. Tech.), Jeannie Bartlett (District Manager), Brodie Haenke (Conservation Specialist), Doug Lantagne (Treasurer), Richard Noel (Chair), Molly Magnan (Board Member)

Conducted via teleconference.

Minutes recorded by Eliza Letourneau and Jeannie Bartlett.

### Minutes:

3:23 Meeting called to order.

3:24 Updates from Wynea. Staff are working on Conservation Activity Plans for Forestry, Energy and Pollinators - these are the plans that identify resource concerns and determine which conservation practices might be needed. Staffing updates, Jimmy Young has moved from VACD to NRCS, Brittany Cole has left, Aaron Thomas has taken her place, and his position is being filled. Lucy Zendzian has completed her Pathways internship and her role is being filled by Jill Mullican. NRCS will be adding an engineer in the St. Albans office by the end of July.

3:28 Doug motioned to approve minutes from the meeting 5/7/20 as printed. Molly seconds. Motion carried.

3:30 Updates from Jeannie regarding AgCWIP. The grant was amended to add money and continue for another two years. It supports Nutrient Management Planning, any kind of agricultural water quality improvement assistance, and events and outreach. FCNRCD will receive \$23,000 every six months for the next two years. Doug motions to accept the grant, Molly seconds. Motion carried.

3:32 Jeannie gave updates on finances. We are finishing a transition to a new accountant, Adam Messier, at the same firm. We have also transitioned to using QuickBooks online so that Jeannie and the accountant can both access the finances. Monthly profit and loss swings greatly, but large losses are tied to future planned billing. Bank balance has ranged in the last year from \$90,000 to \$10,000, so Jeannie feels it is important to keep an eye on cash flow. We have not invoiced for all tree planting projects yet because necessary paperwork still needs to be completed. Doug feels comfortable so long as District staff are aware of cash flow as well as what grants will be billed to in the future. The deferred revenues line in the balance sheet refers to money we have received from grants already but we have not yet done the work for or spent money for that needs to be held aside for those specific purposes. Restricted gift revenue refers to a gift given to the District for a specific purpose, in the current report this is money given from a landowner to do follow up care at her property where we did a tree planting.

3:41 The current budget is a draft budget. It is based on records from Excel and Jeannie would like to check it against QuickBooks records. Jeannie would also like input from the Board to

revise the budget for approval at the next meeting. The Board recommended last year to revise the budget to include rough estimates of large project costs that come up during the year, so Jeannie has added an extra amount to our state grant income and contractor expenses this year to respond to that recommendation. The large increase in federal grant funding comes from the \$125,000 Brodie was awarded for removal of the Johnson's Mill Dam, and the majority of this income is also logged as an expense under contract expenses. Molly moves to approve the draft 2021 budget, Doug seconds. Motion carried. The budget will be voted on again only if it changes by 20%.

3:48 Jeannie opened conversation regarding racial equity in conservation work. Many conservation partners are recognizing connections between our shared work in conservation and issues of racial equity. Jeannie shared statements about racial equity from partner organizations in Vermont and nationally. Board members reviewed provided statements, and supervisors and staff participated in a round of reflections.

Staff are committed to continuing to learn and reflect on how racial equity connects to our work and would like to continue this with the Board. Board expressed willingness to continue this conversation with staff.

4:11 Rural Vermont reached out to Jeannie to get input from farmers on a draft policy proposal from the National Family Farm Coalition, partnered locally with Rural Vermont, regarding milk prices. Jeannie has shared the draft of the policy and would like to hear comments from the Board. Doug noted that before spending time thinking on the questions, he would like to know what has changed politically and if there is actually some hope that this policy could be pushed through. Communication from Rural Vermont noted that the current issues with COVID19 have caused them to think it might be a good time to push this policy, but it is unclear if there has been a real change in Congress to allow for better support. Molly noted that the price of milk has gone up \$8-9, to \$20/hundred weight for June, which is good for the current market but may stop conversation that could lead to more permanent change.

4:28 Next meetings tentatively scheduled for July 16th and August 20th, each at 3PM. If there are no updates in July, that meeting will be canceled and the August meeting will be next.

4:31 Meeting adjourned.