



Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

Meeting Minutes

January 13th, 2020 9:05am-11:40pm
Berlin Office 617 Comstock Rd, Berlin VT

Attendees: Gianna Petito, Kristen Balschunat, Rick Hopkins, Paul Hartshorn, Jeff Cueto, Mike Raboin, Marybeth Whitten (NRCS)

9:05 Meeting Called to Order

9:06 NRCS Updates: Still waiting for the final interpretation of the Farm Bill. New software systems are being introduced at NRCS. There will probably only be 2 rounds of funding for 2020 (but the same amount of money will be available). Everyone is invited to the Jan 22 State Technical Committee Meeting to identify an additional 10 practices that will be added to the state priority list for VT. There will also be a presentation about the new Farm Bill rules and process. The meeting will be held in the first floor large conference room at the USDA Vermont State Office, 356 Mountain View Drive, Suite 105, Colchester, Vermont 05446. Reminder: Applications are accepted year-round even with the unpredictable ranking scheme. “Just apply!” Lots of new hires - staff on detail to help train new employees. One step closer to relocating the Williston Office.

9:30 NRCC Updates: Ag Water Quality Coordinator (Allie Lewis) has been hired and will start soon (coming from DEC). No council meetings since our last board meeting. Starting the budget process again.

9:35 Supervisor and Staff Sharing: Jeff noted that in E. Montpelier there is a forum tonight about EAB at U-32 followed by a hearing about tree removal in the right of way. Rick mentioned that the cross VT trail association is nearly done with fundraising for building a new bridge across the Winooski River to connect trail systems. Paul mentioned that the state/fed government (in collaboration with VLT) is looking to conserve 500 acres adjacent to a segment of the Catamount trail in Warren. Gianna noted that VHCB attended a district-wide training to start a conversation about potential district involvement with easement projects.

9:50 Minutes: Jeff motions to approve the minutes as revised from the Dec 16, 2019 meeting. Seconded by Rick. All in favor. Motion passes.

9:55 Financial Updates:

- **Line of Credit:** Gianna applied for a \$15,000 line of credit from VSECU - if we want that we must also open a Savings Account (\$100) to be considered a “member” of VSECU. Gianna will present comparisons of housing money at VSECU vs. People's United for the next board meeting.
- **Audits:** Review of changes to the District Financial Policy. We need to determine how frequently we should request a formal audit (even though it is not required by the size of the grants we have received). Jeff suggested adding “when deemed appropriate by the board” rather than adding a specific amount of time.
- Motion by Jeff to accept the December financial report. Second by Paul. All in favor. Motion passes.

10:25 Staff Progress Report Highlights: (see handout)

- See handout

11:45 Strategic Planning: Will be addressed at February meeting

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, February 18th, 2020 - 9am - Williston Office

11:46 Adjourn Motion to adjourn by Paul. Seconded by Jeff.