



Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

Meeting Minutes

June 18th, 2019 9am-11:10am
617 Comstock Road, Berlin VT 05602

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

9:00 Meeting begins - no quorum

9:05 NRCS Updates Locally led Conservation Customer Feedback Questionnaires are due to Marybeth in August (plan to analyze results in at a Board Meeting in early September). Marybeth distributed a model questionnaire and offered that WNRCD can customize it. The questionnaires should help describe the top resource concerns in the district and practices you would like to see implemented and prioritized by NRCS. The new system no longer allows Districts to distribute 250 points in the ranking system, rather Districts share their general priorities which NRCS will take into account as they make funding choices. The survey can be completed by anyone in the District. They do not need to be farmers and do not need to be landowners. We can ask partners for feedback and incorporate into our ag work group. It is permissible to solicit feedback in an online fillable form.

Goal for participation: 50

Round 3 of funding is closed. There were many more applicants for funding than money available. A request has been made to national for \$2.2 million additional to fund a few more applicants. CSP applications are also closed (many more applicants than funding available).

Open invitation: to the NRCS State Technical Committee Meetings October 9th at the State Office in Colchester

Discussion about manure pit engineering specs in the face of climate uncertainty (currently they must be designed to store 180 days of manure). Pits over a certain size require a dam permit.

9:50 NRCC Updates

- Jess Buckley has been hired as the new Ag Water Qualities Manager
- Block Grants for TFS and Project Scoping are available
- Basin Planning work is moving forward
- Currently discussing budget for FY20

9:05 Supervisor and Staff Sharing

- Celebrating Kristen's one year anniversary working for the District
- Brief discussion about the state of the Long Trail in the wet spring

9:30 Business Items

- Review minutes

9:30 Staff Report

- Gianna participated in an initial meeting with COPE to create a strategic planning workplan for the year. Step 1: Plan an 1.5 hours initial launch meeting with the board. Step 2: Create a partner survey. Step 3: 3-4 hour meeting - discuss results of partner survey and create pillars of a strategic plan.
- Successful Erosion Control Field Day - more than 50 attendees
- Texas Hill Culvert - moving forward pending landowner approval (culvert upgrade, tree planting, bank stabilization)
- Stream Team Summer Water Quality monitoring has started
- Gianna is completing site visits for equine properties and forest management plans
- Septic socials have been scheduled. Local partners are doing the bulk of the advertizing. WNRCD is lining up speakers.
 - July 2nd Town of Colchester (at planning commission mtg)
 - July 22nd Town of Huntington (at planning commission mtg)
 - July 27th Lake Iroquois Association (at annual picnic)
- Kristen and Riley are starting to take soil samples on farms
- Dave Wilcox hopes to increase the use of skidder bridges in Washington county (invited to attend a board meeting).

10:00 FY20 Budget

- Request for staff health stipend increase
- Request for staff IRA contribution
- Notes on interpreting the budget
 - Gianna aimed high on expenses and low on income estimates to gain a conservative view of the potential budget
 - 3 sections outline revenue and expenses (fundraising, operations and projects)
 - Expected revenue will exceed expenses for FY20

11:00 Next meeting will be at the WILLISTON office Tuesday, July 16th 9-12

11:10 Meeting adjourns