



Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

Meeting Minutes

March 24th, 2020 9:00-12:00pm
Teleconference meeting on Zoom

Attendees: Gianna Petito, Kristen Balschunat, Rick Hopkins, Paul Hartshorn, Jeff Cueto, Rich Turner (new WNRCD board member with voting privileges), Bruce Howlett (NRCS)

9:05 Meeting Called to Order

9:06 NRCS Updates: Many NRCS offices are still open. The jobs are considered "essential," so staff at all offices can be contacted by phone and email into the foreseeable future. Rolling out new contracts is difficult with the new software system. CAPS are the first applications that will be evaluated. CAP funding can cover forest management plans, NMPs, energy management plans, etc. This year there is a greater focus on the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) for folks who are already managing their land well and want to "take it a step further." Deadline for CSP is in May. EQIP deadline is early April. NRCS is almost fully staffed! The Berlin office has received many applications for forest plan CAPS and high tunnels.

9:16 NRCC Updates: March 19 meeting was cancelled due to covid-19 concerns. Hiring a financial manager. The letter to DEC was received and NRCC is in conversation with them about the process with grant application, payments, etc.

9:22 Supervisor and Staff Sharing: Russ joined the call! No further topics

10:00 Minutes: Paul motions to approve the minutes as amended from the February 18, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Rich. All in favor. Motion passes.

9:55 Financial Updates:

- Net positive income in February. We have over \$20,000 of outstanding invoices. It continues to be a struggle to have invoices be paid on time.
- Motion by Paul to approve the March financial report. Second by Rich. All in favor. Motion passes.

9:20 Staff Progress Report Highlights: (see handout)

- Rich is joining us as a supervisor for the remainder of 2020. The position will be up for an election at the same time as all other WNRCD supervisor elections.
- Motion by Jeff to appoint Rich Turner as the Interim Treasurer until the WNRCD 2020 election. Seconded by Paul. All in favor. Motion passes.
- Thoughts on tree sale: Could we delay until May? Or the fall? Delivery? Could we get an exemption for the Agency of Ag since we are handling live material. Jeff would like it to continue this spring as scheduled. Staff will look into options and will keep board members in the loop via email and phone call.
- Brief discussion about how to get supervisor signatures on line of credit at VSECU.
- Motion to approve line of credit and resolution as documented in folder by Paul, seconded by Jeff. All in favor. Motion passes.
- Discussion about changing district address to Ginna's personal address so checks can be quickly deposited if there is a shelter in place.
- Gianna noted that our insurance from League of Cities and Towns is higher than the state or federal minimum. We may be able to save some money if they are willing to sign us on to a smaller plan.

11:00 Financial Policy Terms & Audit

- Motion by Paul to approve **Section 1** WNRCD Accounting Auditing and Financial Reporting Policy. Seconded by Rich. All in favor. Motion passes.
- Motion by Paul to approve **Section 3** Cash Receipts, Petty Cash, Check Signing and Returned Checks. Seconded by Jeff. All in favor. Motion passes.

11:15 Strategic Plan

- Contractor (COPE) has been paid in full
- Supervisors will review in more detail to discuss later
- Gianna gave an overview of the plan as an orientation/framing of the discussion
- Jeff had concerns about the use of the word "development" in the mission statement
- Supervisors will send comments and edits to Gianna by the end of April.

NEXT MEETINGS:

Tuesday, April 21, 2020 - 9am - Conference Call - main purpose of discussing Tree Sale

Tuesday, May 19, 2020 - 9am - location TBD

11:50 Adjourn Motion to adjourn by Paul. Seconded by Jeff. All in favor. Motion passes.