

Windham County Natural Resource Conservation District Minutes

March 14, 2022, 6:30 pm

301 Barrows Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301

Present: Linda Corse, Geof Dolman, Pieter van Loon, Katie Morrison: board supervisors; Cory Ross: District Manager; Heather Blunk, Agricultural Outreach Specialist.

Update from Phylcixia Moore, NRCS Zone Conservationist:

- Deadline for Round 1 funding just passed. Josh has about 40 applicants.
- Round 2 deadline is April 1. This round will be more limited.
- Projects that aren't cropland or grazing will be moved on to FY23, but working on planning and assessments for those projects this spring.
- Really trying to ensure in planning that they have high quality projects.
- There's also a localwork group meeting at Winston Prouty on March 25 in the conference room, 12-2pm. In terms of who's allowed to come to that meeting: interested parties can send an email of interest, and it will include local partners and agency reps.
- There is now no mask requirement in most offices around the state. The mask policy is dependent on case numbers; as numbers stabilize we should be able to have meetings there in the near future.
- There is a new state conservationist in Vermont who is an advocate of local work groups and conservation districts having a voice.

Stream Table Storage:

- The district has had a hard time getting a hold of the stream table. Sounds like the Brattleboro Retreat would like us to find a new place to store it. Options include Vernon School (Cory will ask his wife, who is principal) or the career center.

District Manager's Report:

- Pruning workshop is happening April 9 at Green Mountain Orchards; we'll cap it at 10.
- In the future will not include grants that are completed and waiting in the district manager's report (for brevity's sake).
- NRCC will no longer wait until they've been paid until they pay districts. They have also talked about hiring a grant manager.

Ag Services Discussion Follow-Up:

- Not a great turn out, but a productive conversation.

Stipend for Public/Producer Participation in District Workshops and Events

- Some districts give presenters \$100-200 per workshop.
- Money will come from grants and be built into the billable rate.

-In discussing it, the board is leaning towards establishing guidelines, rather than a policy, which will give us more discretion; see draft policy/guideline.

Per Diem for Supervisors

-Other districts per diem for supervisors ranges from \$0-50 per meeting; sometimes mileage is included.

-Linda proposes for equity sake we should offer a per diem for supervisors.

-This would come out of our billable rate.

-Geof made a motion to make a stipend of \$50 per supervisor per monthly meeting attended available to any supervisor who is interested in taking it. Proposal Approved.

Core funding Request From Vermont Conservation Districts

-The one-time funding request sounds like it will happen but annual appropriation probably won't happen this year. They'll continue to push it next year.

-Includes money for Ag Outreach training

Local Mapping:

-There's an idea of mapping current and former ag land in the county.

Plant Sale:

-Master Gardeners aren't going to be selling plants at the plant sale, but will help the week before and staff a table the day of the sale.

Minutes:

-Motion to approve February minutes. Motion passed.

Next Meeting:

-Wed April 13, 2022 at Geof's at 6:30pm

Future Agenda:

-Quarterly financials.

-District pay and benefits.

-Review RFPs for rain garden projects

-Youth associate supervisor position.