

Present: Daton Fleury, Richard Noel, Eileen Trudell, Jeannie Bartlett, Liza Lemieux, Wynea Buford

9:48 Meeting called to order. Minutes reviewed – “Drainage Inlet” added to explain “Dis” in 10:18. Richard makes a motion to accept minutes as corrected. Seconded by Eileen. Motion carries.

9:50 Review of last month’s action items.

Wynea reviewed for supervisors that all materials coming from the USDA need to have the Equal Opportunity Statement. Each individual board member has the responsibility of treating fellow board members and participants equally regardless of protected identity statuses. We do not have an updated MOU for our agreement with USDA. Stressed the importance of working together as partners. Wynea brought up that in her previous positions, most MOUs were reviewed and signed every year. In USDA’s Quality Assurance Review, someone will need to interview one of the board members about Civil Rights and other USDA topics. Wynea suggests that the chosen board member participate by phone. Talked about whether the makeup of the board represents the demographics of the District.

10:00 Continued review of follow-up. Jeannie has not attempted to uncover the \$10,000 gain still. Richard pointed out the Tile Drain webinar series UVM is conducting, and he suggested an in-person workshop. Discussion of the GoodYear farm awards, and how farmers used to be recognized for plowing “fencerow to fencerow.” Informal discussion of food distribution.

Richard has been doing outreach about “Signs of Conservation.” He put a cover crop sign on the Cassidy property and signs on the Boucher and Bessette farms. He has talked to a couple other folks and plans to keep putting out signs. Richard reported on the Foster Brothers Farm he toured in Middlebury – they do a very impressive rotation of corn, soybeans and cover crop. Richard advocated that farmers here grow a shorter day corn because it leaves more time for the cover crop to get established. Noted that the last 7-8 years have been dry falls.

Richard confirmed that Field Days will give us last spring’s rent in exchange for this winter’s newsletter.

Jeannie did disburse the \$500 scholarship to Chase Deyette.

10:28 Brodie updated on the District’s work with a farm in Bakersfield. District met with the Regional Planning Commission about how to get some stormwater work done on their farm, and how we might work together to implement some improvements on the private land too. Brodie is also working on nutrient management plan updates.

10:37 Jeannie updated that she and Brodie attended a small farm inspection to learn the process better, and they are following up with the farmer to get them assistance with some projects that the inspection identified.

Discussion of roads and road ownership.

10:45 Jeannie provided an update on her assistance to a small farm with a grant application to excavate their pit’s sand. Brodie and Liza updated on tile drain sampling study. Liza informed the board that next Friday at 11:30 Sen. Sanders is having a listening session about milk pricing in St. Albans at City Hall. Discussion of milk pricing, and lack of political will for it. Wynea will be attending.

11:55 Jeannie informed the board she and Fairfield organic dairy farmer Damien Boomhower will be going to the National Young Farmers’ Coalition Conference in D.C. next week. Board is pleased, recommends connecting with St. Albans Co-op Young Cooperators and Organic Valley “Generation O.”

11:02 Richard asked for clarification on the \$17,500 “Tile Drain #3” payment.

11:03 Daton made a motion to accept the financial report as printed. Richard seconds. Motion carries.

11:12 Richard makes a motion to increase our NACD dues to \$250. Eileen seconds. Motion carries. Noted that there were a few years when we didn’t give anything. At the conference Richard spoke to an NACD representative who encouraged us to give more.

11:16 Board makes suggestions for farms that might be interested in the Grazing Plans Class to be taught this March.

11:20 Next meeting set for Dec 4 at 9:30.

11:21 Wynea gave NRCS update. Received many applications for drought assistance – wells, pumps, livestock pipeline. Wynea reported on VACD Annual Meeting and NW regional Agricultural Water Quality Partners meeting. It was good to meet all the different people working in this field in this region. Future meeting is going to be “Conservation Speed Dating” to build consistent

message among agency staff. USDA staff did a lot of trainings last week. USDA is currently going through a Quality Assurance process including spot checks where state leadership visits farms in the county to confirm completion of practices.

11:32 Meeting adjourned.

Follow-up:

- Jeannie will dig into our accounts to figure out where our \$10,000 gain opening FY18 came from.
- Jeannie will get Nature Guide done and get it to Richard before the December NRCC meeting.
- ✓ Jeannie will update Harvest Equip's number on the newsletter to 802-868-4184
- ✓ Jeannie will add something about being prepared for tree sale distribution day to the work plan.
- ✓ Jeannie will find out what it costs per student to send a student to Envirothon and what a typical donation from other Districts is.

Long-term Board Guidance:

- Board suggests an in-person training for farmers about tile drain – maybe something UVM would put on.
- Board suggested we advertise the tree sale on Craigslist.