

NRCC Finance Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
June 15, 2022  
8:30 am  
Zoom Meeting

**Present:** Rick Hopkins, Christopher Von Alt, Clare Ireland, Jill Arace, and Lina Smith

## **Agenda**

1. Welcome (Rick)
2. Welcome to Lina Smith, Grants & Finance Specialist
3. Approval of May meeting minutes (Clare)
4. Bank Administrative Updates (Clare)
  - a. Proposed ACH Limit Increase (\$40,000 to \$150,000)
  - b. ACH Signers
5. Grant proposals, approvals, and updates
  - a. DEC Project Development (Clare/Jill)
  - b. DEC Design & Implementation (Clare/Jill)
  - c. DEC Tactical Basin Planning (Clare/Jill)
  - d. VAAFM AgCWIP (Emily)
  - e. VAAFM FY22 Core Services (Clare)
6. Update on District Retreat and Strategic Planning (Clare and all)
7. FY23 Core Services & Legislative Appropriation (Clare)
8. VACD's legislative initiative (Jill)
  - a. Discussion of NRCC's role, budget, and District allocations
9. Other business, as required

## **Welcome**

Rick welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order

## **Welcome to Lina Smith**

All introduced themselves. Rick gave a brief overview of the role of the NRCC Finance Committee.

## **Review of May Meeting Minutes**

Postponed to next meeting.

## **Bank Administrative Updates**

- Proposed ACH Limit Increase (\$40,000 to \$150,000)

Clare explained the purpose of the ACH limit is to avoid potential fraud. The bank has recommended an increase in the ACH limit to \$150,000 to avoid delays in payment processing. Clare supports the increase and noted that all NRCC payments require two signatures, so there is minimal opportunity for fraud. Rick spoke in favor of the increase and explained the ACH approval process that he and Clare use. He also noted that People's United Bank has been purchased by M&T bank. Rick reported he had received a new security bank token. A motion was made by Richard, seconded by Chris to approve the increase. Unanimously approved.

- ACH Signers

Clare noted the need for at least one additional bank ACH approver, so that payments can go forward in the absence of Rick. Payments are usually made once or twice a month. Clare said this person should be a board member. Richard made a motion seconded by Rick for Chris Von Alt to be backup ACH Signer. Unanimously approved.

## **Grant Proposals and Updates**

- DEC Project Development (Clare/Jill)

The current agreement has been amended and the new deadline is July 2023. We did a request for proposals and received about \$43,000 total. The individual proposals ranged from \$3,000 - \$20,000.

The current agreement should cover project development needs through the end of next fiscal year. Meanwhile, a new 2022 agreement is under negotiation. While we will move forward with this new agreement, districts aren't keen on the level of reporting required.

- DEC Design & Implementation (Clare/Jill).

Our current agreement with its amendments total about \$2 million. This funding source will sunset with CWSP. We are pushing our next RFA back since WUV just did a round and RPCs have a current round open. DMs were ok in pushing back the RFA. We're asking Gianna to sign off on closing projects. We are working through this process and Lina will help.

- DEC Tactical Basin Planning (Clare/Jill)

Clare reported that one year is wrapping up and Districts have submitted proposals for next year. There is some discussion about whether this is a worthwhile funding source in the future. While reporting can be tedious for some, overall, this is a funding source we fought for in the past and many Districts still find it helpful. The total amount of the FY23 proposals were in line with what we've seen in past years, with a small increase for most districts, and one district with a significant increase.

- VAAFM AgCWIP (Emily)

We are still working on finalizing our new AgCWIP agreement after VAAFM requested we rebudget.

- **VAAFM FY22 Core Services (Clare)**

FY22 core services activities exceeded the funding available in the core services agreement, largely due to the increased frequency of DM meetings. We're covering the extra expense with AgCWIP balances intended for capacity building. The FY23 agreement will include the new appropriations. It will also include supervisor per diems. Unfortunately per diems are still limited to the state-authorized rate (\$50 per day).

### **Update on District Retreat and Strategic Planning (Clare and all)**

- Clare reported it was a great day, with good participation and just one DM who wasn't able to attend. The "strategic plan" developed last year was reviewed and the group began discussing vision for NRCDs/NRCC/VACD. Themes from the meeting included a need for greater clarity on the roles of VACD and NRCC and how the pieces fit together in supporting the districts. Districts need support that goes beyond program funding, e.g. admin, finance, legal, HR, etc. There is also a need for clarification of VACD and NRCD agricultural staff and adjustments that will be required after the CWSP/BWQC system goes operational.

Chris, who attended remotely, thought it was a good meeting. He noted the need for improvement of technology for hybrid meetings ("owl" camera, better microphone) as well as structure for speakers (e.g. similar to town meetings where folks go up to a microphone to speak.) Everyone concurred.

Chris noted the need for more communication and engagement, especially of board members.

District Managers proposed the creation of a DM Representative position to ensure that the perspective of districts as locally-led organizations are included in discussions held by NRCC, VACD and partners at the state-wide level, and by NACD at the national level. Jill was asked to create an election procedure, which she presented at the DM meeting. The process will be concluded at the end of June with the election of a DM Rep and an Alternate DM Rep.

### **FY23 Core Services & Legislative Appropriation (Clare)**

- FY22 funding is \$7,000 per district. Ran out of funding so we committed to continue using retained earnings to offer supervisor support. It was noted that per diems are set by statute at \$50 per day.

### **Legislative Initiative Update (Clare and Jill)**

- A meeting was scheduled for June 29th at 8:30 am to discuss this.

### **NRCC Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **Next Meeting**

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 8:30 am, July 20, 2022.

The Motion was made by Richard, seconded by Chris to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:07 am.

### **Action Items for Follow Up**

- Clare will work to get Chris authorized for ACH signature.
- Clare and Jill will continue to work with DMs on the FY24 legislative initiative