Windham County Natural Resource Conservation District

Supervisory Board Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)

Wednesday, June 10th, 2026, 6:30 pm

301 Barrows Rd Brattleboro, VT 05301

Hybrid Meeting, Zoom

Present: Cory Ross, Executive Director; Arrow Branwen, Administrative Assistant; Heather Blunk, Agricultural Specialist; Kate McKay, Seasonal Avian technician; Meg Kluge, Geof Dolman, and Linda Corse, board supervisors;

Zoom Participants: Pieter van Loon and Katie Morrison, board supervisors; Emma Keuster, NRCS

<u>**Land Acknowledgement:**</u> ***We respectfully acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Abenaki People, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations.***

1. Review Agenda for Additions or Changes
    a. Discussing personnel policy, convening subcommittee
        i. Added to Greeter and Tech Hires
2. New Business
    a. NRCS Updates
        i. Awarded funding for CSP and EQIP programs
            1. 15-20 contracts in Windham County
            2. Greatly assisted by local fund pool, huge kudos to WCNRCD with leading local work groups for this
            3. Cost shares low amount mean that a lot of people won't be moving forward with brush management projects or invasive control projects
                a. Next year might be different
        ii. Been working on updates, have a staff meeting tomorrow talking about emergency watershed programs
    b. FY27 Budget
        i. Had a lot of input and good advice from Dave Dore at Structural Integrity, sent a helpful template
        ii. Overview is going over projected end of FY26 and the projected FY27 budget

iii. On track to close FY26 with net income of $41000, better than anticipated
    1. Have better utilized grant funding, gotten amendments to help with personnel costs
    2. Will have a balance of $116000 at the close of FY26
        a. Covers about 1.5 months of expense
        b. Would like to get to 3 months worth of expenses, challenging because grants don't always pay on time as expected
    3. Got the WUV grants to purchase computers for staff, which wasn't originally in the budget; covered by grant income
    4. Issue on the FY26 budget overview that says $6900 was spent on "membership" which we have not used in years; trying to address the issue during the meeting, but will investigate further after
    5. Also some issues with inconsistencies in numbers for how much was spent on healthcare; probably a typo or glitch with document equations, will investigate later
    6. Grassland Bird Project payments, some were paid in FY26 and some may be paid in FY27

iv. Meg moves to approve FY27 budget proposal
    1. **Geof seconds**
    2. **Further Discussion:**
        a. $1.3M+ in revenue
        b. $1.1M in costs
        c. $310000 - funding that we applied for or will apply for and are awaiting a decision
        d. Funding staff pay increases, supporting Americorps, annual meetings, subcontractors, wages for permanent and season staff, infrastructure, vehicle maintenance
    3. **Vote: All in favor, none opposed**
    4. **Passed 7:09PM**

c. FY27 District and Staff Workplans
    i. Cory gives an overview of the workplan of permanent and temporary staff
    ii. Workplan fits in nicely with our strategic plan, a useful guiding document for writing the workplan
    iii. Possibility of hosting a public forum for legislative candidates

        1. Have to make sure we stay politically neutral, not just inviting who we agree with
        2. If it is an election year, it is difficult because they are burned out from campaigning, etc
   d. 2026 Greeters and Invasive Species Technician Hires
      i. According to last meeting's minutes, the board had approved the hiring of those candidates and also approved Cory to hire more as more candidates are available
      ii. All IST's hired and doing well
      iii. Addition to the agenda: Personnel Policy
         1. Need board and staff to join subcommittee to review and draft new personnel policy
         2. One item that might need to be looked at is schedule for pay increases
         3. Another is performance reviews, and if the board is needed when performing those
         4. **The subcommittee will update the personnel policy**
            a. **Pieter and Arrow will join existing personnel subcommittee with Linda and Meg**
   e. Summer Picnic
      i. Have the opportunity to bring everyone together, in place of July board meeting
      ii. Location suggestions:
         1. Living Memorial Park shelter with tables
         2. Winston Prouty also has an outdoor space
      iii. Date and Time:
         1. Aiming for July 28th or 30th
         2. Midday or Late Afternoon/Early evening
      iv. Will organize spreadsheet for food later

3. On-Going Items
   a. NRCC and VACD Updates
      i. Council meeting last week
         1. Most of the meeting focused on discussion of making sure that deliverables for core services happen
            a. Did not end up as definite that they must do full evaluation of district manager
            b. They decided on providing a template

        c. Some effort being made for district boards to do a district manager/executive director performance evaluation as a core deliverable
    2. Did not get to Act 181 discussions
        a. The law has passed; states that VACD will partner with Vermont Council on Rural Development to develop a plan to get feedback because Act 181 has weakened Act 250, taken out all environmental protections provided by Act 250
    3. Will probably be some discussions this summer about statute changes or bylaw changes

b. Update from Budget and Building Acquisition Subcommittee
    i. Revisited the Winston Prouty office, could take possession of renting this space July 1st
    ii. Thomas Hall, Suite 112
    iii. Rent is $1,850 a month
    iv. Appears in budget as rent + utilities x 12
    v. Security deposit equal to one month's rent, but might be paid over time; there was nothing out of the ordinary in rental agreement template received
    vi. Geof moves that we go ahead with rental of Winston Prouty office
        1. Pieter seconded
        2. Seems like a really good opportunity
        3. Someone on staff there can do some room painting for $25/hr
        4. Will have some time to move everything in, get painting done before any of that and maybe before renting officially starts
        5. Not without risk, projected cashflow still works even if things get tight
        6. All in favor, none opposed
        7. Passed 8:04PM

c. Technical Service Provider Work
    i. Qualified Individual Work, related to TSP work:
        1. Regenerative pilot program (CHECK)
        2. Want 25% of all contracts in country to be fed through RPP
        3. More analyzed than regular soil testing, discounted rate for RPP
        4. $180/test, three tests per land unit
        5. Looking at using Ag-CWIP, but thinking it is a no

6. Could come up with a rate that makes sense to charge farmers since money for this doesn't cover it
7. Data will be useful to look at how the regenerative work their doing is affecting land

4. Secretary's Report
    a. Approve minutes from May 6, 2026
        i. **Meg moves to accept minutes**
        ii. **Pieter seconds**
        iii. No discussion needed
        iv. **All in favor, none opposed**
        v. **Geof abstains because he was not there**
        vi. **Passed, minutes accepted 8:19PM**

5. Review Upcoming Supervisor Meeting Dates:
    a. July Meeting: See picnic discussion, skipping regular meeting
    b. Next meeting: August 12, 2026

6. Other Business

    a. Cory will forward edits about questions for the FY26 budget issues

7. Future Agenda Items: None

8. Motion to move into executive session for personnel reasons made by Geof:

- **Seconded by Meg**
- **All in favor, none opposed**
- **Passed 8:23PM**

9. Executive Session **Motion was made by Geof, with a second from Meg to come out of executive session at 8:33 PM. Motion passed.**

Motion made by Geof, with a second from Meg to deem Arrow Branwen's performance very satisfactory and that they should move on the pay scale, etc. as per policy. Motion passed.

Motion made by Pieter, second by Geof to adjourn at 8:35 PM. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Arrow Branwen

Executive Session addendum submitted by Linda Corse