

WCNRCD Board Meeting
July 10, 2024 6:30 PM
Vernon Elementary School,
and over Zoom

Present: Cory Ross, District Manager; Meg Kluge, Linda Corse, Katie Morrison, Pieter van Loon, board supervisors; Phyllicia Moore, NRCS; Isabel Bowman, Conservation Specialist and Heather Blunk, WCNRCD Ag Resources Specialist.

NRCS Update:

- Currently working through obligations; June 30th was the timeline but they haven't quite met that due to changes in systems, etc. Looking to have it done within the next 2 weeks.
- There will be upcoming trainings that will be open to partners "selling a sustainable future."
- Phyllicia will be switching roles, transitioning to be the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations. As part of this transition they're ensuring technical assistance is assigned to a planner and keeping systems going.
- The FY25 rollout is July 32 at Lake Morey.
- Stephanie is moving on to be the CSP coordinator.
- Making sure everyone is on track to be a certified planner.
- Local farm pool proposals are being reviewed; state technical committee meeting is coming up in Colchester.
- Things are in works to look at how they conduct the locally led process.

Unfunded Cooperative Agreement:

- Agreement doesn't reflect number of employees NRCD is hoping for.
- Looking for equity across districts; number of slots is still in discussion.
- The space won't change: we're looking for access and computer equipment.
- Some other districts have staff who don't have security clearance.
- Met with Jess and 2 other PAs to review applicants for VAD program assistant. There were 8 applicants and they're interviewing 4.
- Need to add to Unfunded Cooperative Agreement: why we'd like to make this request.

Motion: To approve highlighted changed to unfunded cooperative agreement.

Motion approved.

Ag Resource Specialist Announcement and Job Description:

- Added the following language:
 - Is willing to be a conservation planner
- Should make the job description unspecific enough to allow role to evolve.
- Edit: find link to 9 step planning process from Vermont (not TN).

Motion: To approved job description for the Ag Resource Specialist position with edits

Motion Approved.

Locally Led Process/ Local Fund Pool Proposals:

- Over the next year VACD funds will be sent to district to carry out the locally led process.
- Amount will be up to \$5000. It doesn't cover all the work but we're already doing the work.
- A new part of this process will be writing the conservation action plan (CAP). In the future this will be required for local fund pool proposals. In the past ehre hasn't been a template for CAPs.
- This will be done once every five years.
- There is a proposal to bump up to \$5000 to reflect personal time spent on the process.

Motion: To approve the locally led conservation application with amendment of requesting up to \$5000.

Motion Approved.

District Manager Report:

- Ellis Brook Project: Turns out the person we thought was the landowner doesn't own the land; his son owns it.
 - ANR atlas didn't have accurate info.
 - Landowner doesn't want the project to happen this fall.
 - State said we can pay out the money we've spent already.
- Got the Watershed United Vermont Workforce Capacity Building Grant.
 - Includes new website
 - Professional development training (wetland delineation training)
 - Shed
 - Strategic planning
 - Consultant
 - Emergency and transition plans for staff
 - Consultant systems.

Motion to enter executive session (8:33 pm)

Motion approved

Motion to hire Noah Lempel, Janet Rivers and Madelyn Seymour as Invasive Species Techs at Somerset Reservoir.

Next meeting at Geoff's, August 22 at 6:30pm.