



Board Meeting

February 16th 12-4pm

In Attendance: Linda Brownson, Jackie Cullen, Rick Ellsmore, Bob Porter, Richard Mellor, Sarah Brady, Pam Gilbert, Kitty Miller, Vicky Stafford, Rick Demarc, Kerry Rickrode, Alena Warren, Jeff Moore, Steve Cook, Gary Peters, Lionell Chute

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Minutes of November 17th: Approved,

Treasurer's Report: Jackie Cullen

Questions on whether things have been resolved from Roger's time last year: Trying to file.

Go over books with Karen back to 2012 to review funds

What was outreach/cottontail/ etc. agreements vs. what was expended? Agreements were over \$200,000

John and Jackie pull 2012 – 2014 to see what shows up in quickbooks

John and Jackie beginning and ending balance for 5 year period, especially '14/'15.

Trying to find Roger's SSN – will ask Paychex to see if

Jackie dig through QB to see if it's in those records

1099 contractor – look for Roger's SSN in records.

Follow up budget meeting with Rick/linda/John

President's Report

Annual National Meeting:

Board Meeting had a number of resolutions but none of them were going to strongly impact NH one way or the other. None from NH.

LISW-RCPP

Linda Attended Steering Committee, in Amherst MA. CT is in charge of the project

Most interesting is that they still have a lot of potential contracts out, CT conservation districts have not agreed to sign yet. CT Cooperative Extension is also stalled on that, NY is considering,

Everyone has concerns about the match, large amount

Technical Assistance: "ask the question, what are we going to take off of NRCS's plate?" job is to save NRCS time and money. If it's a direct cost to implement, like a demonstration etc. that will count as tech. assistance. Outreach is match, Technical workshop is accepted.

Funding may not be used to cover administrative costs

Next meeting will be in Walpole, NH May 16th (Tuesday) 9-3

Student interns to use as match – Antioch etc.

Interviews coming up for Agronomist position: 28 applicants, 6 look like solid applicants.

What credential are you looking most seriously at? A lot of experience can make up for a shortage in education, have some applicants in that category.

Payment: 30 day period only, would have to bill monthly,

Will be an employee vs. a contractor (of NHACD), monthly bill to reimburse for that amount, annual salary is \$45,000 with no benefits.

Need to know: Where will this person be housed for work? They currently don't have a station/computer etc.

Coos and Sullivan have space for them to use as an office.

Create a shared set of questions, on a grid.

Jackie making a google doc grid for review of applicants and comments from committee.

Exec Director plans:

Put on hold, do not have the funds right now but we do need to have one. If we want to engage in a lot of projects, every state has one. Have to have oversight.

NHACD Activity Report

Farm and Forest Expo tomorrow and Saturday

Saving Special Places April 8th Alton, NH

Communications Committee Report:

Needs:

Ways to share what's working on the county level with others/each other.

After annual meeting some good examples as participation, someone suggested we get state reps as supervisors.

Started inviting conservation committee from each town to district meeting

Started with Barrington, going alphabetically and will get all the towns this year.

Dorn could provide a write up for next newsletter about this new program.

Make a best practices handbook for districts

How can we video in? GotoMeeting video?

Look into Zoom video conferencing, UNH uses it.

Coos was contacting Veterans to introduce them to agriculture that have just left the military – another program that can be shared/done.

Sullivan county has FT outreach person, charitable trust paying 50% of her salary.

Tech High school, we want to get a video done to be able to share, working through

NRCS Report

Nominee for new Sec. of Ag is Sonny Purdue, was Gov. of GA for 8years, don't know much else about him other than what's been read. Likely confirmed in early march. Has been working with acting chief, started to populate office, Elias Rellah from Colebrook, NH. Hoping that Linda and Rick can speak with him in March, doesn't know much about USDA.

Annie Kuster is again on House Ag Committee. New Ryan budget calls for \$800 billion. \$1.8 million of funding is discretionary.

NH under hiring freeze for next 90 days. From new O and B director, implementation of either a 3:1 or 2:1 reduction in workforce. Goal is to reduce the number of federal employees "outside the fence"

Continuing resolution until the 28th. Funding letter he got earlier is out, can't do anything further for now.

Monadnock Cheshire got RCPP grant for \$1.2 million for protection in the area.

2 vacancies in Orford we can't fill, Beth Ann is retiring I May. Will be felt as biggest work load is in Grafton, were in the hiring process and had acceptances but hiring freeze started.

1 vacancy in Milford, two interns in Orford, Mgmt analyst.

Ntl Fish/Wildlife announcing new grant round: Belknap had a large grant from them \$70k. Aquatic Species control, could be match, NFWF – get on mailing list.

Annie Kuster SAM Bill: not through yet, probably going through in the next farm bill.

As of now any speaking engagements that Rick or district employees make has to be pre-approved now.

17 drought applications, good news, talked about doing something up to NACD, set aside \$500k and will be able to do that maybe more to alleviate drought issues.

Agreements

NHACD is primary partner for agreements, need to be thinking about how you want to break down, outreach or demo projects. Do not have a figure, will let us know when we know. If the number is x, what will go to outreach, what will go to demo etc.

Recommend not doing an Exec. Director, will be a rough four years,

NHACD annual meeting: assist/sponsor, if you have a credit card recipient, can do a \$2500 sponsor. Need to put together a sponsorship food, not for food, advertise and promote farm bill programs etc.

Soil Health News and the CIG: Dorn

Logistics of getting equipment in for planters

Soil Health Meeting Next Wednesday to lay out the intersection of the RCPP and CIG and getting a list of refining where equipment will go,

Grafton has cover crop that could be no-tilled.

Chad's been working up a list of priorities for farms.

3 units, 2 row for sweet corn, targeting in Rockingham/Strafford/Merrimack. Other two in Sullivan, Grafton,

Deposit sent, waiting for confirmation for the planters to be built. The Rollers are on their way. Wouldn't begin until deposit and wouldn't give a quote so we could give the deposit. Not working directly with Paquea Planter.

Should be done the beginning of May.

All on one trailer and arriving to Sullivan County, distribute from there.

Is NHACD going to own these for the grant period of three years, and then after three years, what happens?

Idea is they will move into district lending programs.

Funding for a 4th unit we're waiting to get for next season.

Will districts purchase from NHACD? Given? How will that system work?

Dorn working on coming up with rental agreements,

New corn planters: do they come with monitors, etc.

John Deer 7000 4in 2 row, likely liquid fertilizer applicators,

Someone needs to be willing to go with them to run the equipment,

Standard Rental agreements:

Security deposit, proof of insurance, sign a statement etc.

Is there another farm in Grafton that's been in the discussion? Not so far,

This year it's about demonstrations to show the effectiveness

Envirothon Report: Peter Whitcomb

Theme is Agricultural Stewardship. Schools will tie into the current issue by connecting with District offices.

Some contacts have been made, Cheshire,

All districts received and email on Feb. 1st with links for more information, draft Best Management Practices, NH Dept. of AG BMP's. Tech guide etc.

Don't want them to learn to be a soil conservationist but learn what a farmer has to go through, what practices can they do? Students can contact a farmer.

Training day is in April 1, competition in May 23rd

Conference: Dr. John Slater will come talk about Envirothon, Them is soil survey of the future, Keynote Dr. David Limbo, national service program. Perfect opportunity to talk about Envirothon and Soil Judging Contest.

Dr. Limbo is advisor for NC team that's one 3 years in a row, UNH Grad,

Conference is April 18th, Audubon in Concord,

Envirothon is in good shape financially.

Speakers for whom envirothon has made a big impact in their life. National conference had a few, one was Olympic gold medalist who was in Envirothon in school,

Could incorporate into the Annual Meeting somehow,

Asked if NH would be interested in Hosting in the future?

2017 NHACD Annual Meeting, Keene, NH

Had 1st planning committee meeting: Started an agenda for the meeting but would Like NHACD board input as it's the NHACD annual meeting.

Space to compare between counties the activities for the year: district reports, included as goals.

Build in informal time in the morning of the first day – 9am etc.

Supervisor training: would there be another training section, focused on marketing. Pam would love one on basic photography and copyright rules, (maybe incorporated into a larger marketing/social media)

Bob P: incorporate the media elevated to one of the main goals,

Will look for local sponsorships so that local Cheshire folks can attend at a subsidized cost.

Need to secure dates to finalize booking

Once a chief is appointed I would send an immediate email requesting the new chief to attend.

Group sales/catering agreement would save us the space. Then we work out details on catering, Marriott vs. outside caterer. Question is food: Cheshire board wants local food served, not Marriott/Sysco food. Monadnock Food coop is the other caterer the Marriott can use.

Will create a sponsorship form for what levels are etc.

Ask RMI in Holderness

Stonyfield

Email ideas to Amanda and she will start a master list of ideas.

David Montgomery, applied for a grant to get him to talk,

Dan Barber is also another possibility.

NH Food Alliance

Looking for committee members contact Ben Hill:

Past year has been viable farm and food businesses, this year they're breaking into action teams and are looking for people to join. Would be great if more conservation districts around the state had more participation. Statewide Meeting is in November each year, would be great to have attendance,

Send summary to district managers,

Other Business:

NACD and NRCS, NASCA, have a new partnership and National Employees association, outlines what conservation planning is looking like today.

Dorn:

In addition to soil health champion work, met with Erin Lausier, stewardship tool, provide an online tool to start to provide a farm stewardship rating and planning and an online tool that allows you to track change over time and give you a scorecard of where you are.

Working to also regionally calibrate cover crop tools.

NACD is really excited about farmer to farmer programs, focus groups on most trusted information being farmer to farmer

Donna: statewide legislative strategy? Can we come to state legislators with focus areas? Create an opportunity for a learning day to help share stories news etc. about programming.

VT is ag friendly but in NH it's the forgotten stepchild, could look over there for what they do differently to make it a more friendly environment for ag.

Share these stories in our newsletter and make that newsletter more viral, give it more reach.

****add state legislator/office emails to newsletter list****