



## **Board Meeting**

**November 17<sup>th</sup> 12-4pm**

**In Attendance: Linda Brownson, Jackie Cullen, Rick Ellsmore, John Treat, Bob Porter, Richard Mellor, Sarah Brady, Pam Gilbert, Kitty Miller, Vicky Stafford, Pete Whitcomb, Rick Demarc, Jack Parker, Ken Ketterring, Kerry Rickrode, Alena Warren, Jeff Moore, Steve Cook, Gary Peters, Lionell Chute**

### **Table of Contents:**

[Treasurer's Report](#)

[Resolution from Merrimack CCD](#)

[Envirothon Report](#)

[Grant Procedure](#)

[NRCS Report](#)

[Annual Meeting Review](#)

[Wetlands Council Update](#)

[Grants Overview](#)

[NHACD Display](#)

**Minutes of October 13<sup>th</sup>: Approved,**

**Treasurer's Report: John Treat**

Budget: Question: Out of balance for this year by over \$2000, through October first.

When we hire an agronomist for the new grant, need to set that person up in Paychex system and figure out the invoicing.

Financial Policy: RETURN TO QUESTION ON ADMINISTRATIVE FEE.

**Resolution from Merrimack CCD**

Steve: reinstate funding from NRCS to help support the building of farm ponds to combat drought. A handful of farmers said that ponds saved their farms this year. Some states have funding but focus has been mostly in the south, less support in N. east region. There is an attached edit from North County RC and D council.

Rob: short on water, makes sense to go back and look at options: new ponds, dredge old ones, make old ones bigger. Artesian well will work for 5 acres, but not a larger operation. Rob's cost a lot of money this year to run it and had to replace his pump. Currently planning for worst and hoping for best with drought conditions.

Rick Demarc: Asked for collaboration with N. Country RC and D from other districts. Added in concept of community aggregation.

Rob Question: Dry hydrant pond, would farmer be limited in extraction? Biggest restriction is that there's at least 2-3 ft of water over the intake, for winter time. Could be a situation where you could be in trouble.

Rick E: working w/ staff in the state and national. Changes are coming this year with equip budget. Min. 500k to a sub account for drought related practices and have added in irrigation ponds. Have a meeting w/ Comissions of Ag, DES and Fish and Game. Have done this in the past and there are time there are challenges with permitting. State endangered species, soils, wetlands come into play that are very difficult to permit. Need clarification on what will be permitted or not before giving guidance for field staff. Have ponds on the books for five years and don't want to start that again.

Rob L: if you have a flat field you don't need a permit to put a pond in if it's not a wetland. Can do it for storage. Advocating the ability to store water on property. 20% of farmers need a new pond, other will need to increase their capacity.

NRCS can pay for liners.

Have to have wells tested 1x a month to sell crops to stores etc. Lined ponds work well to take the top layer and not get the sediment at the bottom.

Linda: Don K mentioned AMA funding (Ag. Mgmt Assistance), Rick: can't be increased which is why he had to tap into equip.

VT 200k, MA 250, ME 400k.

Vicky: equip only funding if demonstrated water savings? Rick got a waiver, no longer an issue.

Decision to omit resolution from Merrimack because Rick E./NRCS already have this in their budget for equip.

### **Envirothon Report: John Slater**

Helenic American University, based in Athens but campus in US also. Role in Envirothon, each year put together a panel of expert on whatever the current issue is,

This year's theme: Agricultural soil and water conservation stewardship. Team to put together team for this year's competition, Peter Whitcomb and \_\_\_\_???

Looking for feedback on this challenge. Now through end of May to solve this challenge and then compete.

Want to involve districts more than they have been in the past. Teams will contact district Managers and work with them. Felt DM's would have a better handle on what farms/farmers could work with students in this challenge.

Use manual of best management practices for ag. In NH and assess a farm's current operation.

Big goal is to get students involved in their communities.

B. Porter, fully support this program

Pam Gilbert: wouldn't consider the things on this sheet my area of expertise, how to work with them still?

Idea wouldn't be to tell the students what's going on at a particular farm, but rather to put them in touch with a farmer who's willing to work with a group of students. Up to them what they do/don't want to tell students. County Farms is a good example of a group to work with.

Get concurrence from land owner before giving any land boundary information etc.

1. Would like to see them generate a map from WebSoil Survey. [websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov](http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov)  
NRCS in general is willing to help.

Rick D: Important for students to see soil/water conservation as a component for farm viability. NH Just released farm viability initiative ([nhfoodalliance.com/initiative](http://nhfoodalliance.com/initiative)). Students should see it in that light, cannot separate that from economic viability of the farm.

Richard M: Fully support incorporating the districts, they are largely invisible to the gen. public and this brings it right on the stage. To find out not just the science but learn the admin. Facilities already out there, which will help them carry into the future. Went to the Jaffrey cons. Commission and agreed they would support it. Having a second meeting to discuss whether to pay for what program does or keep their contribution and match it to add a middle school program, or enhance it in some way. Encourage you to use commissions as well as districts.

Linda; hopefully there can be an historical component about how the districts started.

Bob P. Brought a young man who had worked for him on his farm in H.S. he was really fascinated to see the community that we have.

May 23<sup>rd</sup> competition at Tech Inst. In Concord.

Peter will send an email to everyone with multiple resources.

Lionell: what does envirothon need/could benefit from that could come from NHACD or districts?

The list is long,

Email: [jslater@unh.edu](mailto:jslater@unh.edu),

#### **Grant Procedure:**

Working to establish a procedure. Has been a sore point in the past, trying to figure out what we can do consistently.

Linda proposes a 10% fee

Lionell: Question that comes to my mind is whether we'll be in situations where we can share the overhead or is it one or the other? If we can share how does 10% fit in what a typical grant would ask for.

Linda: each grant is different, depends on the responsibilities. Is NHACD doing monthly reporting or is district doing that themselves? Consider it on a 1 to 1 basis?

Total volume of grants to apply this to had we had a 10% this year?

Pollinator grant: what would 10% would have looked like to NHACD? Could have easily set it up that way, Believes NHACD did see revenue from the grant.

Is it appropriate for 2 agencies to ask for admin?

Could it be 10% total admin, and each grant the district negotiates with NHACD how that's divided.

Vicky most of what they (rockingham) are held to is 10%.

Rick E: 10% is low, typical rate is much higher. Can add something in writing to SARE for example that we have an agreed on rate of 15% etc. and they would have to go with that.

**Establish a rate of 15%, and negotiate with each district on grant by grant basis how that is divided. Motion seconded, and approved.**

Pam: could there be a minimum number that we could agree on? Stick to negotiation on case by case basis.

## **NRCS Report**

Rick E: Many people in Dept. political appointees all have to resign by Jan. 20. Voluntary conservation is very popular with everyone, shouldn't see too much impact us but still uncertain.

Budget from Oct 1<sup>st</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, proposal to extend to end of March, so only have half year's funding. Have received initial numbers that are positive for this year. Met with Vicky, Linda, Jackie a few weeks ago to discuss some plans. If I do get full numbers as anticipated would like to do 2 5 year agreements with NHACD, more stable than year to year. Anything above 75k has to be a contribution agreement, can be 75/25. This would be for outreach and for demo projects. Need a letter that he will send up and get approved.

Will give districts/nhacd to do some project work and outreach for next five years. Budget is good for this year, future is very unclear. In best interest to switch to this system. Have to have a 25% match, allowing staff time to be incorporated into those agreements.

Demo projects: each district put together a one pager (template) need a budget, need accountability for auditing.

Hiring to pathway students, college students.

Dept. chief of programs will be here on 7<sup>th</sup> of Dec. Meeting at Nature Conservancy to go over new easement language.

2018 under current farm bill 50% reduction in easements is forthcoming.

Rcpp program, Monadnock looks to get 700k rcpp project for them, for doing easements in that region.

In Cleveland for a week, 120 high tunnels in the city, doing some interesting things that rick is hoping will be incorporated in the new farm bill. Geothermal heat growing year round, could potentially keep tunnels at the low 40-50 degrees. Pipe from underground where ground doesn't drop below 40 degrees, pipes up and they fan it through. About 4 ft in the ground below the frost line.

## **Annual Meeting Review**

L. Chute: wanted to combine district and state annual meeting, increase impact. A new model for one way to do annual meetings going forward.

Business meeting was first in hopes of attracting more supervisors, then banquet then full day of programming.

Cheshire going to do same model and has already come up with a draft for next year.

135 people attended total.

NHACD registrations through Eventbrite.com, through Sullivan county 70 people came.

Supervisor piece for Lionell personally was disappointing, if you remove NHACD officers and host county supervisors out, only had three supervisors attend the business meeting. That's a question going forward that we need to seriously think about. Are these meetings working or should they be considered in a different light?

Same with workshop day: had 4 district supervisors attend the workshops.

13 NRCS staff attended

10 district managers/assoc. district managers 8 or ten counties represented.

Was a costly meeting, but also the best one and well attended.

Is it going to be up and down depending on where you go, is it going to be consistent?

Kerry: Continuing education credits attached to a forestry workshop that could help bring a forester there?

Amanda mentioned going for pesticide credits for two farm workshops.

Kerry be part of this year's planning committee

Field trip to farms close by and see practices that they worked with their district on etc.

Could go to a farm.

Richard M: program was really packed, no room for networking, deliberately building time in between programming. Could have multiple tracts, if people wanted to go to a farm vs. do a workshop. Plan to have a proposal for february's meeting.

### **Communications Committee Report**

Newsletter coming up, invite for submissions on the way soon.

### **Wetlands Council**

4-5 projects along the CT river about 4-500k.

ARM fund is an important asset, Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund. Funded by impacts from previous years of impacts. From private developers.

### **Grant Overview:**

**LISW-RCPP:** Sarah Brady is Project Manager. Budget and Deliverables for group. Upcoming meeting in Woodstock VT on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>. Added in nutrient management planning line, biggest change that's been done so far. Decreased salary line to make room.

Job description for Soil Health Operations Manager as a template.

**CIG:** Dorn has stepped forward to be coordinator of this grant. Equipment will arrive in Sullivan County and be put under cover. Thinking of using Emily Bryant from Orford office to do some mapping for CIG and RCPP grant. She wants to do mapping, \*\*\*ties in with Envirothon???\*\*\*

**NHACD Display:** NACD lent us their display, asked Beth Mason where they got it. \$500

NRCS pay for booth at Farm and Forest in February.

Motion to pursue a display and looking into panels: Approved.