

MEETING MINUTES

May 23, 2011

9:25 AM

NRCS - 60 Quaker Lane – Warwick, RI

Chair Eric Offenberg called the meeting to order at 9:25.

Present: Eric Offenberg; Emerson Wildes, Jessica Blackledge, ERICD; Gina DeMarco, NRICD; Harriet Powell, SRICD; Dick Went, RIACD; Ramona LeBlanc, SCC.

I. Minutes: A motion was made to accept the minutes with minor correction: Harriet/Emerson, unanimous.

II. Financial Report: A motion was made to accept the financial report as submitted: Harriet/Emerson, unanimous.

III. Old Business:

A. FFOS:

- Ag Techs have begun scheduling appointments for site visits for farm conservation plans.**
- Emerson requested a written synopsis of FFOS and how it now works be prepared for the Districts.**
- Each District will be asked to discuss Farm Values, the formula currently used to determine those values and possible sources of**

funding/technical help in assessing that formula. Do they feel the SCC should address now in advance of next mandated review of values? (2012)

B. NRCS Agreements:

1. Ag Inventory/Biosecurity:

- DEM Agreement expired 3/31/11 and APHIS funding will not be available in next fiscal year. DEM hopes to have some funding available through Traceability Grant.**
- NRCS agreement ends 9/30/11 and remaining funding will be used to identify and contact forest landowners and nurseries.**

2. Geese Abatement:

Field component has been completed and 3 workshops are scheduled in SRICD and NRICD to promote EQIP practices available for geese issues on agriculture lands.

3. Outreach:

Ag Techs are assisting staff with file reviews. A third set of workshops on NRCS programs is scheduled. Eric will request a meeting to discuss the success of this agreement and the possibility of continued funding with Pooh Vongkhamdy.

C. MOU:

Districts had previously signed the agreement and Eric signed for the SCC.

D. Strategic Planning Grant:

Draft proposal has been submitted to RI Foundation by RD&C on

behalf of the districts.

I. New Business:

A. 2011-12 Budget:

- Proposed budget was presented. It reflects a \$200 per month reduction in Districts overhead contribution.**
- Each District is asked to review and discuss. The Districts are also asked to review the 2010-11 fiscal year, the work that the SCC has brought to the Districts and the stream lined administrative function and its impact on staff program time.**
- Budget was tabled until next SCC meeting in order to allow response from Districts.**

B. Board Certification:

A motion was made to create an online training program for New Directors based on Massachusetts model. Each District will decide which modules to emphasize: Harriet/Emerson, unanimous.

C. Outreach in 2011-12:

A motion was made to contribute up to the \$500 remaining in current year's budget for outreach to the development of a website by ERICD: Harriet/Emerson, unanimous.

II. Reports:

A. NRICD:

- District is interviewing for Liz Berg's position which will become**

vacant in July.

- **An open house at new building scheduled for 5/25.**

B. RIACD:

Beginning farmer grant proposal will likely be funding at \$148,000 for 1 year, with a 20% indirect to the Association.

C. ERICD:

- **District is addressing office equipment upgrade.**
- **District is monitoring local aquaculture issues and the feasibility of an aquaculture operation on Nanequatuck Pond.**

D. SRICD:

Doug has been working on Geese agreement. District has a contract with Town of Narragansett to identify the wetland boundaries at Canonchet Farm. Doug is also working with Narrow River land Trust to provide GPS maps of its properties.

E. Chair:

NRCS has funding for renewable energy criteria. Eric will request a meeting with Pooh or one of his staff to explain the program with a view to have CD's do education and outreach to landowners for NRCS.

A motion to adjourn at 11:00 was made: Harriet/Emerson, unanimous.