

RI STATE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

2283 Hartford Avenue

Johnston, RI 02919

MEETING MINUTES

May 19, 2015

USDA-NRCS Conference Room

60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI 02886

Chair Maria Mack called meeting to order at 10:03

Present:

RISCC Members: Maria Mack, Ken Ayars, Clarkson Collins, Paul Dolan, Emerson Wildes; RISCC Staff: Ramona LeBlanc, J. Eric Scherer;

ERICD: Jessica Blackledge; NRICD: Gina DeMarco, Molly Allard; SRICD: Kate Bousquet; RIACD: Dick Went, Jean Lynch; RI DEM: Bev Migliore;; NRCS: Phou Vongkhamdy, Chris Modisette.

I. Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2015 meeting was made by Paul Dolan, seconded by Emerson Wildes. Motion passed unanimously.

II. New Business:

A. Statewide Service Opportunity: Molly Allard (NRICD) discussed a grant opportunity to make in class presentations based on curriculum developed for Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program available to schools throughout the state. She will address each

Borad to determine if they would like her to make presentations in their District if the grant is funded or if they would like her to train one of their staff to make presentations.

III. Financial Reports: A motion that RISCC is in receipt of the financial reports was made by Paul Dolan, seconded by Emerson Wildes. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Agreements:

Ramona will be writing status summary for each grant and agreement to assist transition to new staff. A copy will be distributed to the RISCC Board members in lieu of discussion at this meeting.

IV. Old Business:

A. FFOS/NRCS Plans:

NRCS staff will resume doing whole farm conservation plans and will meet with RISCC to ensure these plans meet FFOS requirements. An RFP for assistance in implementation of existing NRCS contracts will be released to free NRCS staff time to complete the plans.

The Ag Partnership has expressed a willingness to fund re-examination of process by which recommended FFOS farm values are determined.

B. Strategic Planning/Legislative Changes:

A second strategic planning session was held on May 5, 2015. Building on mission and vision statements developed during first session, an outline of core values was developed. The next steps will

be to develop a skeleton written draft and to develop long term strategies. A grant from the RI Foundation to develop a written plan will be applied for.

C. NOFA MOU:

SRICD will forward comments and suggested changes to draft MOU. The RISCC will review and forward to NOFA. The RISCC will sign final version on behalf of the Districts

D. DEM Forestry/ F & W Collaboration Update:

SRICD has been asked to develop an agreement between the RISCC, DEM and NRCS which will outline roles/responsibilities of each in a pilot collaboration in the Wixaboxet watershed.

E. ERICD Board Status:

Russ Smith has been appointed as Acting Chair. Emerson plans to remain as RISCC liaison and Associate Director.

V. New Business:

A. A personnel subcommittee has been created.

VI. Reports:

A. SRICD: Written report distributed. Kate reported that any changes in organizational status should be recorded on organization letterhead with various state agencies (Secretary of State, RIDLT, etc).

B. NRICD: RWU students completing projects. Gina is exploring alternate software which may streamline record keeping, invoicing, etc.

ERICD: Written report distributed. Jessie requested a wrap up meeting with RWU to review results/obstacles and to plan for upcoming semester.

NRCS:

Phou approved NRCS staff person to testify in case where a town is questioning NRCS conservation practices on a farm.

RCPD application deadline of July 2 has been announced.

Additional funding for AMA and EQIP has been requested

DEM: Ag Day is May 28.

RIACD: Deb Went will take over bookkeeping on a temporary basis.

RC &D: Coverts workshop had 16 attendees. A Farm Energy program will be held in Nepwort on July 2. Small Scale Forestry agreement continues in four towns in SRICD.

A motion to adjourn was made at 12:37 by Clark Collins, seconded by Ken Ayars. Motion carried unanimously.