

## Minutes for RI SCC for July 15, 2015

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: NRCS Conference Room, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI 02886

Attendees: RISCC members - Maria Mack (Chair), Paul Dolan (NRICD), Clarkson Collins (SRICD), Emmerson Wildes (ERICD), Ken Ayars (RIDEM); Nancy Parker Wilson (ERICD); Gina DeMarco (NRCID), Kate Bousquet, (SRICD); Eric Scherer (RISCC interim project coordinator); Michael Viola, Civil Engineering Technician (RISCC); Phou Vongkhamdy (USDA, NRCS); Beverly Migliore, RI DEM; Jean Lynch (NRICD)

- I. Welcome and Introductions – Maria Mack, Chair welcomed the attendees and asked everyone to introduce themselves. Mr. Vongkhamdy asked to add two items to the agenda, under New Business, item E. Engineering Agreement for Roof Cover and Roof Runoff Structures engineering assistance and item F. Engineering Agreement for Flood Plain Management engineering assistance.
- II. Introduction of Project Coordinator (anticipated) – Ms. Mack provide a brief update on the status of hiring the new project coordinator, due to issues with pay, travel and office location each of the top three candidates declined the position and the personnel subcommittee will be meeting after the RISCC meeting to discuss the options before them to fill the position.
- III. Review and Approve Minutes of May 19, 2015 – (handout provided) Ms. Mack asked for any updates/corrections to the minutes, none provided - **a motion was made by P. Dolan to accept the minutes as presented. E. Wildes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.**
- IV. ~~Review and Approve~~ Accept Financial Reports ( for June 2015) – (handout provided) Ms. Mack presented the Financial Report. Eric Scherer reviewed the report with the attendees. Several questions were asked. **E. Wildes made a motion to accept the Financial Reports as presented, seconded by C. Collins and passed unanimously.**

Eric also reviewed the Draft 2015-15 Budget with the attendees and explained several of the line items. **A motion to accept the 2015-16 RI SCC Budget was mad by P. Dolan and seconded my K. Ayars, passed unanimously.**

The attendees discussed the legislative grant process for requesting funds. Several attendees stated that this process starts in August and the grantees are contacted by the state to submit their request along with their budgets.

**Action Item: It was asked that B. Migliore and K. Ayars assist with this process and the RI SCC project coordinator would work with them and district staff to help facilitate the process. It was also suggested that grantees consider asking for increases in their grants after several years of decline.**

- V. Review RI SCC calendar – (handout provided) a paper copy of the 2015 calendar with future RI SCC dates was passed out and attendees were encouraged to review the dates for conflict and pencil in dates and times. **P. Vongkhamdy was asked to have his staff schedule the USDA Conference Room for each date for the RI SCC meeting, from 10**

**AM to Noon.**

- VI. Review Status of Agreements –(handouts provided) E. Scherer reviewed with attendees written update on agreements. Comments and questions from attendees were answered and attendees liked having the update to keep track of the agreements. Scherer mentioned that he hoped a new reporting process might help to produce this update automatically.

**Action Item: K. Ayars agreed to follow up with RIDEM legal office on how the RI SCC and RI DEM are 'legally' connected and that MOUs are not needed as the RI SCC is an agency of RI DEM – but MOAs would be needed between the RI SCC (and CDs) and the RI DEM Divisions for services/projects that involve deliverables and funds. Ken agreed to have this at the next meeting.**

**Action Item: E. Scherer agreed to send to K. Bousquet and G. DeMarco a copy of the 2014 Outreach agreement notes from the RI SCC files on status of deliverable yet to be matched.**

**Action Item: Staff (Gina, Kate and Eric) to meet with Walter Marshall (NRCS) to discuss existing status of Outreach Agreements on 7-16-15.**

**Action Item: E. Scherer will complete requests for Engineering Agreement extensions (2014 and 2015) and funding (2015).**

**Action Item: Staff to meet with NRCS on RFPs for outreach and implementation agreements being proposed for 2016 funds on 7-16-15.**

## VII. Old Business

- A. Written update on status of Statewide Service Opportunity – Molly Allard, NRICD has visited with both the Eastern and Southern Conservation District Boards and both are in agreement to work with Northern RICD on the program as a statewide program for the foreseeable future until staffing allows for each CD to conduct its own program with its staff. K. Bousquet mentioned that this opportunity was an excellent example of how the conservation district staff are sharing resources and skills on a statewide basis and this is a benefit to each of the CDs as well as the public.

**Action Item: It was agreed that N. Wilson would be the interim contact for M. Allard for ERICD on this work (and keep E. Wildes informed also).**

**Action Item: On a similar topic, E. Scherer asked for assistance from N. Wilson to help, if needed, in contacting the Newport Water Company for a letter of support and match for the Goose Abatement agreement that is still outstanding. N. Wilson agreed.**

**Action Item: K. Ayars asked if the ERICD could assist with a growers meeting in the District to discuss water quality issues. It was recommended to ask NRCS if such a meeting could be used as a 2015 Outreach meeting and it was agreed to ask NRCS to do this. K. Ayars agreed to provide a write up on the issue for use in**

**development of the meeting. Greenvale Vineyards (N. Wilson) agreed to host an event if needed. It was recommended that M. Allard be the lead and N. Wilson the EIRCD contact for this event.**

- B. Written update on FFOS/NRCS Plans –(handout provided) Scherer provided a quick update on the status of FFOS farm designation plans. There is a need to get this program back on track and this was strongly supported by K. Ayars. An Ad Hoc subcommittee was formed to review existing documents and come up with a strategy to put this program back on track. The subcommittee is Kate Sayles (NRICD), K. Bousquet (SRICD), N. Wilson (ERICD), K. Ayars (RIDEM), E. Scherer RISCC) and Chris Modisette (NRCS).

**Action Item: Scherer to send out a Doodle Poll for a date as soon as possible.**

**Action Item: Scherer to send out documents and other materials for review by subcommittee prior to meeting.**

- C. Status on Strategic Plan document – Scherer explained that a draft application for a RI Foundation Organizational Development Grant was developed for the RISCC to go to the next step in developing a fully operational strategic plan (copy of Application draft provided to attendees). **A motion was made by C. Collins to submit the application for the RI Foundation Grant, seconded by K. Ayars and passed unanimously.**

**Action Item: E. Scherer directed by RI SCC to submit grant by deadline 7-15-15.**

- D. Approve and Sign NOFA MOU – Scherer (handout provided)

Copies of the MOU were distributed and reviewed by three conservation districts at prior board meetings where it was agreed at the last RISCC meeting that the RISCC would sign the MOU on behalf of the CDs. Nancy Parker Wilson agreed to deliver two copies of the signed MOU to NOFARI. **A motion was made by K. Ayars to sign the MOU with the RI SCC and the NOFARI, seconded by P. Dolan and passed unanimously. M. Mack signed two copies of the MOU and they were given to N. Wilson to deliver to NOFARI.**

- E. Review and approve DEM Forestry/ F&W Collaboration Update – Kate Bousquet

K. Bousquet explained why the CDs were looking to have a MPU with RI DEM Division of Forest Environment. A short discussion was held on the need for the RISCC and CDs, as agencies of the RIDEM to have a legal document such as a MOU to enter into agreements. It was mentioned by E. Scherer that he felt that since the RISCC and CDs operated under RIGL as an agency of RIDEM, that a MOU would not be needed but separate agreements for services and products would need a written agreement (Like the Tracability Agreement and the Goose Agreement).

**Action Item: K. Ayars agreed to work with RI DEM legal staff to have this area of a 'legal' relationship between the RISCC, CDs and RI DEM clarified for developing working agreements.**

- F. Provide report on progress of ERICD Board Status – Emmerson Wildes

E. Wildes provided an update on the ERICD Board of Directors there are now five directors, including E. Wildes. Russ Smith is now the Chair.

V. New Business

A. Review draft National NRCS/RI Partnership MOU – (handout provided)

A draft copy of the National NRCS/RI Partnership MOU was presented to the attendees. E. Scherer explained the 'history' behind the MOU process that has evolved over the years between the USDA Sec. of Ag and the many conservation districts. This is not a new idea, but a re-establishment of a historical documentation of the relationship between the NRCS and conservation districts. Copies of the draft MOU have been sent out to all signatories (RI SCC, ERICD, NRICD, SRICD, RI RC&D Council, RI Assoc. of Cons Districts). So far the NRICD, RI RC&D Council and the RI ACD have agreed to sign the MOU.

**Action Item: The SRICD and ERICD will review the MOU at their next board meeting for a decision on whether to sign the MOU. The next RI SCC meeting is August 19<sup>th</sup>. K. Ayars will also have RI DEM legal staff review the MOU to confirm that the RI SCC can sign it as a state agency.**

B. Approve new Board member for SRICD – Collins

C. Collins presented the SRICD nomination and signatory papers for a new Board member, Antonia Bryson to be approved by the RI SCC. **A motion was made by C. Collins to approve Antonia Bryson at a board member for SRICD, seconded by P. Dolan and passed unanimously. K. Bousquet has agreed to send an electronic copy of the signatory papers to the RISSC for their files and retain the original copy in SRICD files.**

C. Review and approve submittal of pre-proposal for 2016 RCPP – G. DeMarco presented a handout to the attendees on an Executive Summary of the RCPP pre-proposal application to NRCS. After a brief discussion it was agreed to approve the pre-application and to submit a full application if approved. **A motion was made by C. Collins to approve the pre-application and to submit a full application if approved., seconded by K. Ayars and passed unanimously.**

D. Discussion of status of office space for SCC - Maria

M. Mack discussed the status of office space at RI DEM for the RI SCC as well as progress on space for ERICD at Roger Williams University. She is hopeful on having more updates on both at the next RI SCC meeting in August.

E. Proposed NRCS Roof Covers and Roof Runoff Structure Engineering Agreement – Alan Gillespie, State Conservation Engineer explained the need for a new agreement between the NRCS and the RI SCC to help develop engineering designs for EQIP clients for Roof Runoff Structures and Roof and Covers. NRCS is proposing a \$65K agreement to be funded. It was discussed that NRCS had three options, to work with its own staff, to have clients work with Technical Service Providers or to hire a partner (RI SCC) to do the work. **A motion was made by P. Dolan to approve the RI SCC enter into an agreement with NRCS to work on a Roof Runoff Structures and Roof and Covers agreement, seconded by C. Collins and passed unanimously.**

G. Proposed NRCS Pocasset River FPMS Agreement – A. Gillespie described the need to have additional work done on the Pocasset River FPMS – currently there are no funds for hard armoring of the river with flood control structures such as flood walls and dikes as originally engineered. In light of the need to do some flood plain mitigation, it was decided to look at a flood plain easement option to help keep the FPMS active for the time being. This option does not need a partner share. It was recommended to have NRCS develop a draft agreement with its local sponsor, the NRICD to review at their meeting with input as needed from the RI SCC. This review might indicate that as the sponsor, the NRICD might be the most logical choice to do this agreement with. There is a need to understand if the NRICD will need to follow any fiscal policy/procedure to announce the availability of funding to solicit proposals for this work (since NRICD and other districts operate as quasi public corporations, what policy/procedure do they need to follow in soliciting proposals and awarding contracts?).

**Action Item: NRCS will develop a draft agreement for review by NRICD (sponsor) and review with RI SCC.**

#### VI. Members and Advisors Reports \*

##### A. RI DEM – Ken Ayars

Deferred.

##### B. ERICD – Emmerson Wildes

No written report submitted – will send it out electronically, verbal report provided on staffing situation at ERICD with resignation of Ms. Blackledge as district manager. ERICD Board voted to hire someone quickly.

##### C. NRICD – Paul Dolan

Written report provided and distributed, verbal updates provided on Snake Den Farm activities.

##### D. SRICD – Clark Collins

Written report provided and distributed, verbal updates provided.

- E. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services – Phou Vongkhamdy

Written report provided and distributed, verbal updates provided.

- F. RI Association of Conservation Districts – Dick Went

No written report submitted.

- G. RI Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc. – Paul Dolan

Verbal updates provided on various grants and agreements under RI RC&D program, including small forestry, CIG not successful, USDA RD Farm Energy Grant, etc.

- H. RI Statewide Planning Program – Paul Gonzalez

No Report

- VIII. Adjourn - **Motion was made by P. Dolan and seconded by K. Ayars and passed unanimously to adjourn at 12:25 PM**

DRAFT

**Action Register for RI SCC for August 19, 2015**

<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Agenda Item IV.	Action Item: It was asked that B. Migliore and K. Ayars assist with this process and the RI SCC project coordinator would work with them and district staff to help facilitate the process. It was also suggested that grantees consider asking for increases in their grants after several years of decline.	B. Miglore and K. Ayars	August 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	
Agenda Item VI.	Action Item: K. Ayars agreed to follow up with RIDEM legal office on how the RI SCC and RI DEM are 'legally' connected and that MOUs are not needed as the RI SCC is an agency of RI DEM – but MOAs would be needed between the RI SCC (and CDs) and the RI DEM Divisions for services/projects that involve deliverables and funds. Ken agreed to have this at the next meeting.	k. Ayars	August 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	
Agenda Item VI.	Action Item: E. Scherer agreed to send to K. Bousquet and G. DeMarco a copy of the 2014 Outreach agreement notes from the RI SCC files on status of deliverable yet to be matched.	E. Scherer	ASAP	Done.
Agenda Item VI.	Action Item: Staff (Gina, Kate and Eric) to meet with Walter Marshall (NRCS) to discuss existing status of Outreach Agreements on 7-16-15.	CD Staff	July 16, 2015	Done
Agenda Item VI.	Action Item: E. Scherer will complete requests for Engineering Agreement extensions (2014	Interim or new Project	August 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	

	and 2015) and funding (2015).	Coordinator		
Agenda Item VI.	Action Item: Staff to meet with NRCS on RFPs for outreach and implementation agreements being proposed for 2016 funds on 7-16-15.	CD staff	July 16, 2015	Done.
Agenda Item VII - H.	Action Item: It was agreed that N. Wilson would be the interim contact for M. Allard for ERICD on this work (and keep E. Wildes informed also).	M. Allard	August 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	
Agenda Item VII - H.	Action Item: On a similar topic, E. Scherer asked for assistance from N. Wilson to help, if needed, in contacting the Newport Water Company for a letter of support and match for the Goose Abatement agreement that is still outstanding. N. Wilson agreed.	E. Scherer or Project Coordinator	August 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	
Agenda Item VII - H.	Action Item: K. Ayars asked if the ERICD could assist with a growers meeting in the District to discuss water quality issues. It was recommended to ask NRCS if such a meeting could be used as a 2015 Outreach meeting and it was agreed to ask NRCS to do this. K. Ayars agreed to provide a write up on the issue for use in development of the meeting. Greenvale Vineyards (N. Wilson) agreed to host an event if needed. It was recommended that M. Allard be the lead and N. Wilson the ERICD contact for this event.	K. Ayars, M. Allard	August 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	
Agenda Item VII - I.	Action Item: Scherer to send out a Doodle Poll for a date as soon as possible.	E. Scherer	ASAP	Done.

Agenda Item VII - I.	Action Item: Scherer to send out documents and other materials for review by subcommittee prior to meeting.	E. Scherer	ASAP	Done.
Agenda Item VII - J	Action Item: E. Scherer directed by RI SCC to submit grant by deadline 7-15-15.	E. Scherer	July 15, 2015	Done.
Agenda Item IV.	Action Item: K. Ayars agreed to work with RI DEM legal staff to have this area of a 'legal' relationship between the RISCC, CDs and RI DEM clarified for developing working agreements.	K. Ayars	August 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	
Agenda Item IV.	Action Item: The SRICD and ERICD will review the MOU at their next board meeting for a decision on whether to sign the MOU. The next RI SCC meeting is August 19 <sup>th</sup> . K. Ayars will also have RI DEM legal staff review the MOU to confirm that the RI SCC can sign it as a state agency.	SRICD Board ERICD Board	August 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	