

Chair, Paul Dolan called the meeting to order at 7:05

Present: Directors: Paul Dolan: Dick Went, Jean Lynch: Associate Directors: Marc Tremblay, Norm Hammond. District Manager, Gina DeMarco: Kevin Farmer, Pooh Vongkhamdy, Jeehye Lee, NRCS: Debra Aiello, RI SCC.

I. Minutes: A motion was entertained to accept the Minutes of the previous meeting as presented. Dick/Jean; unanimous: motion passed.

II. Treasurer's Reports: A motion was entertained that the Board was in receipt of the financial reports. Dick/Jean; unanimous. The board is looking for clarification of financial report: Tabled.

III. New Business

A. Sub-Committee Report on Dame Farm:

1. Marc reported that the sub-committee held a meeting to discuss the possibility of including organizations and individuals who may be interested in participating on the steering committee to help develop a business plan. (See attached) A motion was made to accept the recommendations of Dame Farm sub-committee including the SCC funds to research the potentials. Dick/Jean: unanimous; motion passed.

B. Belfield Drive Project- Guests: Kevin Farmer and Pooh Vongkhamdy.

1. Pooh explained that \$1.78 million has been secured for acquisition of two Belfield Dr. homes that are subject to repetitive flooding since

2010. EWP funding objective is to secure conservation easements on the parcels. A motion was made for NRICD to sponsor the project if they can find someone to hold the deed. Dick/Jean: unanimous; motion passed.

2. Pooh met with the Mayor of Johnston to ask if he would like to become a partner in the project. Gina is planning to meet with the mayor concerning taking ownership of the properties after the houses are removed. She is also planning to visit the towns of Scituate and Cranston to see if they would like to sign up for sign up for a similar EWP Project based on Sandy and flooding two times in past ten years. A motion was made to allocate a day to Gina to work on getting towns to sign up for the project. Dick/Jean; unanimous: motion passed.

IV. Old Business

A. Seedling program:

1. The seedling program is in progress. Distribution of the plants will be held on April 26th and 27th. Ramona is looking for help with distribution. Jean Lynch will work both days, Dick and Deb Went are likely to work both days as well. Janet will work on Friday. Gina , Paul and Marc are planning to work on Saturday.

B. Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program:

1. Construction for the Rain Garden Project will begin on April 22, 2013 at 11:00 in the Village of Scituate.

2. “Get Wet” Presentation will be held on April 11, 2013 at 6:00, at Scituate High School.

3. The Well Water Workshop will be held on April 18, 2013.

C. NRCS Agreements: No report

D. Board Recruitment: No report

E. Ag Inventory: No report

F. Small Scale Forest:

1. The four Small Forestry workshops that were held in March were very successful. There were 16- 36 attendees. Expectantly, the attendees will take part in upcoming projects.

III.Reports

A.Chair: No report

B.RI SCC:

1. The RISCC provided a Fee for service brochure in draft form. The next meeting will discuss finalizing the brochure.

C. NRCS:

1. The third EQIP ranking deadline is April 19, 2013. A total of 87 applications were received in FY 2013. Earth Day at Roger Williams Park Zoo Party for the Planet workshop is planned for April 25th .

D. RC & D:

1. The Woodland Ambassador course will be held at the GW Management area on Saturday April 6th. is the closing project in the small scale forestry workshops.

E. RDC:

1. They are planning a meeting to look at keeping the organization intact, and grow to be more vigorous in administrating grants.

F. RIFCO:

1. Marc is planning a program on May 18th at the South County Rod and Gun Club in Exeter.

G.RIACD:

- 1. Ramona is now a signatory on the Citizens account.**
- 2. Ag Partnership had a meeting regarding legislation on the definition in agriculture.**

H. RIRLA: No report

I. Envirothon:

- 1. The Envirothon Breakfast fundraiser took place at Dave's Restaurant on Saturday April 7, 2013. A meeting is set for Monday April 15, 2013 at Addieville to view the location prior to set up on May 21, 2013.**

J. District Manager: No report.

Dick moved to adjourn meeting at 9:12

The next meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2013 at 7:00

To: No. RI Conservation District Board of Directors

From: Dame Farm Sub-Committee

Date: April 3, 2013

Re: Course of Action

On 3/26/2013 the Sub-Committee met (Dolan, DeMarco, Buckler, Lynch, Tremblay) and the following conclusions were reached:

- The first thing we need to do is determine NRICD's role with Dame Farm, assuming that our offices will NOT be moving there;**
- With authorization from the Board to proceed with the concept to coordinate the establishment of a regional agricultural/conservation center at the Farm, the next step is to assemble a steering committee, which will take on visionary and decision making roles as the project moves forward. We brainstormed possible organizations and individuals who might be interested in participating on the steering committee, as well as a broader list of those who might be interested in the project (but may not necessarily be included on the steering committee);**
- Preliminary Mission Statement:**

To promote sustainable local agriculture on the land and in the minds (and hearts) of Rhode Islanders.

- Preliminary Strategy for Achieving Mission:**

- 1. Ensure long term financial viability of agricultural activities at Dame Farm**
- 2. Provide long term, farmer-friendly leases to encourage creation of**

new farm businesses

3. Showcase natural resource conservation practices

4. Provide educational opportunities for the public to engage with agriculture and with the outdoors

5. Provide support and training opportunities for farmers

• Here are skill sets that should be represented on the committee:

-Agricultural Production, Conservation, and Forestry Interests

-Historic Preservation

-Event Planning

-Educational Programming

-Business Opportunity Development/Grant Writing

-Financial/Legal Expertise

• To begin creation of the committee, we will have an exploratory meeting (hopefully at Dame Farm) in late May (after the Envirothon). At this meeting we will present some of the history of the farm, a preliminary mission and vision statement for its next iteration, as well as some preliminary research into a business plan for the property and ideas on maintaining financial solvency. Hopefully from this exploratory meeting we will identify 7-10 individuals to join the steering committee;

• The Steering Committee's input into the business plan will assist the

NRICD with acquiring a lease from the state for the Dame Farm.

Action Requested of the Board:

To authorize the Sub-committee to proceed with the above-described process of developing a Steering Committee and the resulting business plan.

Financial Impacts:

Funds are available under Program Development to cover Becca's time in coordinating this effort.