

WCNRCD Board Meeting
May 10th 6:30 PM Held at Geof's House and over Zoom

Present: Cory Ross; District Manager; Heather Blunk, Ag Outreach Specialist; Board Members: Meg Kluge, Geof Dolman, Linda Corse, Pieter van Loon

Zoom Participants: Isabel Bowman, Conservation Specialist; Phyllicia Moore; NRCS Zone Conservationist

NRCS update from Phyllicia Moore

- Pre approvals are in place right now. Staff working hard getting contracts out the door. Emma is doing excellent!
- State resource staff came down last week. Purpose of the meeting was to get resource staff out and view operations that are non-traditional and how does NRCS better serve those producers. Visited Giant Journey Farm. Full resource staff attended! Heard from producers and how they felt like they could not have approached the federal government in the beginning and how they did not think this was a space for them. NRCS let them know they are not regulatory, and how they can provide technical and program assistance. How does NRCS make adjustments for those farms? How are they eligible and how does NRCS meet their needs? Another site visit was Grateful Greens. They are now at the Cotton Mill. A different set up than what they saw a year ago. Seeing difference in operation. Resource concerns are no longer there, but how can NRCS still serve an operation indoors? How does NRCS meet requirements when it comes to DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility)?
- CSP IRA funds are kicking in. Application deadline was April 21st. Scheduling site visits. Not too many new ones however if there were previous CSP but they can meet IRA requirements they can possibly be added to the same ranking tools if they did not make it this time.
- Trying to get Emma assistance. Process with HR is making it challenging. Back at square one, but now using a different approach in conjunction with HR. NRCS will advertise jobs and then the location is negotiable.
- Phyllicia is preparing for maternity leave.
- VACD is filling Kaylas position. Job posting closes next week. Interviews will take place next month or first week of June.

Plant Sale Debrief

- Great having bagged/potted plants/trees/shrubs sorted in the box in numerical order
- Have a separate area for orders with multiple boxes or emphasize to runners the importance of getting the correct box # for the order
- When cutting potted perennials cut 5's into square shape instead of strips to cut down on them tipping over
- Having entry taped off day of pick up
- Having a check out table and two check in tables
- Make it more known about picking up orders on Saturday
 - They get a confirmation email, can we add it to that?
 - Remind 101, it's an app and you can do a robot text.
- Maybe add one more hour to pick up

- Have a table for customers to check their orders (with the runner present)
- Bring more pamphlets and handouts for CISMA
- Need at least 4 runners.
- Have a person at the order checking table to troubleshoot (Cory)
- Having what was missing written on their credit slip was helpful
- Get an Americorp Member to do environment education and have the stream table.
- Make sure the website is up to date with plant information (planting, ideal location, etc.) of plants being offered.

District Managers Report

- Will make around \$10,000 in profit from plant sales.
- Submitted two grants to Mount Ascutney. Ellis Brook plantation to take out two berms. Berm removal in Jacksonville.
- Trout sale pickup next Tuesday May 16th. \$2,125 in trout sales.
 - Maybe look into other Trout vendor
- Trees for Streams has both operation and maintenance agreements signed.
- Have pamphlets to give to kids or parents that tells them their teachers can rent the stream table out.
- All roads come back to stream table
- Greeter program
 - Small amount for Harriman. District was only matched money. How can we make it evident to DEC that Harriman needs this?
 - Need greeter at south pond
 - Send to Pieter to post on Marlboro
 - Send info to Geof to send out to members
- Balance sheet. Negative accounts receivable. Why? Because Plant sale consumer refund doesn't line up. NRCC paid us too much.

Quarterly financial report

- Better than last quarter . We are solidly in the black!
- Long Island Sound Futures Fund Grant (LISFF) is taking forever and will not be paid by the end of fiscal year.
- Contractors for LISFF we cannot give them anything because no work has started
- AFT RCPP We thought 35,224. It will be much less than that.
- Nothing under unclassified, Cory would like that to be celebrated!

FY24

- We know nothing officially
- The House appropriated \$1 million in one time funds.
- The Senate appropriated an additional \$250,000 in ongoing funding. This is safe, meaning we will get it and get it on going which pushes us to \$600,000 total. Will get split evenly between all districts equating to around \$40,000 per district.
- Will have answer in a couple weeks

District logo redesign

- Make the barn smaller on all logos, change the barn color to the tan/brown to minimize the number of colors.
- On the newer logo (page 32), have the river taper off into the distance to make it appear more like a river and less like a road.

Minutes

Motion to accept the March meetings minutes was moved, seconded and passed with corrections.

- Cory added short term leave policy

Motion to go into executive session was moved, second and passed

Next meeting is June 8th at 6:30pm at Lindas

Meeting adjourned 8:30

**Respectfully submitted,
Heather Blunk**