



Connecticut RC&D

Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.
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*John Guskowski, President
John Weedon, Vice President
Barbara Kelly, Treasurer
Margot Burns, Secretary*

RC&D Council Annual Meeting Minutes
Monday 9:30- 11:30am, June 29, 2015
deKoven House
27 Washington Street
Middletown, CT

Board Members in Attendance: John Guskowski, Judy Rondeau, John Weedon, Jim Costello, Lois Bruinooge, Mark Nielsen, Barbara Kelly

Board Members not in attendance: Francis Pickering, Jim Sipperly, Margot Burns, Sal DeCarli

Other Attendees: Amanda Fargo-Johnson, Elaine Sych, Janice Ehle/Meyer, Chuck Lee, Jim Hyde, Ray Covino, Pat Young

John Guskowski called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

CT RC&D BUSINESS

Secretaries Report: Mark Nielsen noted that his name was spelled incorrectly in the draft minutes.

Motion: To accept the May 18, 2015 meeting minutes as amended.

Motion made by: John Weedon

Seconded by: Jim Costello

Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

Financial Reporting: Barbara Kelly presented the updated financial report and profit/loss statement

Motion: To accept the financial reporting for audit purposes.

Motion made by: Judy Rondeau

Seconded by: Barbara Kelly

Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

ANNUAL MEETING BUSINESS

Annual Plan of Work: John Guskowski discussed the draft Annual Plan and organization into four broad goal areas. Chuck Lee noted that the Plan has been reviewed by DEEP, outlining general areas of agreement and requesting more detail of work. Notes from DEEP were not provided in writing. John Weedon stated that details would be added as work proceeded. Barbara Kelly suggested more specific line items for action steps. Mark Nielsen noted that this was a Plan of Work not simply for staff, but also contained significant expectation for Board action as well.

Motion: To adopt the Annual Plan of Work for FY 2015-16 with expectation that budgetary details will be fleshed out over the next several weeks.

Motion made by: John Weedon
Seconded by: Lois Bruinooge
Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

Annual Budget: Barbara Kelly presented the proposed budget, noting it was a very rough skeleton of expenditures, and stated that several budget offsets are still yet to-be-determined based on Farm Energy contracting. John Guskowski inquired whether any Board members ought to recuse themselves from action on the budget, and none did. Barbara Kelly stated that income lines needed to be shown.

Motion: To amend the proposed budget to add \$20,000 in expenditures for ERT team member payments or stipends

Motion made by: Lois Bruinooge

Seconded by: Jim Costello

Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

The Council discussed staff responsibilities relative to the budget. John Guskowski stated that based on the adopted Plan of Work, staff would be asked to identify tasks they felt comfortable with “claiming” for the coming year, and decisions about staffing levels and responsibilities would derive from that discussion and a decision of the Executive Committee, in its personnel role.

Motion: To adopt the FY 2015-16 Budget as amended, with the understanding that additional detail would be added based on more current information about income and staffing levels.

Motion made by: John Weedon

Seconded by: Lois Bruinooge

Voted: Motion carried, 4 votes in favor (Guskowski/Weedon/Bruinooge/Costello), 1 opposed (Nielsen), and 2 abstentions (Kelly/Rondeau).

Mark Nielsen added that the reason for his vote in opposition was due to his belief that the budget as presented was not complete and did not indicate how funds would be allocated to different programs. He did not believe that it was appropriate to approve a budget with so many uncertainties.

Election of Officers: John Guskowski reported that the nominating committee recommended a slate of the current officers to continue for the coming fiscal year.

Motion: To nominate John Guskowski for President, John Weedon for Vice President, Barbara Kelly for Treasurer, and Margot Burns for Secretary

Motion made by: Lois Bruinooge

Seconded by: Judy Rondeau

John Guskowski asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor. There were none.

Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

ONGOING PROJECT UPDATES

Environmental Review Team: Elaine Sych distributed her report and discussed recent contacts on the inter-state RCPP grant project and the Land Trust Exchange discussions. *(Contact Elaine for distributed report)*

Farm Energy Program: Amanda Fargo-Johnson reported on the Farm Energy Program and the numerous applications in process for REAP funding. *(Contact Amanda for distributed Report)*

There are two grants requiring action – one for USDA-RD for approximately \$80,000 and one from Dep’t of Energy/DEEP for \$60,000. These contracts require resolutions from the Board and signatures of the President and Secretary.

Motion: To appoint John Weedon as acting Secretary for purposes of Farm Energy contracting

Motion made by: Lois Bruinooge

Seconded by: Barbara Kelly

Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: To authorize John Guszkowski to sign required Farm Energy contracts and to affirm the RC&D's nondiscrimination policies.

Motion made by: Lois Bruinooge

Seconded by: Jim Costello

Voted: Motion approved unanimously.

Soil Health

John Guszkowski and Jim Hyde reported on the two planned Soil Health seminars – one in the late fall/early winter 2015 and one in late winter 2016.

RCPP

Lois Bruinooge stated that contract discussions are proceeding for the Last Green Valley's RCPP grant, and it was anticipated there would be approximately \$20,000 over two years for the AGvocate Program work.

Salmon River Watershed Partnership – Sponsorship

Pat Young gave an update on the activities of SRWP in the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative and stated that she would work with Barb Kelly and the RC&D bookkeeper to transfer Town of Colchester funds into RC&D account for SRWP activities.

Urban Oaks Mobile Market

John Guszkowski stated that the Urban Oaks group established a nonprofit entity, but this entity was apparently not working closely with the activities of the organic farm itself, so it was possible that the RC&D might be called upon again in the future to provide fiscal sponsorship of activities or grant administration.

CT RC&D Organizational Details:

Budget and Staffing: Staff will be asked to submit their proposed work plan tasks within the next two weeks, and then the Executive Committee will conduct meetings with staff to establish revised work plans and undertake scoping of work for additional staff.

Other Business:

Jim Sipperly (absent) had submitted no report on the proposed New England RC&D Conference. There was no other business.

Partner Updates:

Jim Hyde discussed the potential of establishing a manure/nutrient trading market in Connecticut to alleviate over-concentrations of nutrients in impacted watersheds. He stated that the Southwest Conservation District may be looking at this idea, and suggested that this could be a good Agricultural Viability grant project.

Next Meeting Date: August 25, 2015. Location to be determined.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:40am.

Respectfully submitted,

John Guskowski
Board President