



Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

Official Minutes

**Date: 20 May 2026
Time : 10 AM - 1 PM**

In Person @ WNRCD Berlin Office:
617 Comstock Rd, Suite 1, Berlin, VT 05602

[Video Conference Link](#)

Optional: Open Meeting Law Training

- 9 AM - Dan will play video for anyone interested
-  Vermont Open Meeting Law Training Video
- Two attendees, Ella Mighell and Dan Koenemann.

Attendance

In-Person: Rick Hopkins (Chair, Supervisor), Russ Barrett (Vice-Chair, Supervisor), Nancy Everhart (Supervisor), Henry Harris (Associate Supervisor), Jeff Cueto (Associate Supervisor), Dan Koenemann (District Manager), Lucas Goldfluss (Conservation Specialist), Kara Winslow (Agricultural Specialist), Heather Murphy (Agricultural Specialist), Deleany Hindel (Summer Intern, Vermont Law and Graduate School), Pat Richardson (Accountant), Ella Mighell (Guest, Prospective Supervisor)

Virtual: Rich Turner (Supervisor), Dan Hemenway (Associate Supervisor), Marybeth Whitten (USDA-NRCS), Hilary Martin (Guest, Prospective Supervisor), Jean Hamilton (Guest, Prospective Supervisor)

- Introductions
All did introductions.

Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Official Minutes - March 18, 2026
- ACTION ITEM: Approve Minutes
It was noted that Maggie's last name was missing. It was requested that her last name be added (Batton).
Rich moved to approve. Russ seconded. All in favor.

Financial Updates - Pat

- ACTION ITEM: Approve Financials
Budget vs Actual: We are in the beginning of Q4. The tree sale brought in approximately \$29K but that is not including expenses, which include the online store and Paypal fees (\$1,027), and remaining tree costs (\$3,300). Altogether we are looking at \$20K for direct expenses. We still need to know the staff expenses and hours, but we don't have those numbers yet. Likely close to breaking even but not sure yet.



We have invoiced Storm Smart for almost \$54K, but have not received it yet. Right now our total income for the year is \$537,819. Our initial goal had been \$754,819 and we might hit that number by the end of the year. We are on schedule to hit our payroll projections.

Nothing else much of note. There will be savings on workers compensation. Dan has been reclassified to administrative status. Pat is working on getting rates down for the other staff.

We are positive both for the quarter and the year, largely due to carry over from last fiscal year.

Balance Sheet: Currently \$180,412 in the bank account. The receivables are mostly Storm Smart and a few other grants that are due. We have some prepaid expenses that are from the website and the quickbooks license. We needed to get a new QuickBooks license. The online functionality will allow Dan to open as a viewer and run reports. For the accounts payable, Friends of the Winooski River and Friends of the Mad River have invoiced us for their role in Storm Smart. We have a few small payroll liabilities and the credit card payment.

Nancy moved to approve the financials. Russ seconded. All in favor.

NRCS & NRCC Updates - Marybeth Whitten/Rick Hopkins

NRCS: NRCS Vermont has ranked 147 applications in Washington County and 169 applications in Chittenden County. There were many more applications and a much greater ask than there was money to support it. Only 9 EQIP applications funded in Washington County. And 27 EQIP applications funded in Chittenden County. There was one AMA funded. We in Washington County were the only ones in the State to get one funded. The AMA money got cut. Heather is working on this AMA, which is great! All our local fund pool applicants got funded! There was an exception, one was deemed ineligible. The rest will move forward and Heather and Kara are working toward obligation. We are well on our way in this respect.

The CSP ranking was due last Friday. The Central Zone did not meet that deadline. That impacts one application for us, and it is getting ranked right now. It will get done. We should know which CSPs are funded by the end of the day tomorrow or at least Friday. NRCS ranked 25 CSPs in our District. Marybeth predicted all 25 would be preapproved. The ask was only off by hundreds of thousands rather than millions. In fact, they "almost" came out even, 11 in Chittenden County and 13 in Washington County. Marybeth noted that that doesn't add up to 25.

Washington County staff are managing 67 active contracts. Chittenden County staff are managing 69 active contracts. Garrett has left and Johan is on paternity leave. Heather is the only planner in Williston, and she works for the District! There has been a program assistant reassigned to Williston, which will be a help. Heather has stepped up to the plate and helped fill the void in Williston. Maggie Batton will also help service Williston, as will Marybeth, until Johan comes back. Cheyanne Rico has started doing planning, about 20 contracts, so she is helping too.

For our Local Fund Pool for 2026, we have submitted our ranking questions and practices. They were signed and submitted.

Berlin office updates, there is a potential mold problem in the back portion. People have been relocated to the cubicles near the District. The construction outside should already be done.

NRCC: By way of introduction to guests, the Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC) is a State agency that is to oversee the 14 Districts. A combination of two Districts (Winooski and White River) constitutes the Central Supervisory Union.



NRCC requested \$912K of funding from the State for all 14 Districts. This has not yet been approved by the governor. This comes out to 57K to each District. This is an increase over the prior year. There is an NRCC administrator.

The NRCC finance committee met this morning. Council meets once a quarter. There are District Manager representatives to NRCC. Those who might want to be a representative should submit a letter of interest to Clare and the NRCC committee. It represents about 300 hours over two years.

NRCS Civil Rights Training - Marybeth Whitten

Pushed back because we are still waiting on the forms.

Prospective Supervisors

Dan gave an overview of the supervisor role. He explained how the Districts are governed. Ella spoke about herself and her interest in the supervisor role, as did Hilary and Jean. Rick said the board would be in touch with each to talk more. Much of our work is driven by the grants available.

Winooski NRCD Program Updates

- **Lucas - Rethink Runoff**

Contract renewal and 2026 activities. Lucas talked about the Rethinkg Runoff - Stream Team program and the role that we play. He then talked about some of the things he has been up to recently. The Essex green up day near the Amtrak station went well. Local reps and local TV showed up. We also received one time money to do a refresh of the rain gardens. We coordinate volunteers to manage gardens that need help. Also we plan and implement new rain gardens. The UVM master gardeners are involved

Lucas talked about the LaRosa program. Lucas coordinates the Chittenden County sites, 16 sites with 13 volunteers this year. The sampling will run through August. Lucas is planning an event at Fletcher Free Library in Burlington with Edmunds Middle School, for Adopt a Drain. We have intern from Essex High School

The RRST contract has been renewed for an additional two years. Which is great!

Lucas spoke about the Envirothon. It is next week! There are 8 teams, from three schools. The current issue is non-point source pollution.

- **Kara - AgCWIP**

Current and upcoming grant activities. Kara spoke about AgCWIP in general. We are finishing our current deliverables and are on track to meet our goals. There are lots of site visits and soil testing coming in the next months. We have been putting out newsletters and enrolling farm teams. We have two more events. One is a grazing event at Bobolink Farm. Another is in June at the Charlotte Wildlife Refuge. That one is still in the works.

We also have a farm clean up in Orange, partnering with Ben and Jerry's.

We have completed 76 soil tests this year. We need 139 farm visits and have 135 completed. We have sent in two NMPs for this year and three more to be submitted soon.

We will start our next AgCWIP agreement in July. We are waiting on our final deliverables for the new grant. The new award will be heavier on TA rather than outreach.

Vermont Pay for Performance applications will go out in June. There will be some repeat farmer participation and some new farms that have been recommended to us who will be participating in the program for the first time. These were recommended to us by State Agencies. The catch is that now farmers cannot be enrolled in VPFP and other programs.



- Heather - Locally Led Process and Funding Pools 2024, 2025, 2026
Heather added that there will be no double payment through the State and Federal Governments for the same practices. Some of our farmers who have contracts with USDA will not do VPFP this year. Some producers will drop out of VPFP but we will add others.
In terms of the 2024 Main Stem Local Fund Pool Project. It came down to three large engineering projects for stream bank stabilization. The engineering is happening now, through a private engineer. Heather will take over and manage those projects going forward.
The 2025 Headwaters Planting Local Fund Pool Project comprises our whole District area, focusing on Winooski headwaters. While this is a riparian planting pool, some of the projects are not officially buffers but are tree and shrub establishment. All of these will get planted next spring, all native bare root stock. One project will span five years because it is a very large parcel. One project has some invasive species issues.
The 2026 Grazing Local Fund Pool Project has been approved tentatively but with no associated dollar amount.
We have also helped with three EQIP contracts.
- Dan - Tree Sale Wrap Up
 - DEC LWAP Retainer Contract
 - \$8,651 through Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships with UVM and WVPDExplore a nursery at Colchester Pond
Dan offered a few comments on the tree sale but not much as it had been covered largely by Pat earlier. We are hopeful we will break even. Which is good because sales were not good leading up to the day of the sale.
- Delaney - Intro
Delaney provided an introduction to who she is, her interests, and what she will contribute to this summer.

Supervisory Union Collaboration

- Henry Harris - Updates
- Potential projects with White River
- Support Staff at Supervisory Union Level

Henry had a conversation with Clare. The State could provide a paid staffer for supervisory unions. The role could be anything. Rick had asked to look for overlaps between the White River and Winooski five year plans. Much of what we are already doing is shared. We want a fundable collaboration. And maybe the route to go is to start with a free staffer. We also want a clear understanding of responsibilities between the two Districts. We should propose something to Clare by August. Then Clare can try to find the money (from NRCC). We probably need to come up with additional money to support the role. Possible areas of shared interest include: dam removal project development for both Districts, Pat could be bumped up to do bookkeeping for both Districts, invasive species management for both Districts, education in general for both Districts. Henry will reach out to Clare first and have a meeting to bounce these ideas off of her and then loop back to the board.



Revisiting: Cybersecurity Training

KnowBe4

\$975/organization/year (organizations under 25 users)

Barracuda

Nothing for our organization scale

Mimecast

Nothing for our organization scale

Basically, there isn't anything available either for the size of our organization or within our budget. One thought is to ask Norwich University if they could do cyber security training for Winooski NRCD or all of the Districts? Or the Supervisory Union? Similarly, we should ask Champlain College. The Board requested that Dan look into this.

Staff Inclement Weather Work Policy

- Policy of Franklin NRCD ( Weather Policy - FCNRCD.pdf)
- Discussion of Policy
- ACTION ITEM: Adopt equivalent policy for Winooski NRCD

The policy had not been reviewed by the supervisors and associate supervisors. We will push this item to the July meeting. Dan will send around a pdf in advance of the meeting for supervisor review. The goal is to fold this into the staff handbook.

District Equipment Purchase Allowance

- Annual allowance for field equipment
- Similar to Health Insurance stipend
- \$100 per year per staff for boots, sun screen, bug spray, etc.
- ACTION ITEM: Approve Stipend for FY 27 Budget

Pat noted that we have the money to support this now. Staff should put consumables on expense reports and get reimbursed for them. We can set a limit of \$100 if that is convenient.

Nancy moves to add an equipment and consumables stipend to the budget and allow purchase for this year. Rick seconds. All in favor.

Scheduling Next Meeting

- Next meeting is scheduled for July 15, 2026
- Do we want to take a break for the summer?

Keep the meeting!

Personnel Matter

Lucas - Duty Station Switch

Williston Office, effective April 15, 2026

ACTION ITEM: Approval of the Board



Pat noted that Lucas's employment contract needs to be amended to reflect the change. Dan was tasked to do this. Nancy moved to approve the change in duty station. Rich seconded. All in favor.

Heather announced that she is expecting in November!

Russ moved to adjourn. Nancy seconded. All in favor.
12:30 PM