



**White River
Natural
Resources
Conservation
District**

28 Farmvu Drive
White River Junction, VT 05001
www.whiterivernrcd.org
whiterivernrcd@gmail.com
(802) 369-3167

**Board of Supervisors Meeting
July 10, 2024 8:30AM 10:00AM**

Meeting Minutes

Date: July 10, 2024

Time: 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Attendees: Karen Ganey, Henry Harris, Jennifer Byrne, Alvina Harvey, Kate Willard, Didi Persouse, Phyllicia Moore, Dave Blodgett, Niko Horster, Karl Thidemann, Jaiel Pulskamp

Welcome, and Opening

Time: 8:30 AM

Chair Alvina Harvey called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees.

Regeneration Corps Presentation

Karen Ganey presented a slideshow about the Regeneration Corps, outlining the following key points:

- **Original Goal:** The primary goal of Regeneration Corps was to integrate regenerative agriculture into high school education.
- **Key Themes:**
 - Racial Justice
 - Climate Change
 - Just Transition
 - Regenerative Practices
- **Flexible Pathways:** The program offers flexible educational pathways.
- **Peer-to-Peer Learning:** Emphasized as a crucial element of the program.
- **Teaching-Based Pride:** Fostering pride in teaching and learning.

- **Addiction Reduction:** Addressing addiction through engagement in meaningful activities.
- **Program Statistics:**
 - **49% Student Engagement**
 - **87 School Visits**
 - **Six Tree Nurseries:** Worked on or established.
- **Approach to WRNRCD:**
 - Karen approached Jen after learning about the district's work and potential collaboration opportunities.
 - Advisory boards have been formed, working with schools and nonprofits.
- **Educational Expansion:**
 - Beyond regenerative agriculture, there are opportunities for students to learn about other conservation aspects.
 - Significant external support from various organizations.
- **Challenges:** Managing overhead costs, including payroll and taxes.

Additional Input:

- Lauren Weston of Franklin County NRCD contributed to designing Regeneration Corps, indicating its potential statewide application.
- Funding: Both NRCD and Regeneration Corps have funding sources.
- **Discussion:**
 - **Schools Involved:**
 - Mainly within the White River watershed area.
 - Sharon School, WR High School, Windsor School, and Randolph High, among others.
 - Students engaged in Capstone Projects related to agriculture and climate.
 - **Tree Planting Initiative:**
 - The district has about 2,000 trees, and the aim is to plant them in school gardens and learning sites.
 - Upcoming delivery of 5,000 trees from Dartmouth.
 - Karen will assist in teaching, with Henry's role expanding into education.
 - **Financial Concerns and Potential**
 - Partnership Proposal: Karen proposed joining WRNRCD and Regeneration Corps to expand educational opportunities.
 - Challenges: Overhead costs, payroll, and taxes.
 - Funding: The Regeneration Corps has some funding through December

Motion and Vote:

- **A motion was made to support the collaboration in principle, pending budget review.**

Vote: The motion was seconded and approved.

Action Items:

- Create a position description for the new collaborative roles.
- Review the budget and funding sources to ensure financial viability.
- Plan the next steps for integrating the Regeneration Corps into WRNRCD programming.

NRCS FY2024 Update

NRCS has an August 23rd deadline for funding programs. There are ongoing issues with RCPP contract errors, causing delays and extra work.

Recommendations:

- Funding Pool: Local Funding Pool recommendations were sent to Travis.
- Cedar Mountain Farm Training: Phyllicia Moore mentioned training at Cedar Mountain Farm with Megan Giroux.

Land and Leadership Initiative Contract Discussion about Didi Pershouse leading educational workshops:

- Role: Didi is both a supervisor and an educational workshop leader.
- MOU: Memorandum of Understanding sent around.
- Programs: Didi's Land and Leadership initiative aligns with the district's mission, offering podcasts, webinars, and workshops.
- Funding: The general figure is around \$20,000; the MOU is valid through September.

Discussion:

- Contractual Issues: Concerns about legality and fairness in hiring a supervisor as a contractor.
- Recommendations:
 - Increase the educational budget to support Didi's work.
 - Reach out to Rick Hopson for clarity on hiring practices.

Motion:

- **Proposal: Accept phase one of the initiative with a \$20,000 limit, pending further review.**

Vote: A motion was made to accept the consideration of the contract once the MOU is reviewed. Phase one of the agreement was accepted as proposed, with a limit of \$20,000 for further review if it exceeds this amount.

The motion was accepted.

FY 25 Budget Review and Approval

Topics:

- Staff reviews and annual reports.
- All-Hands meeting updates.
- Climate Corps initiatives.
- Conservation Action Plan.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the June, May, and April meetings with the amendments. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Upcoming and Previous Events:

- Dirt & Democracy Playlist on YouTube.
- Mini-Conservation Boot Camp from September 10-18 at VTC, hosting 40 people as part of the Climate Corps initiative.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for August 14, 2024.