



**White River
Natural
Resources
Conservation
District**

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

**Board of Supervisors Meeting
August 21, 2024, 8:30AM - 10:00AM**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83161246019?pwd=w17BkrQuoWVbrNjR0ZLIMFjzxytUp0.1>

+1305 224 1968

Meeting ID: 831 6124 6019

Passcode: 467327

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Alvina Harvey, Karl Thidemann, Jennifer Byrne, Jaiel Pulskamp, Niko Horster, Kate Willard, Didi Pershouse, Phyllicia Moore, Olivia Carlson

8:30 AM - Welcome

8:35 AM - [Approval of July Minutes](#)

- Alvina called for a motion to approve the July minutes.
- Niko seconded.
- The motion passed unanimously.

NRCS Updates

- Olivia Carlson (Soil Conservationist) from the Rutland Office will become a District Conservationist for the Windsor South Zone.
- Important dates:
 - FY25 deadline is Friday.
 - Producers with deferred applications do not need to reapply. Letters will go out at the end of the fiscal year or the beginning of the next.
 - September 13 Boot Camp: Les will provide irrigation training.
 - Jen will send an email to Les to coordinate further.
 - Staff meeting for the South Zone is upcoming.
 - CPA 52 training is available, and partner conservationists are encouraged to participate.
- Jen provided an update on the local funding pool:
 - Approval was received a month ago, but more time is needed. Due to the ongoing momentum, Travis was asked to extend the deadline.



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- Didi discussed an upcoming workshop that will include a walkthrough of the application process.
- Niko inquired about submitting a request to extend the deadline, and Phylcxia suggested using a shorter form for the local funding pool application. The board can assist with gathering information for the CTA form.
- NRCS always considers the Local Funding Pool. Phylcxia will communicate the process to the DC staff.
- Landowners must clarify land ownership, especially leaseholders and businesses registered through FSA. FSA fact sheets can assist in this process.
- Didi was added to the list of landowners interested in the local funding pool.
- Lyle and Bruce are having difficulty finalizing contracts due to issues at the national level. The reimbursement process requires contracts to be signed before work begins. The lack of early start waivers has delayed planned spring work, and farmers are still awaiting contracts to begin.
- Conservation districts inform the USDA through local working groups and board meetings. A formal report with specific recommendations is submitted annually.
- Jen requested NRCS adjust payment rates for higher-cost items like water lines and fencing, citing local price discrepancies.

8:40 AM - [2025 Workplan](#)

- The board discussed involving members more in oversight of various departments.
- Each board member will oversee a department, check in monthly, and attend department meetings to stay informed.
- Jen will coordinate these efforts.

9:00 AM - Bylaws Discussion - [Vermont Open Meeting Law](#)

- Board development around bylaws will be discussed at the next board meeting.
- Some districts have bylaws, others don't, operating solely under state law.
- Jen attended the NACD meeting and noted the lack of bylaws in some districts.
- The board will consider drafting bylaws or creating a guidance document for operations.
- Vermont Open Meeting Law emphasizes the importance of board transparency, and bylaws can ensure operations stay within legal parameters.
- Alvina agreed on the need for bylaws. Jen will gather examples for the board to review.



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9:15 AM - Programs

- Revisit the Regeneration Corps Grafting Process
 - FY 25 Budget Review and Approval
- [Boot Camp](#)
 - [Board sign up](#)
 - Bus
- Land and Leadership Contract
 - [Procurement Policy](#)

9:35 AM - [Appropriations Request Petitions](#)

9:40 AM - VACD Updates

- VACD has not provided HR assistance to districts.
- The Code of Conduct document template was tied in a vote (6-6) due to concerns about due process. The board stressed the importance of a transparent process for addressing conduct issues.
- Jen raised concerns about VACD's allocation of \$1.3 million for staff salaries, while only \$5,000 was offered to the district. This lack of funding affects the district's ability to support local funding pools and EQIP contracts.
- The board is considering leaving VACD if the situation doesn't improve by November. They will issue a letter to other districts asking for support and outline concerns.
- Niko announced they will no longer serve on the VACD board.
- The letter will be sent, potentially leading to a press release if VACD issues remain unresolved.

11:09 AM - Motion to Send Letter to VACD

- Karl made a motion to send the letter as drafted.
- Kate seconded.
- The motion passed unanimously.

Tabled Items

- All remaining agenda items were tabled for a future meeting.

11:02 AM - Meeting Adjourned