

Berkshire Conservation District Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 5:00 PM
Conference Room
78 Center Street, Suite 206, Pittsfield, MA 01201

Minutes

1. Call to order at 5:02pm, and Determination of Quorum
Present:
Board members – Adam Galambos, Ron Kujawski, David Ellis, Donna Kittredge
Associates: Mike Balawender
Program Administrator: Cynthia Grippaldi
NRCS representative: Gary Blazejewski

Reports

2. Secretary's Report – Submitted by Cynthia Grippaldi
 - a. Review and approval of February 4th minutes. Move to accept by Dave, second by Ron, all in favor
3. Treasurer's Report – Submitted by Cynthia
 - a. Cynthia developed and presented a new Treasurer's Report form. She will investigate Viridian to see if it's worth our while to link it to BCD website
 - b. Cynthia attended the MDAR workshop
 - c. Audit is still in the process
 - d. Dave will review the last two years of BCD budgets and begin to form a budget for 2020. Motion by Adam for Dave to begin budget process, second by Donna, all in favor.
4. NRCS District Conservationist Gary Blazejewski introduced himself and talked about the NRCS mission which provides technical assistance for private landowners regarding farmland or forest issues. Gary (or other NRCS rep) will attend monthly BCD meetings to keep abreast of local issues and to collaborate with us when appropriate.

Old Business

5. District Supervisors
 - a. Regarding recruitment to the Board of Supervisors, Ron suggested we might want to recruit 2 additional members — someone in farming, ag and/or nursery businesses. All attendees will ask around. It would be good to get more people from North county involved. We would also like additional associates to join us.
 - b. Designation of committees will take place when needed.
 - c. State Commission Member — they would like a rep from BCD to attend their meetings. Adam will look into the details.
6. Program Status
 - a. No-Till Update: Promotion, scheduling rentals, and management — 200 No-Till cards were printed. On 2/24, Cynthia mailed 86 cards to addresses procured from the Berkshire Grown booklet. We have 3 to 5 farmers inquiring and one commitment

- with a 50-acre parcel. Cynthia will do the scheduling. Mike gave more details on how the no-till machine works. Mike will communicate to the farmers exactly what type of heavy machinery is required to haul the no-till seeder in order to keep it in the best shape. Mike has offered to haul the no-till machine to farmers who do not have the ability to do it, he will ask his insurance company if he is covered for this. BCD's equipment and liability insurance is up to date.
- b. Nutrient Management — Ned signed the paperwork and as soon as the audit is done, funds will become available to us.
 - c. Developing resources — Discussion took place on how we could collaborate with other organizations to support each other regarding programs, education, etc. Adam suggested that colleges might appreciate a relationship with us. Ron suggested that Umass Extension might be available to give us advice.
7. Program Administrator Update —
- Cynthia sent EEA the quarterly report on what we have done.
 - On 2/12, Cynthia and Donna got a tutorial from Marita Carroll (who provided updated website design) on how to navigate Wordpress so we can make editorial changes in-house.
 - Cynthia attended the MDAR workshop on 2/13 and the presenter described grant funding available to farms. She suggested two grants that would be appropriate for BCD to apply for. The Agricultural Climate Resiliency & Efficiencies (ACRE) Program and the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP).
 - On 2/17, she spoke with Audrey Irvine-Broque from the Northeast Grassroots Environmental Fund regarding the pollinator grant and how to best apply for it again. Audrey suggested applying for the total grant of \$3,500.
 - On 2/24, Cynthia submitted \$4,378.50 to the EEA for reimbursement.
 - Cynthia contacted Jane Obaggy to ask how many years of meeting minutes need to be present on the website. Only one year is required as long as previous minutes are kept in binders which Cynthia has organized.
 - Cynthia will be out of the office from March 16th to the 29th.

New Business

8. No-Till Practices Workshop with Berkshire Grown March 11, 2020, 3pm to 6pm, Stockbridge Town Hall — Mike will give the No-till presentation
9. WMMGA Symposium at LMMHS March 28, 2020 — Ron and Donna will attend and bring items to sell at the table. Will give away seeds in exchange for email addresses to build our email base. Will reach out to home gardeners with info promoting our new website, no-till program and conservation info
10. DEP — to be reviewed
11. District Annual Work Plan — Dave suggested we consider using Nutrient Management as a template for setting our goals. To be discussed.
12. Adjournment At 6:39pm, Adam motioned to adjourn, second by Ron, all in favor

Upcoming Events/Meetings:

- Next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 7, at 78 Center St., Suite 206, Pittsfield, MA, Conference Room