

**Berkshire Conservation District
Supervisor Planning Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 21, 2023, 4:30pm**

The Berkshire Conservation District convened on Thursday, December 21, 2022 at 4:30pm for an in-person Supervisors 2024 Planning Meeting at the Berkshire Natural Resources Council conference room. The general public was welcomed to join through Zoom.

1. Call to order and Determination of Quorum - Adam Galambos

Adam called the meeting to order at 4:55pm. There was a roll call and there was a quorum. Present: Supervisors: Adam Galambos (Chair), Ron Kujawski (Vice Chair), Donna Kittredge (Secretary), Dan Harris, Ned Kirchner, Ambrose Clausen (Healthy Soil/No-Till Coordinator), Cynthia Grippaldi (Program Administrator)

2. Public Comment Period

No members of the public were present.

3. Grants Planning

EEA HSAP Challenge Grant RFR —

Following are ideas and thoughts related to the HSAP Challenge Grant:

We fall under the category of Soil Health and the grant range is \$3,000 to \$80,000. There was discussion about what we want to propose. Hampden/Hampshire Conservation District is interested in partnering with us and equipment was the focus of their interest. Ned suggested that HHCD might purchase the equipment and we go for a grant for programming. There was discussion about getting a bridge loan for purchasing equipment. Ned suggested possibly purchasing a mini biochar machine to use for demo. Dan said there is a really wide range from very simple machines to those that cost millions of dollars. We discussed the possibility of creating a small demo system that can be portable.

Ambrose's thoughts: he spent time writing a program that includes purchasing a 7' drill, cover crop reimbursement program and partnering with Ben Crockett at BAV. He has friends in youth education and wants to do public engagement under a soil health heading. He has included the equipment and a cover crop and a webinar series, for producers and community members. Ambrose said farmers are looking for spreaders for both manure and lime and they are also looking for financial support. He would like to offer compost reimbursement, as well. He said that BAV is doing a lot with meat processing.

Dicken mentioned that MDAR is looking to sell Bardin's property which is a 147-acre parcel of farmland in Dalton. About 25 acres are fields. It was a former gravel pit. If Dicken is in a position to acquire that land and engage with us it could be a demonstration plot. If he does not purchase it, he has 10 existing acres he is willing to use as a demo area.

Ambrose drafted a letter to propose increasing his responsibilities which would include keeping the no-till program/soil health manager roll, combining it with soil health and increasing hours to include the plant sale. The added responsibilities would bring his hours up to 30 hours in peak

season. He would like to spend more time one-on-one with farmers, doing site visits, and increasing collaboration with other groups both small and large and having more presence across the community. He has time to work on challenge grants.

To divide responsibilities: Dan has input on equipment; Ambrose will get input and expertise from people. Dan, Cynthia, Donna and Ambrose will meet with Dicken. Partnership opportunities: Adam will talk with BNRC. Ambrose will reach out to Taft and BAV. Dan will reach out to US Biochar Initiative. Adam will reach out to Paul at Umass Extension and Ron will reach out to them, as well. Ron will ask Tom Ingersoll about materials for biochar.

By December 28th, begin to formulate a good direction for where we want to go.

4. Supervisor/Staff Comments and/or Announcements

There were no comments or announcements.

5. Adjournment

Ned motioned to end the meeting at 6:50pm, seconded by Ron. There was a roll call with all in favor.