Berkshire Conservation District
78 Center St. Suite 102, Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 443-1776 x102

BCD Supervisor Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 11, 2025 starting at 5:30pm

The Berkshire Conservation District convened a Supervisors Meeting. Members of the public were invited to attend via Zoom link and were welcome to speak during the public comment period.

1. 5:35 Call to order and Determination of Quorum – Max Prum, Chair
   There was a quorum, and Max convened the meeting at 5:35pm. Present: Max Prum (Chair), Adam Galambos (Vice Chair), Donna Kittredge (Secretary), Ron Kujawski, Jocelyn Latvalla, Ambrose Clausen (Program Manager), Lynn Browne (Treasurer), Cynthia Grippaldi (District Administrator), Jill Wenner (Strategic Program Assistant), Sylvia Muniz-Gaya (NRCS), and Michael Fernandez (BCCD)

2. 5:40 Public Comment Period
   No members of the public were present.

3. 5:45 Report from NRCS Representative - Sylvia Muniz-Gaya, District Conservationist, USDA-NRCS a. Update on NRCS office staffing
   Sylvia reported that they are wrapping up fiscal year activities and reviewing contracts. The end of FY is September 30th and program policies might change. They are waiting on guidance from national headquarters. They are still in a hiring freeze. The focus of the agency is to keep farmers farming.

4. 5:50 Presentation -- Michael Fernandez, Bennington VT Conservation District – Agroforestry collaboration between Districts
   Michael mentioned that there is no longer a large dairy sector in Bennington county, as dairy farming decreased during the 2000s. The District wanted to know what residents were excited about. They spoke with several groups – roughly 600 people over a 3-year span – and tried to be as diverse as possible. They spoke with 250 residents in communities they would not normally hear from. A few issues came up: 1) flood resilience, 2) farmland variability and 3) food sovereignty. They analyzed the data and developed their conservation action plan with the prime goal to address those three concerns. They want to plant 1,000 acres of agro forestry by 2035. They will also be revisioning the food plan in VT.

   Michael spoke with us about the Local Working Group process, and how his District collected usable data to inform and enable locally led decision making. Local Working Groups are subcommittees of the State Technical Committee (STC). STCs provide information, analysis, and recommendations to appropriate officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture who are charged with implementing and establishing priorities and criteria for natural resources conservation activities and programs within each state. The slide show about Local Working Groups can be viewed at:
   https://www.bccdvt.org/files/613cdfbda/Local+Working+Groups+Intro.pdf

   Michael said the biggest challenge is getting farmers to answer surveys. He applies for many of grants.

5. 6:30 Secretary's Report – Submitted by Donna Kittredge, Secretary
   a. Review and approval of the August Meeting Minutes
   Adam made a motion to accept the August 11th Meeting Minutes, seconded by Max. There was a roll-call, and all were in favor.

6. 6:35 Treasurer's Report – Submitted by Lynn Browne, Bookkeeper
   a. Review and approval of Treasurer's Report
   Lynn will have all the Plant Sale numbers available for the October meeting.
   Max made a motion to accept the August 11th Treasurer's Report, seconded by Ron. There was a roll-call, and all were in favor.

7. 6:45 Program/Grant Updates - Ambrose Clausen, Program Manager

a. Healthy Soils – Ambrose will be working on compost subsidies.

b. Plant Sale 2025 wrap up, potential of offering a spring 2026 plant sale – Ambrose has only a handful of plants left over from Plant Sale. Roots Rising Farm will receive a selection of native plants from the Plant Sale. We will discuss the possibility of holding a spring Plant Sale after the numbers come in from this recent Plant Sale. c. No-Till – rentals are low this year. This fall, there are 4 rentals coming up (two are new in CT). Mike's usage of the no-till may put us over. The cost to replace wheel bearings was $350 and the wheel bearings should last 5 years.

d. FY25/26 B&I 'Urban Ag and Community Engagement' grant planning and implementation – Ambrose has not done any recent community engagement but will follow up with it in the next few weeks.

8. 7:05 Supervisor/Staff Comments/ Announcements

-Agroforestry Committee update – Ambrose invited the customers who bought nut trees at the Plant Sale to sign up on our email list.

-Our next Supervisors Meeting will be on Wednesday, October 8th at 5:30pm. Our Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13th at 4pm.

9. 7:20 Motion to Adjourn

Ron made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20pm, seconded by Max. There was a roll-call, and all were in favor.