

Natural Resources Conservation & Development Board
Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 14, 2011 at 1:00 p.m.

This meeting was held by teleconference.

Board members in attendance:

George Woodbury
Cheryl Thompson
Carol Kenley
Bernie Karl
Al Poindexter

Others in attendance:

Shana Joy, Executive Director, NRCDB	Ken Marsh, AACD
Franci Havemeister, Director Div. of Ag.	Joan Hope, AACD
Bryce Wrigley, Salcha Delta SWCD	Ryan Stencel, AlaskaLink
Steve Hicks, AACD	Jerry Norum, Fairbanks SWCD

1. Call to Order – Determination of Quorum

It was determined that a quorum was present and the meeting was called to order by George Woodbury at 1:04pm

2. Approval of Agenda

Al would like to add *District Reports* to the agenda and *District Funding & Staff*. Bernie moved to approve the agenda as amended. Carol seconded. The motion carried.

3. Approval of March 8, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Bernie moved to approve the minutes as presented. Al seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. Executive Director Report

- a. Bernie moved to approve Shana to go to the NASCA board meeting in June. Al seconded. The motion carried.
- b. Al asked about the NRCDB approving the district maps before they are posted on the web. Shana explained the map project process so far. Al said that Homer had some questions about their map. Shana has resolved Homer's issues about their map; they were technical glitches in the data. The final map review and approval will appear on the June agenda.
- c. The board would like Shana to go ahead and try and visit Kenny Lake to assist them if possible.

5. AACD

- a. Cheryl recapped the AACD meeting on April 2nd. There was some concern about Kenny Lake's status, AACD voted to replace their depleted funds with any new funds that come to AACD. Districts were encouraged to contact legislators about funding for the districts.
- b. Steve Hicks offered comments regarding worker's compensation insurance district share calculation changes and a HB 195 letter of support. He also offered an NRCS funding update. Watershed rehab program cuts might have an effect on districts in Alaska.
- c. Al asked Steve about continued AACD operations if no state funding is appropriated. Steve is working on a plan and the state capital budget is in the House right now. Bernie recapped his visit to Juneau in March including the feedback that he received from various legislators on funding for districts. DNR was not able to add a funding request to the supplemental budget as the legislature requested the department do.
- d. Representation on AACD's board: AACD will consider changing the by-laws to allow the NRCDB to have a seat on the board as a non-voting seat. Shana will work with AACD on the by-law change.

6. Memorandum of Understanding with Soil and Water Conservation Districts

- a. Fairbanks, Anchorage, Kenai
- b. Al moved to approve the MOUs as presented. Bernie seconded. The motion carried.

7. Alaska District Wrap-up

- a. Al moved to approve the Feb 9th meeting minutes. Carol seconded. The motion carried
- b. \$7,271 would remain after the final AlaskaLink billing per Steve Hicks. Bernie moved to approve the final bill and close the contract. Al seconded. The motion carried.
- c. Cheryl asked a question regarding prior watershed down in the Kobuk River area. NRCS may be doing some work there soon. In 2005 the AK District did some work there; Lisa Ferber, a watershed specialist, was involved with that work. She is a prior employee of the AK District. Lisa now works at Zender Environmental – Cheryl will give NRCS that info.

8. Southeast Alaska Conservation District Formation Work Proposals

- a. Bernie asked Joan about her cost proposal; it is higher than the budget available. Joan gave an overview of her proposal; she looked at the potential new boundaries on a watershed basis with the northern boundary near Yakutat. She noted that a diverse group of board members on the new district would give it more strength. Joan has checked in with the NRCS Juneau office for potential interested cooperators. She looked at the task as fully establishing a viable district with more than the minimum cooperators.

- b. Al mentioned that any funds left over in the AK district budget would be starter funds for the SE district and if the entire budget goes to the formation work, there wouldn't be any starter funds for the new district. Also someone needs to take responsibility for training the new board on operations. Kenai may be interested in expanding their boundaries toward Seward and may be looking to the AK district for some funds to support that effort.
- c. Bernie asked if now is the right time to form a new district with these funds or focus on keeping the existing districts alive. The worst scenario would be to form a new district with no funds available to support them.
- d. Cheryl would like to see the new district formed. George pointed out how all of the districts are likely to be looking for funds individually anyhow soon and forming the district now would give them an opportunity to go out and seek funds. Al explained the district formation process.
- e. Joan offered to donate a couple of leave days just to get some of this work done. She has been working in SE on the invasive plants program and has developed some good contacts to help her get it done. Joan can do this work for only the cost of faxing forms and travel expenses - \$500 or less total.
- f. Ken Marsh encouraged the board to consider Joan's proposal and the additional diversity of cooperators that she can generate in the SE area. Ken also encouraged the board to consider a more southerly northern boundary of the new district.
- g. Bernie suggested to allocate \$2,000 to Joan and \$2,000 to Gary Morrison. Continuity is very important and both Joan and Gary are very qualified to undertake this. George will relay this information to Gary and see what he is willing to do.
- h. Carol liked the compromise idea if Gary is willing and Joan shouldn't be expected to donate her time.
- i. Al moved that the board allocate \$2,000 to Joan/AACD and \$2,000 to Gary Morrison, upon Gary's approval, to collaborate to put together a SE district petition and hopefully have final results by the June NRCDB meeting. Perhaps AACD could be the lead on the project. Bernie seconded. The motion carried.
- j. George clarified what the \$2,000 is for – time and expenses.
- k. Joan asked – what role would the NRCDB like to have in forming the new boundaries. Al said that should be up to the new board. George pointed out that common sense and watershed boundaries should be considered. From Yakutat south was the general consensus for the new district.
- l. Carol moved to approve the new cooperators: Lendrum, Ritter and Torgerson. Al seconded. The motion carried.

9. District Reports

- a. Al talked about the documents that district's are currently required to submit per the District Operations Manual to the NRCDB: annual workplan, inventory, monthly financial reports & minutes, and an annual report. What is the board's responsibility regarding the minutes/financial reports; it's not in the DOM or the statute. Shana explained the current procedure for the above documents. Bernie is happy with the current situation/process. Al asked about the format of the financial reports that are submitted and shouldn't all districts be using Quickbooks? Financial reports have been received in quickbooks and excel formats.
- b. Al brought up districts in financial trouble. Kenny Lake is an example – there are no administrative funds available. Kenai just lost their district manager. Is there something that NRCDB can do to support those that are struggling? George pointed out that Shana would be contacting Kenny Lake to ascertain the situation. Al mentioned a letter to the Governor alerting him to the districts in trouble. George would prefer to hear from Shana after she contacts Kenny Lake. Al believes that several districts will be contemplating closing their doors by July. Shana pointed out that except for the two districts already mentioned, the others do not appear to be in the same dire circumstance.
- c. Jerry Norum offered comments. He said that the state has a lack of responsibility towards districts. Bob Jones, NRCS, had contacted him in concern about the failure of districts. Bernie wants to call the Commissioner right now and talk to him about the struggling districts. Shana pointed out the position that the Commissioner must be in regarding the governor and the budget. Al mentioned the surplus available and don't SWCDs need that funding, they're in statute? George asked that Shana contact the Commissioner and stress the importance of funding for districts. Shana will do so.
- d. Carol is comfortable with Shana as the lead for receiving and filing the district reports. Al is comfortable too as long as Shana reports missing reports or any anomalies that come up. The procedure in place will continue unchanged.

10. Board Comments None were offered.

11. Public Comments

- a. Ken Marsh has been working diligently along with AACD and cooperators to encourage the legislature to fund districts. Ken has been hearing that funding is not likely at this point.
- b. Bryce said that at the AACD meeting, the Spokane district Executive Director talked about EPA Clean Water funds available to districts in WA. Bryce asked about those funds that EPA is holding here in Alaska, can NRCDB request information on those funds for a potential opportunity for districts here? Regarding the NRCDB rep to AACD and whether or not it would be a voting or non-voting seat, the AK District was a voting seat

but it would be an appointed position voting which has been concerning in the past.

- c. Steve commented that the by-laws would need to be changed and would work with Shana on it. Al doesn't believe that NRCDB should be voting on AACD business.
- d. Joan: Jennifer in Dillingham is working now as an environmental coordinator for the village where she began as an invasive plants coordinator.

12. Next Meeting Date and Location

- a. Thursday, June 16th at 8:30 a.m. The meeting will be held via teleconference.

13. Adjournment

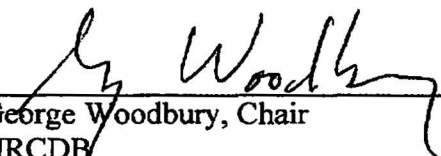
Al moved to adjourn at 2:39 p.m. Carol seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes taken by:

Minutes approved by:



Shana Joy, Executive Director
NRCDB



George Woodbury, Chair
NRCDB