

The regular teleconference meeting of the Natural Resource Conservation & Development Board (NRCDB) was held November 9, 2015 at 9:35 a.m. at the conference room located at 1800 Glenn Highway, Suite 12, Palmer, Alaska.

Board members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. George Woodbury, Board member (telephone)
Ms. Cheryl Thompson, Board member (telephone)
Ms. Ina Jones, Board member (telephone)
Mr. Bernie Karl, Board member (telephone)
Mr. John Schirack, Board member

Others in attendance:

Mr. Ed Fogels, Deputy Commissioner, DNR (telephone)
Ms. Franci Havemeister, Director, Division of Agriculture
Ms. Lora Haralson, Administrative Officer I, Division of Agriculture
Mr. Todd Pettit, President, Alaska Association of
Conservation Districts (AACD) (telephone)
Ms. Dee Pond, AACD (telephone)
Mr. Joshua Scott, Kenny Lake Soil & Water
Conservation District (telephone)
Ms. Ann Biddle, Kenny Lake Soil & Water
Conservation District (telephone)

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

It was determined that a quorum was present and the meeting was called to order by Board member Woodbury at 9:35 a.m.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.
The agenda was approved.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT/SESSION (three minutes per person)

(No members of the public were present).

D. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING

June 17, 2015 Draft Meeting Minutes

- MOTION:** Board member Schirack moved to approve the minutes of June 17, 2015.
- SECOND** Board member Jones seconded the motion.
- VOTE:** The motion passed without objection.

E. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Acting Executive Director Havemeister:

- Stated she had received a Draft Operational Agreement, Strategy, and Long-Range Plan between DNR, AACD and NRCS. She will forward it to the Board for their review.
- Stated the Division has been working on FY17 budget and DNR was asked for a 3% reduction per division. The budget will be made public from the Governor's office on December 15, 2015.
- She was asked by DNR Commissioner Meyers and Deputy Commissioner Fogels to leave her position. She will continue working until December 4, 2015.

Deputy Commissioner Fogels stated Governor Walker made the decision that it was time a change in leadership to replace Director Havemeister. Deputy Fogels stated he has worked with Director Havemeister for the past 8 ½ years and she had done an outstanding job. The next step for a new Director appointment the according to the law states that the DNR Commissioner must pick from two names made from the recommendation from the Board of Agriculture & Conservation (BAC). The BAC will meet on November 12, 2015 and that discussion will be held. He stated that if the NRCDB has any ideas or recommendations for the Director replacement to let him know. If a Director is not appointed by December 4, 2015 the position will be filled in an Acting Director capacity until a permanent replacement has been finalized.

Board member Karl stated that Director Havemeister has served the State, NRCDB and the Division of Agriculture and has done an excellent job. He asked Director Havemeister if the NRCDB voted today to write a letter of support would she be willing to stay as Director. Board member Karl stated it would be a good agenda item to discuss at the Farm Bureau meeting held on November 13-14, 2015.

Board member Jones stated her whole district is in shock by the way the decision to replace the Director was handled. She stated Director Havemeister has the knowledge and a thorough understanding of agriculture.

Board member Schirack stated he is supportive of Director Havemeister her staff and appreciative of how much she has done for the NRCDB and Soil & Water Conservation Districts with the reduced funding on the budget.

Director Havemeister said that the Governor a new direction for Agriculture. She stated it has been a really good job and an extremely difficult job and now it is time for someone else to come in. She is looking forward to spending time with her family and appreciates all the kind words from the Board.

AACD President Todd Pettit:

- Todd Pettit stated AACD sent out an operational agreement between DNR, AACD and NRCS got s five year plan the current plan expires December 31, 2015. He asked that the board review and make any suggestions so the document can be moved forward to DNR. After the document is finalized it will be signed by Deputy Commissioner Fogels, Todd Pettit and Bob Jones from NRCS.

F. NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Kenny Lake Soil & Water Conservation District name change approval:

MOTION: Board member Karl moved to adopt the name change from Kenny Lake Soil & Water Conservation District to Cooper River Valley Soil & Water Conservation District.

SECOND: Board member Jones seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed without objection.

Article 2 Land Availability for Private Use discussion:

- Board member Woodbury discussed the need for having land available for private use.
- Deputy Fogels stated it was a good idea however all state agencies are going through turmoil because of the budget cuts. He stated the biggest single asset the State has is the 125 million land base (size of California). Discussions are being held with the Governor regarding increasing agriculture and the States mineral resources.
- Board member Thompson stated we need to support agriculture because currently California is out of water and the State could produce vegetables to help other states.
- Board member Karl stated Alaska was a world leader in the logging industry. Logging is sustainable it creates jobs and income.

G. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board member Woodbury stated the Board should put together a position paper or letter reflecting their concerns regarding the budget reductions and what resources the State has and the challenges the State are facing.

Board member Schirack stated that the NRCDB board needs to show support for the Soil & Water Conservation Districts. Funding for NRCDB was cut and AACD did not receive any funding. He stated the board should write a letter of support to DNR and the legislature that these districts are important and continued funding is needed.

H. SET NEXT MEETING & AGENDA ITEMS

The next teleconference meeting will be scheduled in March 2016. An exact date has not yet been determined.

I. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.