

Upper Ohio CD Meeting Minutes May 18, 2021

Members Present

Allen Rush, Chairman
Bill Gellner, Vice Chairman
Patricia Thomas, Supervisor
Wayne McKeever, Supervisor

Others Present

Nick Beaver, NRCS
Lori Cochran, WVCA/UOCD Administrative Specialist
Katie Fitzsimmons, NRCS
Logan Marino, UOCD/NPCD

Members Present via teleconference

Audra Cunningham, Supervisor
Holly Morgan, Secretary/Treasurer

Others Present via teleconference

Shaun Kuhn, Forestry
Jennifer Kile, WVCA

Vice Chairman Gellner called the meeting to order.

Kuhn was excused from the meeting for a brush fire call.

Chairman Rush joined the meeting and took the chair.

Cooperating Agency Reports

USDA-NRCS-FSA Fitzsimmons provided a written report. Plans to include information from both UOCD and NPCD in future reports so both Districts receive the same information. Offices are still staffed at 50% with the door locked. Received an email Friday afternoon, partners, visitors, employees passed two weeks of full vaccination do not have to follow the mask mandate. We have been working on finishing assessments for the Conservation Stewardship program. Those rankings were due last Friday but we received a one-week extension, so they are due this Friday. There are 14 applications between the two offices. There are sixty-eight current contracts being managed between the two offices. David is working on the compost barrel DIY Video for NPCD and UOCD. Last week David and Nick attended training. Lauren and I talked about some articles that could be put together for newsletters. In every NRCS employee's performance plan, it says you are supposed to write X number of articles. Her and I talked about putting together a series on operation and maintenance of different practices. Lauren is currently working on one for operation and maintenance of a spring development. I have been some fence maintenance at the house and have been taking some pictures and a few things like that to put something together. Just something to keep people aware of things they need to do, draw more videos on Facebook. We can't give recommendations on chemicals for IS, but we can work with Extension on what chemicals can be used. Bruce Lloyd is very good about recommendations to farmers. That is what we are working on for the Newsletters. Logan Marino is our new shared soil conservationist. He is here to meet everyone this evening and will be at the LWG next week. NPCD is having a farm tour Thursday, so we have been working on putting some information together for them. UOCD LWG meeting is Monday the 24th at 6:00pm at the Tyler County Fairgrounds in the food court shelter. NPCD is having their LWG July 26 and 27, one in Brooke County and one in the Northern part of Marshall County. We got Equip preapprovals between the two offices there were 9 preapprovals for \$166305. Nick has been working hard on the CSP assessments for UOCD, so really hoping to preapproval on some CSP's. May be more Equip money later, but currently that is what we have.

Beaver reported that Lauren and he are both in the office full time, since it is a smaller office and social distancing is not an issue. Been going to a few properties talking to people about AgEP trying to get more interest in that. LWG meeting is on the evening UOCD starts accepting AgEP applications, so that could be good.

Logan Marino introduced himself and gave information on his education at Penn State. He is looking forward to working with us.

WVCA – Everyone was provided the written WVCA report provided by Kim Fisher.

Forestry – None

SWA – None

WVU Extension – Nothing new.

Previous Meeting Minutes

McKeever made the motion to approve the April 27, 2021 meeting minutes. Cunningham seconded the motion; motion passed.

Financial Report

McKeever made a motion to file the financial report for audit. Gellner seconded the motion; motion passed.

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Gellner made a motion that UOCD bills be paid as funds permit and coordinated by office staff.

McKeever seconded the motion; motion passed.

Funding Request

None

Supervisor Reports

Gellner – Was able to go to a State Farm for a program for Farm Safety put on by the WV Department of Ag. On their website, they have that if you call in, they have people that will talk to you about marketing, about your problems, and can help you. They have high tunnels and have a guy on staff that is pretty phenomenal guy who does high tunnels. Steve Westbrook sold a large portion of his farm to Amish.

Cunningham – Sat in on a Farmers Market trainings and some other instructional Zoom meetings on generating more income from farms and property. Was asked to sit in on a listening session, started out to be a Beginning Farmer/Rancher program. Ended up being a two-session listening session geared more toward finding help for existing farmers with different programs. Part of it covered lack of slaughter dates in processing facilities and help with getting produce to farmers markets. Visited with 2 different farmers in Pleasants County. I was invited to Bill and Sara Hyre's farm and discussed their operation and what they are transitioning to. Spoke with Bub Riggs about what all he has going on at his place. Continue to turn in weather data for this area of the county. Spoke with Jack and Brenda Smith about their Centennial Farm article for the newspaper. I think I have that coordinated with the reporter from the newspaper.

McKeever - Had a communication meeting on the 26th. These meetings are well attended, and some good ideas are spread around. We had our Envirothon Awards meeting on the 30th at Stonewall Resort, there were not any teams there, but they were all virtual. Top ten teams, Tyler was 10, they did good in Forestry, was close to the top in Forestry. 9 was Ritchie, this was their first year. Magnolia was 8, they operated with only three members. Clay was in 7th. James Monroe another first-year team was 6th. Braxton was 5th and they got \$1250 scholarship. Number 4 was Hampshire and they got a \$1750 scholarship. Number 3 was Moorefield and received a \$2500 scholarship. Number 2 was Berkley Springs and they received a \$3750 scholarship and number 1 was Mineral County FFA and they got a \$5000 scholarship. Seems like everyone enjoyed it. Now we are in the process of getting training done for the Mineral County FFA team...the training is coming from top people, so it will be good. In July the team will participate in the NCF Envirothon, the North American Envirothon between US, Canada and maybe China. It was supposed to be in Nebraska, but at the planning time they decided to do a virtual competition. It will be the last week of July. On May 5 we had our final Envirothon meeting for the year to wrap up things and plan for next year. Had our Partnership call between Brian, John, and myself. On May 13 we had a meeting on our Conservation Code. A lot of the code is old and meaningless, but some of it still needs to be there. Currently almost everything we do has to go through approval of the SCC, and we are looking for more self-doing things than what we do now. So, we are trying to get that into the code. This is going to be some major changes, so we have to be mindful of what we do. We are trying to catch up on things. Hoping to have something to present by next spring. We are taking suggestions, so if you have any let us know. Working with Tygerts Valley CD for the American Chestnut from a different direction. The American Chestnut takes more carbon out of the air than any other tree. Looking at that as maybe a grant type project. We need to do more research on it. Still working on our Executive Director. Still working on the grant paperwork. Local Work Group meetings need more District involvement. Going to have some training on that in July and October. July meeting will be in Charleston. Not sure what hotel yet. Ag Day will be Feb 1st. And I sent out the newsletter.

Thomas – Delivered the box of Envirothon stuff that Wayne prepared for the team. I took a team picture of the team with their award, t-shirts, certificates, etc. It will be posted on the FB page. I met with them and the advisors, and they all were happy to get to participate in this. Next year I want to get the experts to come in and work with them. Purchased repair parts for the NRCS toilet and Kenny and I got that going. Made arrangements with Lori to get the water turned on. Picked up a barrel and made the rain barrel for the FFA Auction. They were very pleased and thankful. Received the training I will need for the PEIA stuff, so I will be going through all the training. Consulted with Lauren and Wayne on the conservation farmer for Tyler Co. I will cover this later in the agenda.

Morgan - Last month's FB post reached 852 people, I posted the poster and picture contest. I have had no one reach out to the page on that. I talked to John Smith a couple of times about Envirothon. Signed checks and sat in on the communication call and the monthly meeting. Spoke with someone that had a question about the Spring Seed Program and that was it.

Rush - We had trouble with the drive shaft on both spreaders need to tell everyone they need to put the arms all the way down when spreading. More trouble with drive shaft in the last two years than we have had since we owned them. Possible because people are buying smaller tractors and if the three-point hitch isn't up all the way, it hits the drive shaft. Two new ones here were \$400 and lucky to get them at that price. These don't have a keyway in them, and I talked to a machinist that can cut one in if needed. Barrels I found at the same place just a different company. Just need to check on delivery. Tires at the state road facility waiting on them to drag them out to where we can get them loaded. DEP will help with the cost, maybe. Someone in Mannington may take some of them. Talked to several about AgEP and went and looked at a spring development for someone.

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Unfinished Business

AgEP

McKeever made a motion to approve payments for Terry Collins HUA, \$1980.00 and Edith Smith, Lime \$1291.50 with total payment being \$3271.50. Gellner second the motion; motion passed.

Grant Needs

McKeever working on American Chestnut Grant. Will report more at the next meeting or so.

Spring Development Supply Update

Discussion was had on pouring lids. Carr Concrete in Waverly has lids for the spring box.

Equipment Rental Update

No equipment has gone out since the last meeting.

Equipment Repairs Updates and Needs

Hydraulic repair on one spreader and drive shaft repair on both spreaders.

Education Programs

- Barrel order update – has a possible supplier, still working on it.
- Composting workshop update – David is working on a video.
- Bluebird Box Video –
- Other ideas – Video about our AgEP program for District webpage and Facebook page.

Conservation Farm Award

Thomas made a motion to select Roy Henriksen as the District Farm Winner for 2021. McKeever seconded the motion; motion passed.

LWG Meeting

Meeting is set for May 24 at 6:00 at the shelter at the Tyler Co. Fair Grounds.

Poster Contest

No entries yet. June 1 is the deadline.

Photo Contest

No new entries yet. June 1 is the deadline

Shop Upgrades, water hookup, pressure washer, etc.

Thomas made a motion to purchase a pressure washer plus accessories for maintenance use not to exceed \$450. McKeever seconded the motion; motion passed.

Mowing of shop acreage

Gellner made a motion to hire Danny Cochran \$75 to brush hog the acreage around the shop twice a year. McKeever seconded the motion; motion passed.

COVID updates

The cubicle for Jenn's area is not yet available.

Spring Seed Program

Seeds have been mailed. We had two returned.

New Business

Building Maintenance

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New locks for shop buildings and exterior office lights are in need of attention. Contact Allens Doors about the entrance door lock.

Correspondence

Thank you for participating in the Spring Seed Program.

Adjournment

Gellner made a motion to adjourn. McKeever seconded the motion; motion passed.

The next regular meeting will be June 15, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Lori Cochran, Administrative Specialist

Signature of Chairman

Signature of Secretary

Date

Date