

Upper Ohio CD Meeting Minutes October 20, 2021

Members Present

Allen Rush, Chairman
Bill Gellner, Vice Chairman
Patricia Thomas, Supervisor
Wayne McKeever, Supervisor
Audra Cunningham, Supervisor
Holly Morgan, Secretary/Treasurer

Others Present

Nick Beaver, NRCS
*Lori Cochran, WVCA/UOCD Administrative Specialist
*Jennifer Kile, WVCA
* Kim Fisher, WVCA
Jon Wilson, Forestry

*Attended via teleconference

Vice-Chairman Gellner called the meeting to order.

Cooperating Agency Reports

USDA-NRCS-FSA - Beaver reported as of October 1 NRCS has rolled over to a new fiscal year so all of our planning and project management programs have taken a little pause for a reset, as they typically do at the end of year. Workspaces are on a reduced staffing status, typically a 25% capacity for enforcing or encouraging telework as much as possible. This past year we obligated 31 contracts between both Districts in our available programs. Total \$ obligated between both Districts, \$744,298. We have 91 active contracts between both Districts. Currently we are getting out working with landowners to reevaluate conservation plans and getting things prepared to move forward with funding in 2022. Logan has been working with watershed dam inspections, Katie, Lauren, and myself are working on getting our conservation planning certifications and recertifications. Logan and David are working toward meeting the criteria to become apprentice planners and certified planners. We have been attending various online trainings and in person trainings when available. Logan has a written report attached to the back of my written report. He has been attending training with us. Logan has worked with Kevin Moore on a spring development visit and several Ag things. He has started working on nutrient management plans and calculating fertilizer recommendations for a lot of the soil samples he has pulled in this area.

WVCA – Fisher reported we are looking to December to reevaluate the telework situation. Administrative review, the third item on my report, is basically a rename for the old AgEP spot checks she used to do where she used to come to the districts and check the folders for missing items, documentation, signatures, etc. That has been revised, some of the old questions were redundant and it was a long process, so we have revised the process. Basically, we went by what was legislative rule and the AgEP Administrative Agreement. With the help of District Operations, Conservation Specialists, the Conservation section we came up with a new spot check. The AS's will do a spot check in December and the Area Directors will spot check all Supervisor folders that have applied for AgEP for that year. Davin is working on the Supervisor Directory, please make sure that what is in the Directory is current information. It is the time of year for Agreed-upon Procedure Audit and check on your policy and procedure manuals in your District.

Forestry – Wilson reported it is fire season now so now burning debris 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. until the end of December. You can have a campfire. We are not expecting a big fire season here in Tyler or Pleasants Counties. We did send three crews to Minnesota for western fires this year. We go where they tell us to go and that is where we ended up. Nationally it was a slightly below average fire season. Logging is still about the same, it is a good time to sell timber if you have good timber. The prices are up a little, but if there are any challenges in getting to it, they are probably not going to do it because there is so much timber to cut. Tyler is down to two loggers, Roger Stevens and Gary Midcap's grandson. We are getting several calls wanting us to look at timber. Probably one of ten that we look at actually has timber. Landowner assistance we have looked at quite a bit of invasive species. Japanese Knotweed is slowly creeping up the small streams where you used to only see it along the river. It is here, we just have to figure out how to control it. They say the Spotted Lantern Fly is on the move too.

WVU Extension –

WVACD –

Previous Meeting Minutes

Thomas made the motion to approve the September 21, 2021 meeting minutes. Morgan seconded the motion; motion passed.

Financial Report

Cunningham made a motion to file the financial report for audit. Morgan seconded the motion; motion passed.

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Morgan made a motion that UOCD bills be paid as funds permit and coordinated by office staff. Cunningham seconded the motion; motion passed.

Supervisor Reports

Morgan – Two days of the quarterly meeting. Spoke with Davin White planning the promotional video. Face Book reached 2511 people, up 593%, the nice story about the Wells Farm and another one got a really big response. Sat in on the Communications call and the Area Meeting.

Cunningham – Regional Calf Sale grossed \$184000 for local producers. Consignments were up this year and had some really good prices on some of the livestock. Participated in the Grazing Lands Steering Committee Meeting on the 15th. Sat in on the morning and afternoon session of the quarterly meeting. Will be on the Appalachian Grazing Conference Meeting tomorrow. Spoke with a couple producers in the area, one concerning a Forestry Contract, a spring development and about AgEP information. Sat in on the Communications Call. Continue to report the weather.

McKeever – Envirothon Teachers Workshop, Communications Call, Awards Banquet, Envirothon Meeting, Area Meeting, State Conservation Committee Meeting, delivered sign to Joe Wells, Grazing Land Steering Committee Meeting, Quarterly Meeting and NACD Meeting. Closing of Clements Nursery was one of the items of discussion. Considering ways to reopen the Nursery. Envirothon Cacapon State Park April 21 and 22, all set to hold it virtual again in necessary. See if we can get the Teacher Training online; Davin is working on this. Quarterly Meeting in April will be at Cacapon also. Approved the Envirothon budget for \$75000.00 for next year. Century Farms applications are due to the District office by February 1. Names are due to John by April 1 for printing of signs. Scholarships are due by the first Monday in March (March 7). The application is not out just yet. Auction was canceled this year and lieu of auction donations Districts are asked to send money in the form of a grant to the education committee. Some Districts have already donated, and they have received \$2500 so far. So, if we would like to send funds, we can do that. The Photo, Poster and Education District of the Year deadline is now the first day of the July Quarterly Meeting. Rookie Supervisor due by September 1. Area meetings have been well attended. Our Area Meeting is concentrating on Partnerships and things like that currently. On the code change, the Legislative Committee met a few weeks ago. One of the issues brought up, was you have to be a farmer to be a Supervisor. The Commissioner of Agriculture doesn't have to be a farmer and the fact that could be challenged down the road. They would like to change that also because it would loosen up some of the regulations to becoming a Supervisor. They have changed it to read "should be involved in agriculture, conservations or natural resources". This needs to be approved so that sponsors can be found prior to January. On the Code revisions, some of the history part that was 3-4 pages has been condensed to a paragraph or two, the definition of urban agriculture has been updated, added a paragraph to establish appropriate language for assistance from the WVCA, page 9 allows the State Conservation Committee to receive federal and state funds and then sending to Districts, allowing Districts to stay within current law, also established definition to the types of financial reports required by law to meet requirement by the auditor. Currently supervisor vacancy recommendations need to be sent within 15 days, this will be extended to 90 days. Changed the requirement if your term is up and no one runs you can stay in office. When your terms up, your terms up. Four years and you rerun or your off. Some language on grants will be addressed. Quarterly Meetings will be Jan. 18-19 and maybe the 20th, training will be on the third day and will be either at Stonewall or Flatwoods. Next will be April 18-19, looking at Cacapon for that one, but not yet decided on. After that, July 18-19 and lastly October 17 -18 will be at Flatwoods area. We will get about \$10000 from the Exigency Program less the amount we already have on hand. The total amount for each District is \$10000. This can be for drought related, flood related, can be reseeding, water tank, etc. Things that AgEP, NRCS, FSA, etc. don't cover. This fund will be separate from AgEP funds. A letter was written clarifying if Districts have legal counsel. The association has legal counsel, supposedly Districts do not. More to follow. Special Projects Weed Program selected five districts (we are not one of them) and selecting 2 farms from each District and treat weeds with chemical, mechanical, etc. First round no one signed up. If it goes well, will probably be 3 or 4 years before the program is available to all Districts. Grazing Conference is March 10-12, 2022, cost \$200, online right now. Weather reporting stations, Elk District had funds that they put toward weather reporting stations that goes directly in the phone service. WV was a little bit lacking in that. They had mentioned that information be forwarded to other Districts in case that was something they wanted to do. Appalachian Grazing Conference is Dec. 6 -9. Audra is planning on going. Conservation Day at the Capitol is planned for Feb. 7 and 8. Try to have a dinner or something on the 7 and try to have displays there and get around to see everyone. They stressed the point of getting to know your representative personally. On the 8 try to be at the Capitol and set up displays again. Have our rack cards and everything like that available. The planning is starting now, so if you want to get in on the planning now is the time. Wayne reported on awards for posters, photos, and other awards. Signs were presented for 10 Century Farms and 6 Sesquicentennial Farms, and the Farm Winner was NPCD Jeff Allen.

Rush took over chair for the meeting.

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Gellner – just want to reiterate what Wayne reported on the exigency program. Sat in on the state AgEP Committee. It will be a separate program. Russel Young is a Conservation Specialist 3. Jennifer Skaggs received a promotion. Been talking to Jenn about the AgEP Program as far as what we need to do to with the program to make the program here and in NPCD more compatible.

Thomas – Thomas reported that she had sent info to Morgan to be placed on Facebook. Soil Tunnel Trailer was at the Harvest Festival in Middlebourne, so she came to see what was needed to set it up on that Friday and then set it up and worked it Saturday. Quite enjoyable. Met with Wayne at the Wells Farm and presented their sign. Delivered the check to Roy for his award for the District Farm.

Rush – bought the door for the shop building. Saw a farm that could be a potential District Farm Winner next year. Discussed with Lauren the brass couplings needed for spring developments. Other than the normal communications with landowners, I sat in on the Partnership call. There is a lot of concern about the sediment in the streams in the area.

Funding Request

Little Fishing Creek Tire Clean-up
Tabled.

Unfinished Business

AgEP –

A discussion was held on the AgEP approval process. This was tabled to another time.

Grant Needs

Nothing new.

Spring Development Supply Update

Covered in Supervisor reports.

Equipment Rental Update

Lime spreader rented three times and sod seeder once.

Pressure washer

Nothing new

Equipment Repairs Updates and Needs

Drive shafts on the spreaders has been repaired.

Man Door at Shop

Door was purchased but not yet installed.

Education Programs

- Barrel order update – covered in Supervisor Reports
- Other ideas – Davin and Holly are getting together to put together a video.

Cooperator Agreements – None

Software

Cochran is researching what is available.

New Business

Big Tire Disposal

Looking into disposal options

UOCD Promotional Video

Spring timeline.

Special Exigency Practice

Table

Soil Tunnel Trailer

Table

Correspondence

Nothing new.

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Adjournment

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

The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, November 16, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Lori Cochran, Administrative Specialist

Signature of Chairman

Signature of Secretary

Date

Date