

Meeting Minutes

March 14th, 2017

5:00 PM

USDA Service Center, 432 E, Pioneer Ave Homer, AK

- A. Call to order: 5:50 pm
- B. Roll call: Chris Rainwater, Genarita Gobarek, Jared Worthington, Kyra Wagner, Otto Kilcher, Tim Alzheimer, Devony Lehner, Jim Engebretsen
- C. Approval of the Agenda: approved with addition in new business from Chris,
- D. Approval of the Minutes: Gena motioned, Otto seconded
- E. Visitors
 - a. NRCS: Jared discussed the new structural requirements on high tunnels. No domes of any sort, due to experience with structures failing. Chris brought up the width limitation (no wider than 30ft), Jared replied that special considerations would be figured into such a want. Chris asked for Jared to check on a few of the requirements for wood framed high tunnels. The max width of 10 feet was very alarming to most and would like to know if it is an error or what? This new requirement takes into effect now, so prior recipient's will not have to adhere to the new changes. Have another round of contracting, hopefully thru this upcoming summer.
 - b. Other guests: Jim Engelbretsen listening in to consider empty board seat.
- F. Financial Report: Invasive program is of great concern. Gena made an amendment to the financial report to pick a numerical number to how much we are willing to go in the red over. Chris called the vote on the amendment, no one opposed. A cap of \$15,000 was agreed upon. Motion to approve by Otto. Unanimous approval.
- G. Manager's Report

A. Land Use: Trails

- a. Watermelon Trail: Ramps are decorating the parking lot on Ohlson Mountain. A call is planned for the end of the month to get the big players into the room and clarify some blocks to getting permits to do a winter trail through the Critical Habitat Area. Maybe too big to get around? Snomads are talking to a lawyer to know all the options, but hopefully this teleconference will clarify where everyone stands. Kyra to send notification to the board when the teleconference date is set.
- b. Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area: Next meeting is March 21st. Kyra to send meeting informational materials to the board.
- c. BLM: Charlotte is ordering AIM (Assessment, Inventory, Monitoring) protocol supplies for the field season.

B. Water Quality

"To provide education and leadership in the conservation and sustainable use of soil- and water- related resources through cooperative programs that protect, restore and improve our environment."

- a. Anchor River: Anchor River Watershed Coalition meeting coming up next month, perfect forum to talk to everyone about the ACWA grant planning. Kyra to send board Anchor Point DOT planned summer work from last meeting.
- b. ACWA Grant: Got it! Finally! But with a much smaller budget. And less time to implement it. Yahoo! Kyra to meet with Jason Okuly of State Parks and see what funding they have for implementation. The Board expressed concern that any project in that area is going to be destroyed at some point by the natural meandering of the river. Kyra to ask Jason about the expected life class (how long does it need to last?) of Anchor River project.

C. Agriculture/Soil

- a. New Specialty Crop Block Grant: Our proposal was accepted and we were invited to officially apply. We applied for some funding to host a few High Tunnel Group gatherings and a couple high tunnel tours in 2019. We were also asked if we would host some of the equipment that farmers are asking for when they apply for this funding. I told them we would indeed. Somehow. Kyra to add to next agenda to talk about rental equipment
- b. Old Specialty Crop Block Grant: Still working on getting this out the door. Looking into the possibility of hiring the same consultant that Heidi had to do her survey.
- c. Farmers Market Promotion grant (FMPP): Hosting the “Solar Energy Systems for Alaska” at I&O at 6:30 tomorrow as part of our producer outreach series.
- d. Rural Business Dev. Grant: Just received an approval for an extension for 9 months. This way we won’t have to do our survey over the top of the Census of Agriculture that the USDA is pushing, and we’ll be able to use their statistics in our report.

D. Invasive Weed Program

- a. Weeds program: Matt presented last night at the Central Peninsula Garden Club on invasives with Janice Chumely. Will be talking to other partners while in the area about future plans for the “cost share” program.
- b. Mini Grant: Matt is finalizing the details on a mini grant we have been offered from the Copper River Watershed Forum. It will help pay for trips across the Bay and time in schools.
- c. Matt: And.... Matt applied for a job at the City of Homer and we are still waiting to hear. Ugh.

E. Education

- a. Enviro Ed through EPA: Fairbanks Soil and Water/Ag in the Classroom is applying with UAF Cooperative Extension for a grant that could be spread state-wide. If they get it, we are a \$5000 line item, allowing us to spend time in the schools on Ag curriculum.

F. Administration

- a. New office space agreement: We still have not started the discussion yet with the State Office about renewing our agreement.
- b. NRCS Funding: At the end of this month there will be a training on the EzFed Grants online grant application that we will need to use for all our future funding with NRCS.

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- c. Cooperators: We signed a new cooperator on, Mark Richey.
 - d. Ag Update: You all should have received your first Ag Update today, let Kyra know if you didn't
 - e. AACD: Next week is the AACD state Face-to-Face meeting. Chris and Kyra are planning to go.
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H. Old Business

- a. Employee evaluation: (skipped)

I. New Business

- a. Upcoming AACD Board Meeting (appropriate funds for travel?) Kyra brought up sponsoring Kodiak member to attend. Funding was discussed, mileage, 1 round trip ticket and two hotel rooms. Otto motioned to approve \$700 for meeting. Gena seconded the motion. Passed.
- b. Upcoming Local Working Group meeting (food donations?) We are hosting here in Homer Friday April 6th. Discussion about menu for event. Kyra will ask that participants RSVP, could be a good number of attendees. Four hour long, around 10am-2 pm
- c. Comments on KPB Comprehensive Plan: Kyra showed a comment letter sent to the borough from Kenai SWCD board. The board gave their opinions on what they agree with and what aspects that could use some further classifying. Soils of local importance being a big topic. Motion for HSWCD board to sign onto this letter. Genarita made the motion, Otto second.
- d. Spruce trees with Division of Forestry

Next Meeting April 11th, 2018, 5pm