



Meeting Minutes

January 10th, 2017

5:00 PM

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

- A. **Call to order:** 5:30pm
- B. **Roll call:** Chris Rainwater, Otto Kilcher, Genarita Grobarek, Jared Worthington, Kyra Wagner, Tim Alzheimer (by phone). Charlotte Crowder visiting briefly.
- C. **Approval of the Agenda:** approved with the addition of the discussion about the State Farm Conservation Plan (SFCP)
- D. **Approval of the Minutes** Otto motioned to approve, Tim seconded. Change cost share for crop rotation number changed to \$.14
- E. **Visitors**
 - a. NRCS Report: presented by Jared, handed out high tunnel numbers, schedule for EQIP deadlines, discussion of water rights (yes, all applicants still need to apply for water rights), and looking forward to having Sean Willison join the team on the 22nd.
 - b. Other guests: In response to board questions regarding our BLM work, Charlotte came over from her office and showed the board the portion of the Unalakleet area
- F. **Financial Report:** Gena motioned to approve, Otto seconded. Passed.
- G. **Manager's Report**

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- a. **Land Use:**
 - i. Watermelon Trail: The trails are great right now for hauling the ramp down to Beaver Creek! What about the gegblock? Any plans?
 - ii. Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area: Next meeting next week
 - b. **Water Quality**
 - i. Anchor River: No news. Will be meeting with the Land Trust and Cook Inlet Keeper and State Parks at the end of the month to discuss other avenues for this project.
 - ii. Chris: are there any studies on plastic particles in KBay? No.
 - c. **Agriculture:**
 - i. NRCS & Employees: Jessica Guritz continues to work on soil recommendations for NRCS contracts after moving to Anchorage. Jessica has completed technical service provider (TSP) training to assist NRCS and NRCS applicants in areas like forestry and agriculture. At the moment she is a temporary employee with HSWCD, but we may bump her up to part time if we can identify a solid way to keep her on. Jessica's main background is in forestry and since Meg has stated that forestry is one of the big gaps that SWCDs could fill, it may be good that Jessica is available to assist remotely or for on-site forestry work where NRCS sees fit.
 - ii. Specialty Crop Block Grant: Preparing surveys for restaurants.
 - iii. Farmers Market Promotion grant (FMPP): Preparing surveys for market vendors
 - iv. Rural Business Dev. Grant: Preparing surveys for producers
 - v. Chris: why are the spruce turning blue? He has noticed it up at his elevation too now. CO2? Aphid fungus? Otto noted that he has seen that the spruce are faster growing,

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- further spaces between branches, used to have 7/16 inch growth rings, but now. Gena noted that the boughs they collected for wreaths this year were also blue.
- vi. Kyra updated the board on collaborative activities HSWCD is participating in: AG classes with AKFLT, SCBG presentation with Div Ag, HFM promotion/fundraising
- d. Invasive Plant Program**
- i. Weeds program: We have a meeting with Kyle Graham and Emily Gunter on Friday to discuss the Invasive Plant Cost Share Program to be funded by USFWS. There is still interest from the City of Homer and the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust to partner with this program.
 - ii. Future possibilities: We are preparing a proposal for the Copper River Watershed Invasive Plant Mini-grant Program for the 2018 season. This grant will focus on classroom and community outreach, education, and weed pulls.
- e. Education**
- i. Ag in the Classroom: Nothing new to update
- f. Administration**
- i. Board asked NACD funding questions, NRCS space use? How much? How do you file for freedom of info act to find out how much this office costs? Kyra reported that, though no new agreement has been designed yet, the NACD funding should be able to cover our rental costs easily.
 - ii. Realty class would be great! Could bring peace and tranquility to the world....should include construction industry, are there other organizations to leverage?
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H. Old Business

- a. **Employee evaluation:** Otto moved to postpone, Gena seconded.
- b. **Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights** documents and policies: Otto moved to accept, Gena seconded. Corrections to typos suggested. Motion passed with corrections. Board members signed policy acknowledgement, Tim will sign later when he is back in town.
- c. **Ethics review:** Otto moved to postpone, Gena seconded. Tabled.
- d. **AACD Update:** Chris: Tribal district and AS41 districts trying to work together in Kodiak, could Kodiak create a designated seat on their board for tribal member? But it would mean opening up the statutes, which would be likely to hit opposition. As for the \$50,000 that was taken back by the state when Anchorage SWCD failed to use it, we should be writing work load suggestions to show that we would make good use of it.

I. New Business

- a. **Elections** Otto motions to bring to the floor the topic of elections and seat. *Gena filled out nomination form and gave to Kyra, did it get to Jenny at AACD? Kyra to send Jenny an email regarding nominations, do we send stuff to Div Ag, what do we when we have an empty seat? Kyra to find out what is the status of seats. Are we out of compliance?*
 - i. Resolved that Gena to fill the seat for the next three years.

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- ii. Otto motioned that we volunteer for positions, seconded by Gena. Tim will be secretary (and willingly take minutes), Gena will be treasure, Otto to be vice chair, Chris to be chair.
- b. SFCP for ADL 232302**
 - i. Road easements? Soils index? Ag potential? What happened to the 3 acres (a discrepancy between the area listed and the original lease)? Why the shapes? Otto recused himself from final decision since he is an adjoining landowner. Tabled till next meeting
 - ii. Kyra will email out more specs to the board to answer these questions.
- c. **Other: 1935 aerial photos.** Chris looking to acquire historic photos, could get from DOD? Recounted story of Charlie Miller entertaining servicemen at the time with raspberry drink. Dan Sullivan could be the ticket, Chris will check the possibility.
- d. **Other: Office Signs.** Can we take the old signs down from the other building and bring them over here? Otto suggested to use funds and volunteers to do the favor of bringing the signs over.
- e. **Other: Equipment:** Otto took the 4wheeler trailer to Tire Town and they replaced the tubes.

Adjourned at 9:15

Next Meeting February 14th, 2018, 5pm

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