

*Tsaile WHeatfields Farm Board and Water Users Joint Meeting
Wheatfields Chapter, Wheatfields, AZ
Saturday, January 12, 2013*

MEETING MINUTES

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. Meeting called to order at 10:51 am (All new elected officer were present; Lorena Eldridge, Lucinda Davis, and Dorthea Litson). Lorena Eldridge ran the meeting.

B. Invocation conducted by Bennie Litson.

Before Mr. Litson started his prayer, he provided word of encouragement to all the officers.

C. Agenda reviewed by Dorthea Litson. One item was added to the agenda, and that was to reorganize new selected officers' position. This item was the next to talk about.

To added item was accepted:

Motioned by Lorena Eldridge

Seconded by Bennie Litson

Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained

Motion Carried

D. Reorganize Position of Farm Board

Lorena Eldridge explained the options:

1. The audience can select who they want in each position.
2. The Farm Board members can volunteer themselves for a the position
3. The Farm Board member can talk among themselves to make the decision.

Open for Discussion:

- Bennie Litson requested the Farm Board to talk among themselves to decide what position to hold.
- The Farm Board reorganized themselves in the following way:
 - President – Lorena Eldridge
 - Vice President – Lucinda Davis
 - Secretary – Dorthea Litson

Each elected officer was given a chance to speak to the audience.

E. Reading of last meeting minutes, December 18, 201 was read by Dorthea Litson.

No questions or comments.

The last meeting minutes was accepted as read:

Motioned by Julia Litson

Seconded by Bennie Litson

Voting: 6 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained

Motion Carried

F. Announcements:

1. Chapter Meeting – 10am Monday, Jan 21, 2013 @ Wheatfields Chapter Hse.

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2. Soil Workshop – 9 am Saturday, January 19, 2013 @ Wheatfields Chapter Hse.
3. WUA & Farm Board – 9am daily, Saturday & Sunday, Jan 26 & 27, 2013 @ Dine' College, Tsaile, AZ - Land Grant Office
4. Food Sovereignty Workshop – 8am dail, Thursday & Friday, Jan 24, & 25, 2013 @ Dine College, Tsaile, AZ
5. Farm Board & Grazing Official Training – 8am, Tuesday, Jan 29, 2013 @ Navajo Nation Museum Window Rock, AZ

II. REPORTS

a. Farm Board

Lorena Eldridge stated she has no report.

Lucinda Davis no report

Dorthea Litson reported on the following:

1. First Nation Grant status of the money that can be spent. Also the Goals and Objectives of the grant.
2. She also reported that the granter provided a workshop regarding these areas: Creating Mission and Vision statement, Roles and Responsibilities of Board of Director, Creating Financial Policies, and Accounting software.

b. WUA

Aaron Begay reported the Water User is an important non profit for the community within the Tsaile – Wheatfields – Blackrock area. It can take care of water development for all, so more economic development will occur. One example he shared was to bring out the water source that people use to haul for both drinking and livestock to nearby highway. However, the current officers and Board of Directors seem to not take it serious. He fields like he is the only member that is always here attending the farm board meeting. He thank the Farm Board for all the support it has to offer to the Water User.

Lorena Eldridge encouraged him for all the work he does for the Water Users, Farm Board, and farmers. They and she relies on his expertise.

C. Operation and Maintenance Fee

Lorena Eldridge explained the that the Farm Board have worked the farmers to set the price at \$1.50 per acres, but last year, 2012, they decided to up the price to \$3.00 per acres and for all farmers to pay this price. To date, Dorthea Litson creates and submits the invoice to people who have not paid, and in return Danny John provides the update of who has paid, so she will know what invoice to submit again.

Dorthea Litson reported that there are 12 farmers from Lower Wheatfields who have not paid the O&M fee. There late charges are coming huge; it is at \$70. Please Note: The Upper

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Wheatfields and Tsaile farmers have not been invoice yet due to the following: Identifying farmers with the farm plot; acreage to the farm plot; and mailing address. Unit this is fixed then invoice can be submitted.

The questions, "How do we handle people who don't pay their O & M fee?"

Mr. Bennie Litson spoke twice. Each time he spoke he advocated that it is important to continue to invoice the farmers to pay. It is already a part of the law and written into the policies and procedures that you as Farm Board members are asked to implement them. We are moving forward no backwards.

Lorena Eldridge stated the laws, policies and procedures in need of revisions, and that is now in process somewhere in Window Rock.

The report was accepted as it was dialogue, and no action came out of it:

Motioned by Lucinda Davis

Seconded by Aaron Begay

Voting: 7 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained

Motion Carried

III. OLD BUSINESS

a. Purchase Computer and Software

Lorena Eldridge explained she was assigned to research the cost of computer and accounting software. She worked with the Chapter to request for the cost of their MIP software, and if possible a licensure can be purchased. To date there is no answer from them, but move it to work session to talk about. She researched the price of the laptop it starts at \$ 500.00 and above. She also would like to purchase projector, printer, and scanner.

Dorthea Litson explained that the workshop on January 4 and 5, 2013 conducted by First Nations. There they explained the various type of software, and they recommended Sage Peachtree once known as Peachtree. In addition, she shared the following:

- In the First Nation grant – there is \$500 set aside to purchase Laptop. Granter did not really support the Laptop due to easily loosing it.
- In the First Nation Grant – there was \$500 set aside to have someone collect assessment, but Land Grant hired two Interns to collect the assessment; therefore Jackie Franck stated that we can use it for
 - Creating Brochures or
 - Purchasing Software

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- In the First Nation Grant – Jackie Franck stated if the organization need more technical assistance we can request for it, and she can pay for that expense. For example, once we purchase the laptop and software we have Mr. Pinto help us set up the software, and train us on the software.

Dorthea Litson asked what are the PROs and Con a computer capability.

Lorena Eldridge explained there really is no difference between a PC and Mac computers.

Final Decision was as follow:

Lorena Eldridge is responsible purchase a Laptop. The \$500 allocated can be use, and cost difference can be match from the Lower Wheatfields account. She will work with Danny John to purchase the Laptop.

Dorthea Litson was assigned to work with Danny John to purchase the software, Sage Peachtree, that costs \$900. \$500 from the First Nation Grant will be used, and the cost difference from the Lower Wheatfields accounts.

To action item accepted was regarding the final decision mention above:

Motioned by Dorthea Litson

Seconded by Bennie Litson

Voting; 7 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained

Motion Carried

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- a. LUP – Transfer, Relinquishment, Sublease, or Probate

No item listed. No action taken.

- b. Create Budget and Resolution – FY 2012 Sales Tax

Dorthea Litson explained that the Chapter received FY 2012 Sales Tax in amount of \$ 87,840 at the planning meeting. Last year, Farm Board requested for \$23,000. The 23,000 dollars were used to pay three (3) water masters position and repaired (2) reservoirs – Kee White and Rita Jishue, but no sure to the current balance.

Lorena Eldridge asked the farmers for their inputs. The following comments, questions, and suggestions were made:

1. Aaron Begay stated, “Based on last year, we hired three water masters to take care of each farmland, but some of the water masters were not around when need. For example, in Lower Wheatfields, when Mr. Tommy Yazzie was not around Merle Kedelty or James Becenti had to work with the farmers to release water or schedule the irrigation. For this reason, two (2) water masters can serve us well for the time being.”

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2. Lorena Eldridge commented that if two (2) water masters were hired the Farmers are going to complain why they have water masters.
3. Aaron Begay replied, the data indicates the amount of farmers that are farming at this time allow for two (2) water masters.
4. Dortha Litson stated that for the last two year the Water Masters work from May to end of September and was entitled to 400 hours. The 400 hundred last each to end of August, so it is important to increase their hours to 600 hrs to work up to September.

The following is the budget put together by the people:

Description		TOTAL
Water Masters	2 person x \$10 per hr x 600hrs	\$12,000
Irrigation Manager	1 person x \$10 per hr x 600hrs	\$ 6,000
Fringe Benefit		\$ 700
Conference		\$ 5,000
Supplies and Materials		\$10,000
	TOTAL COST:	\$33,700

Please note: Conference is listed a flat rate of \$ 5,000 and Supplies & Materials at \$ 10,000. The possible conferences that farmers will be able to attend are IAC Conference @ Las Vegas; Organic Conference @ Albq.; Navajo Nation Agriculture Conference @ Window Rock; Onada Tribe in Wisconsin; SWIAA; and other. Registration, travel, and lodging can be paid.

The materials and supplies are set to rebuild 2 reservoirs.

Additional comment:

Freddie Yazzie – We need to look for improvement. The water masters needs to be looked over. Daily worksheet at the end of the day needs to be submitted by the water masters.

The dialogue of budget and compiled was accepted:

Motioned by Aaron Begay

Seconded by Freddie Yazzie

Voting: 7 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained

Motion Carried

V. OTHERS

- a. None (no action)

VI. CONCLUSION

- a. Next Agenda Item

The following are the next agenda item:

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1. Evelyn Litson – Farmland in Tsaile
2. Priority for the Farm Board
- b. Next meeting scheduled for Saturday, February 2, 2013 @ 11am Wheatfieds Chapter House.
- c. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

The adjournment was accepted:

Motioned by Aaron Begay

Seconded by Dorthea Litson

Voting: 7 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained

Motion Carried