

TSAILE/WHEATFIELDS JOINT FARM BOARD AND WATER USER MEETING  
Sunday March 24, 2019 @1:00 PM  
WHEATFIELDS CHAPTER HOUSE, WHEATFIELDS, AZ

AGENDA

**RECEIVED**

SEP 16 2019

Tsaile/Wheatfields  
Chapter BY: Deb

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Meeting called to order
- B. Invocation
- C. Roll Call
- D. Recognition of guest(s) and visiting officials
- E. Review and adoption of agenda
- F. Review and adoption of last meeting minutes – 3/3/19

II. OLD BUSINESS

NNFB 2017 goals - Below are the Program Performance Criteria (PPC and Goal Statements for all Farm Boards) The Farm Board elected officials will be assigned 1 or 2 PPC, see below.

- A. Each FB will submit 12 crop inventory reports from their respective Agriculture Land Use Permittees (ALUP).

**Goal Statement:** Each FB will submit at least 3 respective crop inventory reports quarterly in table format (3CIR x 13 FBs).

**1.** Crop Inventory

- B. Facilitate farm improvement/outreach activities for farmers in collaboration with tribal, state and private sectors.

**Goal Statement:** Conduct 2 agricultural educational outreach/workshops for farmers per quarter per 13 FBs.

**1.** Wheatfields Agriculture Projects

- A. Project Update
- B.

- C. Provide training and assist farmers in updating or developing a conservation plan as required by BIA and the Navajo Nation.

**Goal Statement:** With farmer participation, implement conservation training and develop 2 or more plans per quarter per FB review.

**1.** Training

- D. Assist with farm area improvements such as land leveling, erosion control: with funding sources such as USDA.

**Goal Statement:** With farmer participation, each FB will implement 1 improvement per quarter according to conservation plan.

**1.**

- E. Each FB member shell inventory at least 3 ALUP/Farm Permit within respective FB area.

Goal Statement: With BIA and Farmer participation, reconcile and inventory as to the status of each ALUP or Farm Permit. (3ALUP x each 13 FB member)

1.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. WUA Report
- B. Water Shed Resolution
- C. Plan of Operations/Policy & Procedures
- D. Tri-Party Agreement

IV. RECEIVING REPORTS

- A. Reports
- B. Announcements
- C.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. Next Agenda Items
- B. Next Meeting
- D. Adjournment

TSAILE/WHEATFIELDS JOINT FARM BOARD AND WATER USER MEETING  
Monday March 24, 2019 @ 1:00 PM  
WHEATFIELDS CHAPTER HOUSE, WHEATFIELDS, AZ

**Minutes**

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Meeting called to order  
Meeting was called to order at 1:20
- B. Invocation  
Invocation was given by Lorena Eldridge
- C. Roll Call  
Lorena Eldridge and Lucinda Davis – Present, Emerson Chee - Absent  
Water Users Association – All Absent
- D. Recognition of guest(s) and visiting officials  
All local farmers
- E. Review and adoption of agenda  
Agenda read by Lucinda Davis  
Motion to accept the agenda as is by Charles Chee  
Second by: Jessie Tsosie Votes: 3 – 0 - 1
- F. Review and adoption of last meeting minutes of 2/24/19, 3/3/19  
Minute read by Lucinda Davis  
Motion to accept the minutes by: Charles Chee  
Second by: Jessie Tsosie  
Votes: 4 – 0 - 2

II. OLD BUSINESS

NNFB 2017 goals - Below are the Program Performance Criteria (PPC and Goal Statements for all Farm Boards) The Farm Board elected officials will be assigned 1 or 2 PPC, see below.

- A. Each FB will submit 12 crop inventory reports from their respective Agriculture Land Use Permittees (ALUP).

**Goal Statement:** Each FB will submit at least 3 respective crop inventory reports quarterly in table format (3CIR x 13 FBs).

**1. Crop Inventory**

We as Farm Board oversee the Land Use Permit, there are 127 Land Use Permits and there are a lot of farms that are not in use, some are in probate and some are in disputes and some farmers are just not farming anymore. Every year the Council allocates funds to the Farm Board for stipends which is not much but as Farm Board Member we want to help our local Farmers. There is a form call Form 2 which measures what the Farm Board should be working on. This form is what sets goals the Farm Board have to meet each quarter. This is the reason we ask the farmers to turn in their crop report, this is what we will be collecting when we do home visits. We decided to ask four questions when we visit the farmers and that is why the Farmers are not coming to the meetings and why they are not turning in Crop Inventory Forms. Several months ago Emerson Chee as the

Farm Board Vice President decided to take it upon himself to do this job, to collect crop inventory forms. He brought in 10 forms, but since then he has not come to our meeting to this day. We decided to do the collection ourselves, but right during that time it snowed and the roads got muddy so we have not started the inventory yet. The reports are due in the end of March, 2019. The forms are submitted to Department of Agriculture then to Office of Budget and Management. There are 13 Farm Boards but out of that there are only a few Farm Boards that turn in the forms. There is a lot of work that goes into these forms and paperwork. The grazing and farm permits being discussed by the BIA and others. The agreement has that the agreement is between BIA and the Farmers. The questions is how do we get the Farmers to start working on the farms again. They even talked to the Dryland Farm will be under the Grazing Official. Under title 3 the Grazing and Farm Board are under this title. They are working on changing the policy and procedures then it goes to Council. The crop inventory has a lot of weight that it carries on Water Rights and Permits. We will be starting the inventory on March 31 2019 beginning with Zita Begay to Jessie Tsosie.

Jessie Tsosie said she gave her permit to Lyndon Chee from NRCS, but she never got it back. She does not have one. She gave her permit to her children, her son and daughter half and half.

Lorena told her that she can ask her for a duplicate copy but she has to do it herself since it is in her name.

Jessie also said she gave 6 bags of oats to the Chee boys to plan but nothing grew out. She is not sure if it was last year or the year before.

Last year Water Users planted to everyone late in the fall, but I am not sure if that is when they planted for her. There is that privacy act in place so Jessie has to go to BIA herself.

Lucinda will ask BIA tomorrow to see what she needs to do to get a copy. We will let her know when we visit her next week.

B. Facilitate farm improvement/outreach activities for farmers in collaboration with tribal, state and private sectors.

**Goal Statement:** Conduct 2 agricultural educational outreach/workshops for farmers per quarter per 13 FBs.

**1.** Wheatfields Agriculture Projects

A. Project Status Update

Project Update, we don't really know what is being plan on this. Last meeting WUA came to the meeting but they did not give a report.

Allen Begay – How are you working with the WUA and who is the oversight. Miss Oliver said Aaron Begay came to visit her and they said they are going to continue working on the land and wanted to know what the family is going to do about the land. WUA is going to fence the farm. He wants to know what is going to happen. He suggest that the Farm Board take Jessie Tsosie to Chinle to check on her permit. Does the Farm Board have a staff that can help the Board or do the Board just come together at the meetings. Ida Mae Oliver said the WUA came to visit her and the said they will start the outside fencing and they wanted to know what the farmers are going to do with the farm. They had fixed the fencing several years ago. They bought



new materials to fix the fence. The last time he came to the meeting the WUA and the Farm Board were not working together, it seems like it is the same now. Audit was done so after that are you working together now. People are complaining that they were not notified when the WUA went into their farmland.

Lorena responded by telling him that we as the Farm Board are not the oversight. All the equipment belong to the Water Users Association according to the MOA. The audit was done, yes back in December, 2018 and was reported to Budget & Finance, but they did not give a directive as to the CAP. The Auditor General said the B & F did not say what will be done. The funds are the Navajo Nation funds. At the time of the B & F meeting Aaron Begay and his group came and reported to B & F. There was a directive that the checks need to be given to the WUA so they got two checks and that is what they are using to operate again. At the last meeting the WUA were at our Farm Board meeting but they did not give a report. Bennie Litson is the only one that said we need to work together, but no one else said anything.

Allen Begay said the job is just going without really completing all the work.

The question he had was how many bales did they get and who bought the bales in Angela Kedelty's farm. That is the questions they have as a family.

Lorena-We are not the oversight for the WUA so we cannot tell them what to do. We do not have staff. They took all the t-post and wooden post. We don't even know who the officers are, all we know is that Weston Carroll is the President.

Allen Begay-is saying that they really don't have the authority to tell the farmers what to do.

Lorena said Allen Begay has worked for the Navajo Nation for many years as a manager/supervisors so he understands the MOA/MOU. Water Users are non-profit who should not be asking for funds from the Nation. Non Profit got the money form the Nation but they are thinking that the Nation and Farm Board have nothing to do with it. We need all the 127 farmers to come together and say what they want, but no one is coming in to say. The Farm Board cannot change anything without the Farmers.

Mr. Begay also talked about pumping water back up from Tsaile Lake for farming. The money will all be used up soon and money will be gone and the farms will stall be there the same.

C. Provide training and assist farmers in updating or developing a conservation plan as required by BIA and the Navajo Nation

**Goal Statement:** With farmer participation, Implement conservation training and develop 2 or more plans per quarter per FB review.

1. Training

Dine College-Land Grant and Water Users are putting up the training. The training from last year are still the same ones.

The other training is from the department of agriculture. There was on that was put on at San Juan College, and they talked about the Plan of Operation. They talked about Range Technician starting the year 2020. Then in June there will be Natural Resources Summit and the Farm Board were told to attend that Summit.

- D. Assist with farm area improvements such as land leveling, erosion control: with funding sources such as USDA.

**Goal Statement:** With farmer participation, each FB will implement 1 improvement per quarter according to conservation plan.

- E. Each FB member shell inventory at least 3 ALUP/Farm Permit within respective FB area.

**Goal Statement:** With BIA and Farmer participation, reconcile and inventory as to the status of each ALUP or Farm Permit. (3ALUP x each 13 FB member)

1. None

We need to motion to approve the A, B, C, D and E reports.

Motion by: Jessie Tsosie

Second by: Allen Begay

Vote: 5 – 0 - 3

### III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. WUA Report

No one showed up

- B. Water Shed Resolution

- C. Plan of Operation/Policy & Procedures

At the last meeting we got some people attending our meeting, and there is a Marquel Begay that did the Water Shed Study for the Tsaile Creek, Wheatfields Creek and Whiskey Creek. She was supposed to be here to give another report on this issues and was asking or a supporting resolution. There is so much trash that needs to be cleaned up. This is contaminating the water. There are refrigerator and other items that are disposed of in the ditch. They will be starting the clean-up. They will also doing rock dam building from the beginning of the streams so there will not be any erosion. They also want to put fencing in the stream areas to see how the change will be in the fence area. We also talked about the climate change and it will be getting stronger.

We need a motion for the Water Shed Study. Motion by: Lucinda Davis

Second by: Jessie Tsosie

Vote: 5 – 0 - 2

Plan of Operations was developed by the former Farm Committee that developed the Plan of Operations. This Plan of Operations is what we need to update the POO. It is the same for the Policy & Procedures. We want to put it on the projector to show what needs to be changed.

- D. Tri-Party Agreement

The issue we have of not working together, the only way that we can work together is mostly get a tri-party agreement. Some years back the Shiprock/San Juan Water Users got some money and there was misuse of funds so they came up with a tri-party agreement. We went to see the Water Users Associations, Martin Duncan gave us a copy of the tri-party agreement. Now we are re-writing the agreement to work with our area.



Danny John-He has the same issues that Allen Begay has about the Farm Board and Water Users not working together. There are work that have been done and some is unclear as to how the project going. It's like two rams fighting each other between the two organizations. He asked for assistance from the Water Users on the earth dam, which they helped him with. They are saying that the Farm Board are the problem. He told them that working together is the key to getting a project done. Even the O & M cost and collection needs to be as to how they collect and how you presented to the people. Maybe they should not be collecting late fees, give the elderlies a chance to catch up, 10.00 a month late fee is too much for the people that get monthly income. He does not care about policies, it is just in the way. Maybe getting an input from the farmers will be a good thing. When you go from home to home get the people's input. Mr. Becenti told him that once the equipment goes through your gate, you will be charged 200.00 so they do not want them in their farm. They see the tractor going down the highway, how much fuel does it take and the wear and tear on that equipment. He was told by Emerson Chee that the fence was put on top of the hill and not where the fence should be at. Everything needs to be put on the table and hash it out in order to be able to work together. Not working together is why the farmers are not attending the meetings. Policies just put pressure on the people, it does not solve the problems.

Lorena – told the farmers that we are having the different meetings. Farmers do not go to the meetings, the WUA meetings most likely is just the Litson family that attend the meetings. What do the farmers want, they need to express their opinion. If this is going to go into a business then the Farmers should have a business plan, WUA cannot take all the profits. There was an agreement that which we do not have and have not been told about.

Danny John worked in-kind on the fencing project last year, but he still got a bill close to 1,000.00.

Lorena told him that she did not sign any agreement or forms for them so she did her own irrigation. The other thing is the audit report. WUA gave their report to B & F Committee but not recommendation. Vangie Curley-Thomas was just given a directive to process the checks for WUA. So nothing is being done by B & F, we don't know if the new Council will do anything about it. The environment impact study is what they did and the carrying capacity is not there for the grazing, so this is holding up the processing of the permits. Lucinda will be asking BIA to see if they can give her a copy of her permit, but

We need a motion for the tri-party agreement. Danny John wants all the farmers input on the tri-party agreement. We cannot leave anyone out or they will say that we decided on this by ourselves. After a long discussion, it was decided that this be deferred to the next meeting.

Motion by Allen Begay to defer and second by Danny John Vote: 6 – 0 – 2

Patricia Morgan has not attended the meeting for a while. They don't have access to the water to their field. They were supposed to share the water gate valve but they cannot get water to their field. She also completed the conservation plan. She has been paying a little more on her O & M fees because they told her that will be used for some work. She received a letter but did not open it because the name is wrong. She has been attending the WUA meeting, but it is the same thing and nothing is moving so she lost interest. Now she wants to start helping the Farm Board get all this revitalization going again.

#### IV. RECEIVING REPORTS

##### A. Reports

- 1. None
- B. Announcements
  - Joint Farm Board Meeting – 4/12/19 Tuba City
  - Next Meeting – 4/7/19 at 1pm
  - Permittee Meeting – 4/25/19 at 1pm

V. CONCLUSION

- A. Next Agenda Items
  - Same as before and we will add the Tri-Party Agreement
- C. Next Meeting
  - Next meeting will be on April 7, 2019 at 1:00 pm
- D. Adjournment
  - Lorena adjourned the meeting
  - Adjourned at 5:39