

*Tsaile - Wheatfields Joint Farm Board and Water Users Association Meeting  
Monday, May 13, 2013  
Wheatfields Chapter House, Wheatfields, AZ*

## Meeting Minutes

### I. Order of Business

- a. Meeting called to order at 3:26pm.
- b. Roll Call: Farm Board: Lorena Eldridge, Lucinda Davis, and Dorthea Litson all present; and Water Users: Violet Hunter, Aaron Begay, Myron Begay, Kathy John, and Lupita McClanahan were all present. Dorthea Litson was present.
- c. Invocation conducted by Nelson Begaye
- d. Reviewed agenda by Dorthea Litson. The following items were added to the agenda:
  1. Annual Operation and Maintenance fee requested by Manual Charley
  2. Extension of irrigation to her farmland requested by Patricia Morgan
  3. Upper Wheatfields Irrigation pipeline improvement requested by Ben Curley

*Action: All three items were added to the agenda.*

*Motioned by Mildred Silversmith*

*Seconded by Patricia Morgan*

*Voting: 17 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained*

*Motion Carried*

- e. Reading of last meeting Minutes, April 25, 2013
- f. Announcements
  1. Chapter Meeting, Monday, May 20, 2013 @ 1 pm, Wheatfields Chapter House
  2. Conservation Plan Workshop, Friday and Saturday, May 17 & 18, 2013 @ 9 to 3:30pm Daily Wheatfields Chapter House, Wheatfields, AZ
  3. Pesticide Training and Testing, Dine' College, SUB @ 9am, May 14, 2013
  4. Beef Quality Assurance Workshop, Wednesday – Friday, May 22 to 24, 2013, Dine College, SUB @ 9 am Daily. Sponsored by Land Grant Office.

### II. Reports

#### a. Farm Board

Lorena Eldridge, president, reported the following:

1. Three Water Masters were hired to take care of all three fields. They are Calvin James, Brandon Bia, and Merle Kedelty. Merle is the supervisor.
2. She attended the work session with IRS in Tucson to change the way elected officials are being paid if they are already on the Navajo Nation payroll system. (This is for the entire Navajo Nation government.)

Lucinda Davis, vice president, reported she attended the Navajo Nation Department of Agricultural Workshop. However, she play more of an assistance to the work she does. She

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also let people know she will be leaving early for workshop she has to attend related to her work.

Dorthea Litson, secretary, reported that there will be a conservation planning workshop. She explained the need for all farmers and ranchers to develop their conservation plan. Next, she reported to outcome of the meeting with the grazing representatives. The officers there supported the farm board efforts to move with plans that they have in place for the idling farm lands.

Questions:

Ben Curly comment that the Farm Board is pressuring the farmers. Farm Board needs to provide the seeds, pipe, and land leveling. Then they can challenge the farmers to do the work. He also stated, "I am uneducated so, how am I to write a conservation plan."

Lorena Eldridge explained, yes, Mr. Ben Curly has been requesting for pipe, but it is important to know that there are projects out there to help more farm development. For example NRCS is on good Federal Program to tap into. This federal program set aside money for each state such as Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. It has its own priority list that they fund. However, it calls for a conservation plan. Secondly, the pipe that Mr. Curley has a concern about was fixed in the summer of 2009 by Jimmy and Angie Wilson.

Angie Carroll shared she has a 25 acres farm land, but she does not use all 25 acres to farm on it due to many rocks in certain area. Yet, she is being charge for the full 25 acres of farmland to pay her annual operation and maintenance fee. Water does come to her farmland. She use to irrigate from the water coming from Roanhorse dam also known in as "Tsy be hakid" She also explained the changes in the different farmlands near her field. For example, the late Mr. Raymond Sorrell plow his wife's farmland, the late Richard White's farmland, and Alice Carroll farmland and made it into one big farmland. Finally, there is now a fence line over the old irrigation cannel; therefore, she is unable to receive water.

Lorena Eldridge explained the Farm Board is now working on two reservoirs one is Roanhorse reservoir and Walter Begay reservoir.

*Action: No action came out of this report, but it was accepted as a dialogue.*

*Motioned by Calvin James*

*Seconded by Weston Carroll*

*Voting: 21 yes; 0 no 2 abstained*

*Motion Carried*

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b. Water Users

Dorthea Litson was the only officer present. She shared that the WUA account has an estimate of \$33,000 in the account.

*Action: No action was taken.*

*Motioned by Merle Kedelty*

*Seconded by Patricia Morgan*

*Voting: 23 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained*

*Motion Carried*

c. Water Master

Merle Kedelty, Calvin James, and Brandon Bia all reported the following:

1. They have been working on cleaning out the irrigation system in all area of the farmland.
2. In Tsaile, they remove big rocks out the irrigation system
3. Rita Jishue's reservoir has been clean out by Navajo Nation Water Resource Department, however it need an irrigation system to it to divert water into the reservoir.
4. Freddie Yazzie irrigation system need back filling and some other area
5. Kee White reservoir is ready.

*Action: The report provided by the Water Master was accepted as a dialogue.*

*Motioned by Weston Carroll*

*Seconded y Kenneth Sorrell*

*Voting: 18 yes; 0 no; 2 abstained*

*Motion Carried*

III. Old Business

- a. Select One Board Position for Water Users

No discussion therefore forward to next meeting.

- b. Logo for Water User

Lucinda Davis brought submitted her grandson's drawing. All of the people who attended approve the drawing for the Water Users.

*Action: The drawing submitted was accepted to be the Logo for WUA.*

*Motined by Dorthea Litson*

*Seconded by Mildred Silversmith*

*Voting: 16 yes; 0 no; 4 abstain*

*Motion Carried.*

IV. New Business

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

1. Miranda Chee

No show as a result no action taken.

2. Helena Begay

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She explained her late father, Walter Begay, had a farmland above the hill near the Chapter House. She is now in the process of collecting information, and would like to change the name on her late father's farmland to one the children.

Dorthea Litson explained the two processes: One this land is a quite title. We, Farm Board, can recommend cancel the permit and reissue to children if all the children are in agreement and will need a written for each. However, we have never challenged this process.

The other process is to deal with court system where FB writes a recommendation resolution this can be forward to Court system.

Mildred Silversmith: She encouraged the sisters to come to an agreement with all their siblings then move with the progress.

*Action: To put this matter on next Farm Board meeting where more information and data will be collected.*

*Motioned by Mildred Silversmith*

*Seconded by Weston Carroll*

*Voting: 14yes; 0 no; 0 abstained*

*Motion Carried.*

b. Annual Operation and Maintenance Fee

Lorena Eldridge explained the history of O & M fee. It was established by the farmers about 2 years ago, and started at \$ 1.50 and by the second year change to \$3.00 per acres. It is an Annual Fee meaning one pays of this fee once year. The money is used to maintain irrigation line.

Manual Charley: He explained there is a miscommunication based on the people who are here at the meeting, and once they leave they provide wrong information. There is word out there indicating, "if one does not pay then he will lose his farmland."

*Action: Accept the information provided about the purpose of annual O & M fee.*

*Motioned by Carlen*

*Seconded by Rena*

*Voting: 15 yes; 0 no; 1 abstain*

*Motion Carried*

V. Other

a. EQIP for Upper Wheatfields

Lorena Eldridge: She commented that she already explained how EQIP works.

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Dorthea Litson: She added additional information about the pros and cons of submitting for EQIP individually verses group.

- b. Patricia Morgan – Irrigation extension in Tsaile, AZ  
Dorthea Litson explained to Patricia that last fall in 2012 Merle Kedelty and James Becenti install a small box in Anthony Brown’s Field so the water can be shared by both.

Patricia Morgan she will try, but is almost sure it will not work due to the irrigations system located upward slope.

*No action was taken.*

VI. Conclusion

- a. Next agenda item were as follow:  
LUP: Homer Nez : Helena Begay  
Upper Wheatfield EQIP

- b. Next meeting date @ 9am on May 31, 2013, Wheatfields Chapter Hse.

- c. Adjournment at 7:30pm  
*Action: Accepted meeting adjournment.*  
*Motioned by Treva Carroll*  
*Seconded by Helena Begay*  
*Voting: 14 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained*

*Motion Carried*