

*Tsaile - Wheatfields Joint Farm Board and Water Users Association Meeting
Friday, May 31, 2013
Wheatfields Chapter House, Wheatfields, AZ*

Meeting Minutes

I. Order of Business

- a. Meeting called to order at 9:24 am
- b. Roll Call; Farm Board members – Lorena Eldridge, Lucinda Davis, and Dorthea Litson were all present. Water Users members – Aaron Begay and Dorthea Litson were present.
- c. Invocation conducted by Lucinda Davis
- d. Reviewed agenda by Dorthea Litson. Questions, comments, suggestion were as follow:
Lorena Eldridge request to have two items added to the agenda.
Narbona Growth Funds
Office Space Agreement

Action: The two items were added to the agenda.

Motioned by Merle Kedelty

Seconded by Weston Carroll

Voting: 11 yes; 0 no; 0 abstained

Motion Carried

- e. Reading of last meeting Minutes, May 13, 2013, by Dorthea Litson. No Question, comments, or correction.

Action: The read last meeting minute accepted.

Motioned by Aaron Begay

Seconded by Merle Kedelty

Voting: 14 yes, 0 no; 1 abstained

Motion Carried

f. Announcements

1. Chapter Planning Meeting, Tuesday, June 4th, 2013 @
2. Conservation Plan Workshop, Saturday, June 22, 2013 @ 9 to 3:30pm Daily Wheatfields Chapter House, Wheatfields, AZ

Additional announcements were as follow:

- Joint Farm Board Meeting, Navajo Nation, location unknown, Friday, June 7, 2013
- Navajo Nation Admin Building continues to stall the work. President and Council Delegate of the Navajo Nation DO NOT see this as a priority. Now, there is problem with Education Building in Head start Office.

II. Reports

a. Farm Board

Lorena Eldridge read the Resolution written by the Grazing Official for the Farm Boar initiative.

Questions:

The late Wesley Begay's children were inquiring about which farmland their paternal aunt is asking for, Upper Wheatfield or Lower Wheatfields?

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Lorena let the children know that their aunt is Not talking about Lower Wheatfields. She is only inquiring about the farmland in Upper Wheatfield's.

Lucinda Davis stated she has no report

Dorthea Litson reported on the outcome of the Conservation Plan Workshop and next steps. The next meeting is to develop farm or ranch operation, and in July the actual inventory will be conducted. Secondly, she encouraged the farmers to farm their Farmland.

Questions, comments, and suggestions:

Emma Yoe: Is the conservation plan workshop open to all?

Dorthea commented that it was open to all farmers and ranchers.

Tony Yazzie: He agrees with comments being made that farmers don't work on their farmland. His questions are: How to I reestablish my farmland? Is there a problem with my soil?

Answers:

When planting seed one needs to immediately irrigate over the planted area.

Tony has one of the good dark soils.

b. Water Users

Aaron Begay reported he has missed two meeting, and is not sure where all the board members are. He explained the purpose of Water Users. The focus is on water issues, for our community, both drinking water and livestock and farming water. He encouraged all farmers to farm their farmland.

Lorena Eldridge explained the Water Users revised the Bylaw, Article of Incorporation, and elect new boards and establish a strategic plan. However, the boards are not showing up to the meeting. Most have missed twice.

c. Water Master

Calvin James and Brandon Bia reported the following:

- In Tsaile:
 - Rita Jishue's reservoir is being filled with water.
 - Cynthia and Sylis Begay are irrigating their ½ acre pasture.
- In Upper Wheatfields:
 - Yolinda Staley irrigated
 - Merle Kedelty irrigated
 - Putting fence around diversion dam
- In Lower Wheatfields:
 - Emerson Chee is irrigating, and is requesting for another week
 - Robert Yazzie is irrigating
 - Sadie Neztosie is requesting water next week

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Questions, comments, and suggestions were as follow:

Lorene Eldridge asked several questions –

Who create an irrigation cannel to Rita Jishue reservoir so it can be filled with water?

What material is being use to put a fence around the diversion dam in Upper Wheatfields?

Has Emerson Chee paid his Operation and Maintenance fee and his pipe rental fee?

What are each farmer's growing?

Answers:

Sylis Begay used his tractor to create a cannel to Rita Jishue reservoir. His job was done on a volunteer base.

Material being use to put a fence around the diversion are odds and end barb wire, and fence post are coming from dead trees.

Emerson Chee only paid \$50.00 of his O&M fee, and he has not paid for his pipe rental.

Not sure what farmers are growing, but Emerson is growing Winter Wheat.

Zane James' questions:

Is the use of O & M fee are being shared with farmers?

Do the people who pay their O & M fee have first priority to using the water? Is this something that is written in the policy and procedures?

Lorena answered:

Yes, the O & M fees have been shared with the farmers in the past, but not on what has been collected currently.

The Water Users have worked hard to establish Strategic plan. One is to create a financial policy.

Action: The reports were all accepted, but TWO actions evolved. Farm Board needs to do a follow up with Grazing Representative about late Wesley Begay's children Farm Land Issues. Write letters to all Current Water User officers to ask if they are still interested in serving as a Board.

Motioned by Merle Kedelty

Seconded by Weston Carroll

Voting: 14 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained

Motion Carried

III. Old Business

a. LUP – Transfer, Relinquishment, Sublease, Probate

l. Helena Begay

Dorthea Litson explained she received an email to remove her from the agenda. She does not have all of her paper work put together.

Defer to next meeting.

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2. Late Homer Nez

No show.

Lorena Eldridge stated not put this on the agenda any more. Farm Board will wait for the family to come forth.

Action: Defer Helena Begay request to next meeting. Don't put late Homer Nez LUP issue to agenda until his family comes forth.

Motioned by Aaron Begay

Seconded by Kenneth Sorrell

Voting: 10 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained

Motion Carried

b. Select One Board Position for Water Users

No Action. This item deferred to next meeting.

c. EQIP – Upper Wheatfields

No Action. This item deferred to next meeting.

IV. New Business

a. Narbona Growth Fund

Lorena Eldridge explained that the Narbona Growth Fund is a \$200 million dollars. There are 47 Chapter project submitted, and all have missing elements. The Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture staff is submitting a proposal. Mr. Fernando Notah, who oversees the Chinle Agency Farm Board, requested all the Farm Board to submit for a proposal. The other options being thought about are as follow:

1. Divide by 24 Council Delegate – 8.3 million
2. Divide by 5 agencies – 40 million
3. Divide by 110 chapters – 18 million
4. Divide by using the 50/50 formula
5. Use to pay for Navajo Nation short fall or put all proposals together.

The proposal deadline is June 14, 2013.

Also, Lorena explained that the Dept. of Agriculture wrote a conceptual proposal on August 22, 2013. In the conceptual proposal the following are some things the staff outlined:

Water Shed Improvement

Earth Dam/ Windmill

Farm Equipment

Full use of Land Use

Range Land

Irrigation

Irrigation sprinkler

Water development

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Lorena Eldridge asked the people, "What should we request for in the proposal?"

The farmers really did not say anything, but Dorthea talked about the possible of requesting for Farm Equipments. There was a proposal that we were writing for Farm Equipments.

Lorena stated to add: irrigation improvement for Upper Wheatfields, Tsaile, and Nidish chii Ci' hinikaadi in the proposal.

Dorthea Litson commented that I think these are all doable, but if we look at the deadline for proposal submission it might be a short time. Unless we work together every night and have the farmers take the lead on estimating the number of pipes needed.

Action: Complete the written proposal for Farm Equipment, and to meet with the farmer on Sunday, June 9, 2013 at 2pm. The Chapter Officials will be asked to write a supporting resolution before June 14, 2013.

Motioned by Dorthea Litson

Seconded by Merle Kedelty

Voting: 12 yes; 0 no; 3 abstained

Motion Carried

Additional comments regarding the proposal:

Filacita Bahe: Will Farmers be asked to pay to use the equipment?

Manual Charley: How big of Farm equipments are we talking about? What type of equipment? We the soil be thought about when equipment is being requested for?

Lorena Eldridge replied by stating, "All of the equipments need will be listed in the proposal, and we will have to wait on thinking about it the equipment will be rented; this we should worry about until we know the proposal is funded."

Nelson James suggested having Brochures of equipment.

Ernest Descheenie stated, "He is aware of the soil condition in Lower Wheatfields and the underground irrigation system is what he never approved." Also commented, "Dorthea Litson is an unworthy Farm Boar member, and she does not know anything about farming. She does not know how to irrigate, and she and her family members drink alcohol near his home."

Lorena Eldridge thank him for talking about his concern. The irrigation system has been improved and the main line run along the previous open irrigation system. Finally, people using alcohol is problem for many people, and as an individual it is hard to control.

b. Office Space Agreement

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Lorena Eldridge explained the office space agreement between Chapter officials and Farm Board members is finalized.

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Action: Accept the final agreement of office space.

Motioned by Kenneth Sorrell

Seconded by Westin Carroll

Voting: 10 yes; 0 no; 2 abstained

Motion Carried

V. Other
None

VI. Conclusion

a. Next agenda item

- ONLY the Narbona fund PROPOSAL

b. Next meeting date, Sunday, June 9, 2013 @ 2pm Wheatfields Chapter, Wheatfields, AZ.

c. Adjournment @ 1pm.

Action: Meeting adjournment was accepted.

Motioned by Paul Yoe

Seconded by Freddie Yazzie

Voting: 10 yes, 0 no; 0 abstained

Motion Carried