

MEETING MINUTES

I. Order of Business

- a. Meeting called to order @ 2:15 pm.
- b. Roll Call- Lorena Eldridge, Lucinda Davis & Dorthea Litson Farm Officials were all present Aaron Begay, VP, Dorthea Litson, Treasurer & Lupita McClanahan, member for TWBWUA was present and the rest of the officers were absent.
- c. Invocation by Patricia Morgan
- d. Review agenda by Dorthea Litson. No questions, comments, or items added.
Action: Agenda accepted as it was read.
Motioned by Patricia Morgan
Seconded by Dorthea Litson
Voting: 6 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained *Motion Carried*
- e. Reading of last meeting Minutes, June 18, 2013, by Dorthea Litson. No questions or comments.
Action: No changes or correction made to meeting minutes.
Motioned by Patricia Morgan
Seconded by Aaron Begay
Voting: 6 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained *Motion Carried*

II. New Business

A. Water Allocation

Lorena Eldridge shared that she invited NRCS, Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture, Navajo Nation Department of Water Resource, and Water Code to attend meeting today at 2pm. She received email from Lyndon Chee, NRCS staff, and Mr. Notah, NN Dept. of Agriculture, were unable to attend the meeting.

Further she explained that the Navajo Nation Water Code was paid \$75 last year for a permit. The staff is to determine a permit for us. Based on the report Upper Wheatfields and Tsaile Farmland were receiving 2 cfs from stream flow in the first week of May 2013. During that time the data provided indicated there is only enough water to irrigate 93 acres each and at most by end of summer at 240 to 250 acres. The full report is what we continue to wait for.

Dorthea Litson also added Ray Dotson, Manager of NRCS, Flagstaff office emailed stated that all EQIP applicants and future applicant will be put on hold until they receive water allocation plan from Tsaile – Wheatfields Farm Board, Ganado Farm Board, and San Juan Farm Board.

Questions, comments, and suggestions:

Lupita McClanahan – Does this allocation include the Range Units? How far will does water allocation take us if we know there are some idling farmlands?

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Dorthea Litson – She replied, “When this water allocation is being developed we have to plan it as if 100% of farmland were being utilized.” Furthermore, she has been working with Western Rural Development, New Mexico State University, and Land Grant Office, Dine’ College to develop a water shed study for our community. The difference about this study is to have the community people involve so they have a better understanding of water issues within their area. The proposal is now being drafted. She suggested adding the water allocation plan into the proposal being drafted.

Lupita McClananhan - Why is Blackrock Farmland not added to list?

Lorena Eldridge – The farmland can be added to the data, but farmers need to come forth.

Aaron Begay – This question is for Lucinda; “What is Water Management saying or how could they help?”

Lucinda Davis replied, “Water Management can help with water allocation plan, and water shed study.”

Aaron Begay – He commented that NRCS say they are there to help the people, but it seems like they are there to work against the people who are trying very hard to improve. It is more likely due to the department trying to save more money. In addition, if two Senators are putting article in the New York Times claiming that where NRCS helped the producers are growing more and not thinking about water lost in the Panhandle state of Texas and Oklahoma. Even today they are not here to plan or assist how they might be able to help. As result, they would be more reluctant to help.

He suggested to do our own water allocation plan, and watershed study.

Action: We decided to developed our own water allocation plan, and work with Western Rural Development house at Utah State University, New Mexico State University and Land Grant, Dine’ College to write the allocation plan development into the proposal be written.

Motioned by Merle Kedelty

Seconded by Aaron Begay

Voting: 8 yes; 0 no; 3 abstained

Motion Carried

III. Old Business

A. No items

IV. Reports

a. Farm Board

President reported the following:

- ❖ Upcoming scheduled workshops. 11 annual Southwest Marketing Workshop is scheduled from July 15 to 19, 2013 in Alamosa, CO. The focus of the workshop is to develop marketing plan.

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- ❖ Outcome of Conservation Plan Workshop, June 22, 2013: She stated that the farmers were at various level of writing their conservation plan. She worked with Freddie Yazzie to develop a conservation plan. At the end, there were three different conservation plan templates to share among farmers. She suggested that there is a need to only work with one conservation plan template to unify the process for the farmers. The Farmers who attended the last workshop were Freddie Yazzie, Weston Carroll, Merle Kedelty, and Kathy John.
- ❖ Office Space within the Chapter House: She reported the office space agreement is all put together, but needs to have Chapter President to sign the agreement.
- ❖ Narbona Growth fund Proposal: Lorena Eldridge explained to the people that a proposal was written to request for at least 4 positions of three years, and Farm equipments which total amount is estimated at 1.7 million dollars. She sat down with Ferdinand Notah to review the proposal. He commented that it would not fit to request for CIP funds, but will for Narbona Growth Funds. He suggested developing operation and maintenance plan for the use equipments.
- ❖ The Capital Improvement Projects within the Navajo Nation has gone through Resource Development Group. At the last planning meeting the Chapter Official learned none of their project has been selected as a result they were to submit at resolution requesting for answers.
- ❖ Supplemental fund for the Farm Board, Eastern Land Board, and Grazing has been approved by the Navajo Nation Council and waiting the NN President signature to pay for their stipend.

Questions, comments, or suggestions:

Aaron Begay – What did Ferdinand Notah say when meeting with him on the proposal?

Lorena Eldridge – She responded that Mr. Notah stated, “If there is personnel positions written into the proposal it will not fit into the CIP category.” CIP items are like building structures of some sort to develop economic stability. For example, creating a larger diversion dam will fit into that category. In addition, he suggested having an Operation and Maintenance plan for equipments.

Dorthea Litson – She explained the proposal process and suggested to write the Operation and Maintenance plan for the equipment so it can be attached to the proposal as an appendix. Therefore, it needs to be put on next agenda item for farmer to talk about it. At one of the meeting in May the farmers wanted to know if fees will be attached to equipment use if funded.

Vice President reported the following:

- I. A proposal for Water Shed study for Tsaile – Wheatfields – Blackrock area has been written, and is now searching for people to do the study. Currently the only company, Carwell & Browning, advocated by Mark Maryboy, has submitted a bit. Mark Maryboy is the council delegate pushing to ensure the water shed studies are completed across the Navajo Nation.

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If proposal is approve the study will cost \$500,000, and when it is completed more construction money will need to complete the project.

Questions, comments, and suggestions:

Dorthea Litson commented she does not trust Mark Maryboy and his company to do the water shed study in our community. As a council delegate for his community, he only settled for facet water for his community people and turned all water to Utah State for farming as economic development. Another word he short change his people.

Secretary reported the following:

1. First Nation Grant is extended to August 31, 2013. The second report is due on Friday, July 19, 2013.
2. Conservation Plan workshop needs to continuously be sponsored since it one of the required need for all farmers and ranchers who have permit use.

Action: The Farm Board members report was accepted, and no action came out of it.

Motioned by Aaron Begay

Seconded by Merle Kedelty

Voting: 9 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained

Motion Carried

b. Water Users

Aaron Begay stated he has no report.

Dorthea Litson reported the following:

1. We still have not fixed the Article of Incorporation and this is hindering the banking situation. The amendment is signed, but not the Article of Incorporation. There was a conference call we did to put all of the changes into motion. The coherent of the officers is hugely lacking and is putting the financial situation in an acquired position to move forth on certain projects.
2. The officers absents are a huge problem. It is more likely due to no stipend attached to it. We really have to do something about the officers. I hate to wait until the next two weeks.
3. The organization is in IRS review status.

Questions, comments, and suggests:

Lupita McClanahan suggested writing a letter to the officers.

The absent status was reviewed:

- Violet Hunter attended only two meeting after March 16, 2013.
- Aaron Begay attended six meeting after March 16, 2013.
- Myron Tsosie attended 1 meeting after March 16, 2013.
- Dorthea Litson attended 8 meeting after March 16, 2013.
- Lupita McClanahan attended 3 meeting after March 16, 2013

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- Kathy John attended 3 meeting after March 16, 2013.
- 1 position is still vacant.

Action: To add the Water Users Association officers to the agenda.

Motioned by Lupita McClananhan

Seconded by Aaron Begay

Voting: 9 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained

Motion Carried

1. Water User Office (added to the agenda)

Action: Write a letter to both the President and Secretary to ask if they still have an interest to service as officers. They need to write a letter to let the people know of their status within 5 days. In the absent of the President and Secretary the Vice President, Aaron Begay will serve as President to complete necessary paper work such a Article of Incorporation and write a letter to bank to cancel Danny John a signature.

Motioned by Lucinda Davis

Seconded by Lupita McClananhan

Voting: 9 yes; 0 no; 1 abstain

Motion Carried

c. Water Master

Calvin James reported the following for the Tsaile farmland area:

- Farmers currently irrigating are Mazelena Yazzie and Freddie Yazzie
- Next in line are Julius Burbank and Harvey Kenny Jr.
- Farmers who irrigated are Patricia Morgan. She tested how her irrigation system works in her farmland. She learned there is more work that needs to be conducted. Freeland Jishue irrigated his farmland. The water source was from the newly rehabilitated earth dam.
- Unsure of Samuel Yazzie will be irrigating; and Fred Benally is upset about the irrigation schedule, but Victor Castro usually irrigates for him.

Brandon Bia was not there to report, but Merle Kedelty reported for him for the Lower and Upper Wheatfields:

Upper Wheatfields Farmland area:

- Yolinda Staley and Arlene White irrigated.
- Alvin and Calvin Spencer started irrigated on Friday, July 5, 2013.

Lower Wheatfields Farmland area:

- Emerson Chee, Aaron Begay, and Robert Yazzie are irrigating.

Merle Kedelty reported the following of other project they have been working on:

1. Fixed a broken "T" in Tsaile farmland area
2. Created main irrigation ditch to reach the farmer's farmland.
3. Continuously cleaning out boxes and checking on irrigation system

Questions, comments, and suggestions:

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Lorena Eldridge: She asked how many farmers have harvest.

Water Master responded: Tsaile area – Marvin Johnny and Mazelena Yazzie; Upper Wheatfields area – Edward Litson; Lower Wheatfields area – none yet.

Calvin James: He asked. “Who is the owner to the farm equipments that sits on the south side of the metal building?” He asked the Chapter office staff, and they indicated that the equipment belongs to Farm Board, and in return the Farm Board have states it belongs to the Chapter. Some of the equipment needs a PTO attachment, and he cannot seem to locate the PTO.

Lucinda Davis: She replied indicating that the Farm Equipment does belong to the chapter. The person who has over site is the Vice President.

Dorthea Litson: She asked, “How is Brandon doing with work?”

Water Masters responded that he is working well. Brandon is only able to work Monday to Friday. On weekend he cannot due to no ride to work. Farmers all know to schedule irrigation with him.

Lorena Eldridge suggested having Brandon write a written report and submit to Farm Board.

Water Masters shared their concerns about the hours they work in relation to how they are being treated by the Chapter Office Staff. The Office staff reduced Calvin hour by 8 and Brandon by 12. Calvin was approached by Leanne that he was driving around in Lukachukai therefore he was considered not working. He commented that he was driving in Lukachukai during lunch hour to pick up his nieces. The other is during the orientation they were told the position is a 24/7 type of job, not an 8 to 5. The office staff looks at their work as an 8 to 5 job where they need to check in at 8 and check out at 5. For example, there were several times farmers would say to meet them out at their farmland around 6:30 or 7am in morning, and water masters have to wait and ensure all is settled with farmer which causes him to clock in late. This is considered being late for work by the Office staff.

Lorena Eldridge stated that the Chapter is the one paying your position, but during the orientation and in the job description it does indicate that these positions are not an 8 to 5 job.

Action: A letter or email will be send to both Paula Begay and Leanne Thompson to explained the concern of water masters, and let them know that these positions are NOT an 8 to 5 job. It is a 24/7 job as indicated on job description. Lorena Eldridge is responsible for writing to Paula and Leanne.

Motioned by Dorthea Litson

Seconded by Lupita McClanahan

Voting: 9 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained

Motion Carried

V. Conclusion

a. Next agenda items:

1. Status of Water User Association Bank account and Article of Incorporation

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2. Status of Operation and Maintenance Fee paid and not paid by farmers
 3. Develop Operation and Maintenance plan for requested Farm Equipment to attach as exhibit of the written proposal.
- b. Next meeting date on Monday, July 15, 2013 @ 3pm Wheatfields Chapter House.
- c. *Adjournment of meeting @ 5:30pm*
Motioned by Merle Kedelty
Seconded by Kaelynn Morgan
Voting: 9 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained *Motion Carried*