

Tsaille – Wheatfields Farm Board Water Users Joint Meeting  
Sunday, September 21, 2014  
Wheatfields Chapter House, Wheatfields AZ

**AGENDA**

**I. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- a. Meeting call to order
- b. Roll call
- c. Invocation
- d. Adopt agenda
- e. Reading and adopt last meeting minutes, August 14, 2014
- f. Announcements:
  - Chapter Planning Meeting, October 1, 2014 @ 3pm Wheatfields Chapter House, Wheatfields, AZ

**II. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Tsaille Water Plan
- b. Nominate Water Users' Vice President
- c. Revitalization of Farmland
- d. Storage Unit
- e. Report from Fish and Wildlife
- f. Proposal
- g. Financial Report – Water Users
- h. Community Water Plan

**III. NEW BUSSINESS**

- a. Reservation Wide Farm Board Workshop

**IV. Reports**

- A. Farm Board
- B. Water User
- C. Water Masters

**V. CONCLUSION**

- A. Identify next agenda items
- B. Schedule next meeting date
- C. Adjournment

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**I. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

a. Meeting called to order at 10:42 AM

b. ROLL CALL

- Farm Board: Dorthea Litson and Lorena Eldridge present. Lucinda Davis absent
- Water Users: Dorthea Litson and Aaron Begay present. Kathy Johns absent

c. Invocation by Lorena Eldridge

d. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dorthea read the agenda. No questions or comments made by the people.

Action: The agenda was adopted as it was read.

**Motioned by Teresa Chee**

**Seconded by Dorthea Litson**

**Voting: 3 yes; 0 no; 1 abstain**

**Motion carried**

e. READING LAST MEETING MINUTES, AUGUST 14, 2014

Dorthea read the last meeting minutes. No questions, comments, or amendments.

Action: The last meeting minute was accepted as read.

**Motioned by Teresa Chee**

**Seconded by Freddie Yazzie**

**Voting: 3 yes; 1 no; 1 abstain**

**Motion carried**

f. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Wednesday, October 1, 2014, Chapter Planning Meeting at 3 PM

Additional announcements:

- Tuesday, September 23, 2014 - Public Hearing-2014 Rangeland Grazing Act at Lukachukai, AZ
- Friday, October 17, 2014, Joint Farm Board Meeting at Window Rock, AZ

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II. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. . TSAILE WATER PLAN

Lorena explained, the Tsaile Water Plan for the farmlands was assigned to Lucinda to conduct her research on it. In May 2014, Allan Begay, a farmer from Tsaile, indicated that there was a plan to pump water from Tsaile Lake back up so the farmlands in the Tsaile area will have sufficient water for farming. She shared that Lucinda has looked into this matter several month ago. Lucinda spoke with the Director of Navajo Nation Water Resource, Mr. Tariq. Mr. Tariq explained that this Tsaile Water Plan was an idea being explored at one time, but it has NEVER been written into a plan.

Furthermore, Lorena suggested to possible continue the work with Mr. Allan Begay to see if he has any documentation of this idea that was once being explored.

**Action: No action taken.**

b. NOMINATION OF WATER USER VICE PRESIDENT

Lorena explained that at the last joint Farm Board meeting and Water User Meeting the vice president, Lupita McClanahan, of the Water Users submitted her resignation for her position, and the people accepted it. Now, the floor was open for nomination.

The audience that were present all commented that they were unable to run for the vice president position.

As a result, further discussion took place of how this position can be filled. The followings work comments and suggestion made:

- Lorena explained how the first Water User Boards were selected. She stated one person was assigned to travel from home to home to education the people about the organization's roles and responsibilities. A potluck dinner was set up for the people to come on a certain, and that is where the officers for the Water Users were selected and nominated. At that time, the people had been greatly supported by the Michael Benson, Navajo Nation Water Management Branch Office.
- It was suggested to create flyers for the vice president position and submit to radio station for announcement.

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- Another suggestion was to educate the people about the Water Users nonprofit organization at next Chapter Meeting prior to the start of meeting.
- Dorthea commented that the next Navajo Nation Water Study team will be conducting reports the results of their research on Water supply for our community on November 12, 2014 @ 1 pm Wheatfields Chapter House.
- It was suggested to have a luncheon and have the Water Users conduct their meeting before the above meeting mentioned.

**Action: The Water Users officers will have a meeting in the morning on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 with a luncheon. This is where the Vice President will be nominated. In the meantime, flyers will be created to advertise for the vice president's position, and submit it to radio station for announcement.**

**Motioned by Aaron Begay**

**Seconded by Teresa Chee**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained**

**Motion Carried**

c. REVITALIZATION OF FARMLAND PROJECT

Lorena provided a history of how this project came to being. It was supported by the BIA Natural Resource Office in Chinle, AZ and by the Chapter with a resolution. She commented to move this topic under proposal for further dialogue and discussion.

d. STORAGE UNIT

Lorena asked, "What we mean by storage unit?"

Dorthea explained the storage unit we are talking about is located on the southeast side of the chapter house. We talked about the idea of requesting for this particular storage unit where we can store our materials and supplies.

Lorena explained that in July 2014 meetings, we provided three options to store the materials and supplies. The options were as follow:

1. Renovate the metal storage unit located on the southeast side of the chapter house
2. Install chain link fence inside the orange barn, so we can store the materials and supplies

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3. Purchase a metal pod storage

Based on the three options, we submitted a resolution for option one. The Farm Board and Water User worked together to write the resolution and provided the estimate cost of materials and supplies needed for renovation. The resolution was presented during the Chapter Meeting in August 2014 where the people approved. Currently, the metal storage unit is under construction for renovation.

Lorena commented that she conducted a follow-up on the renovation with the workers. The supervisor indicated the renovation is for other uses other than storing materials and supplies. As a results, it is unknown how this metal building will be used in the future.

**Action: Lorena will write a letter to the Chapter staff to ask what the storage will be used for in the future, and when renovation will be completed. This letter will be presented at the next chapter planning meeting, and assign Lucinda to present the letter. Lorena is unable to attend next chapter planning meeting, and Dorthea may not be able to attend too**

**Motioned by Aaron Begay**

**Seconded by Rosemary Upshaw**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained**

**Motion Carried**

e. REPORTS FROM THE FISH AND WILDLIFE CONFERENCE

Lorena explained that at the last Farm Board meeting on August 14, 2014, we have selected James Becenti to attend this conference on August 20 & 21, 2014. He was to provide a report from the conference today however he is not here.

**Action: Deferred this item to the next meeting**

**Motioned by Teresa Chee**

**Seconded by Aaron Begay**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstain**

**Motion carried**

f. PROPOSAL

Lorena explained, in June 2013, the Farm Board created a proposal requesting for farm equipment and personnel costing \$1.7 million. This proposal was submitted to Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture. We are not sure how it end up in the Community Development Office in Window Rock. Under this program, the proposal was rated number one for the chapter as capital improvement;

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however, the Chapter stated that there number one project was Wheatfields Lake Development. Our proposal was pushed to 9.

Currently, the Farm Board plans to revise this proposal and submit to the Navajo Nation. Not only this proposal will be submitted but also another proposal to create shovel ready project for the other two farmland areas. Lower Wheatfields need water meter and outside fencing. Lorena commented that the Navajo Nation will be receiving funding from several sources; \$554 million as ace settlement for natural resource, \$8 million for unmet needs; and \$15 million for IDC. The 8 million for unmet is coming from all the project that the Navajo nation Pres. vetoed.

**Action: Dortha will created assignments for other farm board members and water user members to take part in revising the proposals. For example we've assigned Lucinda to figure out the costs for conducting feasibility studies for irrigation projects. The assign projects will be brought to next work session where it will be revised into one proposal. The work session is scheduled for Sunday, October 12, 2014 at noon. During this time each members are asked to bring a favorite dish to share with other.**

**Motioned by Teresa Chee**

**Seconded by Rosemary Upshaw**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained**

**Motion carried**

g. **FINANCIAL REPORT FOR WATER USER**

Dortha reported the current balance as of August 28 2014; deposits made; and expenses made.

**Action the financial report was accepted. The requests was to provide the financial report at the next meeting again.**

**Motioned by Teresa Chee**

**Second by Rosemary Upshaw**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstain**

**Motion carried**

h. **COMMUNITY WATER PLAN**

Lorena explained that the Farm Board, Water Users, and land-Use Planners conducted a Joint Meeting on September 14, 2014 to talk about this community water plan. She had to leave early from that meeting so she does not know the outcome.

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Dorthea explained the outcome of the meeting. The plan was to have a meeting after the Farm Board meeting today to develop a proposal to requests for some funding from the Chapter who will be receiving an amount of \$50,000 for capital outlay. However, the committee members are all not here. As a results, she will develop the proposal and submitted to Chapter staff. The following are items to requests within the proposal:

- computer
- computer software – maps and GPS capabilities (ES RI – computer system with GPS device)
- data warehouse
- poster printer
- watershed study
- inventories-windmill, water well, and earthen dams
- inventories-residential water, identify who has running water and who does not have running water
- data entry clerk (check website, Department of personnel management Navajo nation government, for salary of data entry clerk)

**Action: To request the Farm Board and Water User to write the proposal and be submitted to the chapter planning meeting on October 1, 2014**

**Motioned by Teresa Chee**

**Seconded by Aaron Begay**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstain**

**Motion carried**

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. RESERVATION WIDE FARM BOARD WORKSHOP**

Dorthea explained that the Land Grant Staff of Dine’ College approached her to see if the Tsaile – Wheatfields Farm Board to take the lead on organizing two - day workshop for all Farm Board members across the Navajo Nation. Land Grant Staff of Dine’ College have funding available to pay presenters and food. The purpose of the workshop: 1. To build Farm Board’s capacity, so they can take the lead on running workshops to teach and work with their famers.

Lorena explained that she announced, at the Navajo Nation Joint Farm Board Meeting on Sept. 19, 2014, that the Tsaile – Wheatfields Farm Board is in the process organizing a two day workshop that will be held sometimes in November. The response from the Farm Board members were as follow of topics to cover:

- crop yield report

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- monthly reports
- budget form 2
- develop resolutions
- No waters; so what to plant?
- Types of irrigation methods
- soil
- Internal Revenue Service reporting

Background information of Farm Board members across the Navajo Nation were presented as follow:

- most farm board members can write, read, and speak English
- there are 43 farm board members
- there are 13 chapters that have farm board

The audience provided additional topics to be covered, and they were as follow:

- plant identification weeds and good forage
- investment
- greenhouse
- teambuilding
- conservation plan
- How will my farm operation interfere with my Social Security or my SSI?

**Action: The farm board will create a survey and mail them out to all 43 farm board members. The surveys collected will be prioritize for the two day workshop. On this survey will include the possible dates to have the two day workshop in November.**

**Motioned by Aaron Begay**

**Seconded by Freddie Yazzie**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained**

**Motion Carried**

#### IV. REPORTS

##### 1. Farm board

President's report:

Lorena explained that she attended the Reservation Wide Joint Farm Board in Window Rock, Arizona. The major topics that were talked about was the 2015 budget for the Farm board, Grazing, and Eastern Land Board. The stipend for each board members are the same as last year. At this meeting, it was



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announced the Resource & Development Committee of the Navajo Nation were meeting. Therefore, the meeting was cut short, so some to the Farm Board can attend that meeting to see if they can talk about increasing the stipend. The next Navajo Nation Joint Farm Board was scheduled, Friday, October 17, 2014 in Window Rock, AZ.

Secretary report:

Dorthea had no reports to provide.

2. Water Users:

Water User President:

Aaron reported that the Water Users has been recertified by Internal Revenue Service on July 16, 2014. Due, to being revoke there were several grant opportunities we had to let go.

3. Water Master:

No reports from the two water masters. They both did not show up to the meeting.

**Action: The reports provided by the Farm Board and Water User were accepted.**

**Motioned by Aaron Begay**

**Seconded by Rosemary Upshaw**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained**

**Motion Carried**

ROSEMARY UPSHAW REQUESTED TO BE GIVEN TIME TO SPEAK.

Rosemary explained that she and her sister, Marie Carrol have a Land Use Permit where their farmland is located in Lower Wheatfields. She and her siblings are in the process of becoming more active with their farmland. She and her siblings are aware that their farmland has been idling for several years, and they are aware of the Operation and Maintenance Fee that needs to be paid.

Lorena thank her for informing the Farm Board.

Dorthea explained the purpose the Farmland Revitalization Project. The project is NOT to take the farmers Farmland away, but it is for how do we work together as Farmers and Farm Board to help is other revitalize the idling farmland. The design is for the Farm Board to help with farm equipment and it's the farmers'

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responsibility to figure out where they will be helping in revitalizing their farmland. For example, in this case, Rosemary if the Farm Board is going to help with the Farm equipment then what part are you going to help the Farm Board to revitalize the farmland. Will you be doing all the irrigation frequently? Based on how the farmer help will determine the split of the produce that is being produced.

Dorthea encouraged Rosemary and her sibling to think about how they will be working with the Farm Board to revitalizing there farmland. She also told Rosemary to not just plow her field and not plant. If the ground is left bare erosion can take place, the matter in the soil will be lost. For these reasons, it important for farmers to take care of their soil.

V. CONCLUSION

a. NEXT MEETING AGENDA

The following are on next item on the agenda:

- Tsaile Water Plan
- Survey – Reservation wide workshop for Farm Board
- Financial Report
- Report on Operation and Maintenance Fee

b. NEXT MEETING DATE

- The work session for Farm Board & Water Users is scheduled for Sunday, October 12, 2014 @ noon, Wheatfields Chapter House
- The regular Farm Board and Water User meeting is scheduled for Sunday, October 19, 2014 @ 10am, Wheatfields Chapter House

c. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm.

**Action: Accepted meeting adjournment at 2:55 pm**

**Motioned by Teresa Chee**

**Seconded by Dorthea Litson**

**Voting: 5 yes; 0 no; 1 abstained**

**Motion Carried**

D.