

TSAILE/WHEATFIELDS JOINT FARM BOARD AND WATER USER MEETING  
Sunday September 23, 2018 @2:00 PM  
WHEATFIELDS CHAPTER HOUSE, WHEATFIELDS, AZ

AGENDA

1. 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 of August 30, 2018

RECEIVED

SEP 16 2019

Tsaile/Wheatfields  
Chapter BY: PSB

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 Status Update
  - B. Fencing

- 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. AIF Proposal

- 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. Lula/Melinda Kenny
2. Allen Begay
3. Freddie Sarracino/ Angie Wilson
4. Rena/Carlene Charley

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. WUA Financial Report
- B.

IV. RECEIVING REPORTS

- A. Reports
- B. Announcements

V. CONCLUSION

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

TSAILE/WHEATFIELDS JOINT FARM BOARD AND WATER USER MEETING  
Sunday September 23, 2018 @2:00 PM  
WHEATFIELDS CHAPTER HOUSE, WHEATFIELDS, AZ

MINUTES

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Meeting called to order  
Meeting open at 3:00 pm
- B. Invocation  
Lucinda Davis
- C. Roll Call  
Lorena, Lucinda Present, Emerson Absent  
WUA all absent
- D. Recognition of guest(s) and visiting officials  
All local farmers
- E. Review and adoption of agenda  
Lucinda read the agenda  
Minutes from August 30, 2018 meeting  
Motion to defer the August 30, 2018 minutes to the next meeting and to accept the agenda as is by Melinda Kenny  
Second by Lula Kenny  
Vote: 11 – 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

Lorena went over the crop inventory, the purpose and that we need to all turn the forms in even if we don't plant or if we planted and did not get any crop, we need to report this in our quarterly reports. She explained that out of 110 chapters, only 13 chapters have Farm Board so there are 43 members. The crop inventory in the Plan of Operations of the Farm Board. On the forms it ask what you planted, there are different crops listed, this year we tried hay grazer which is a new crop we did not plant before, there are different vegetable and fruits listed. There is also the problems we have like weeds, deer, bugs, snakes and others that are our problems. This is also related to our Water Rights. Most of the farmers that attended the meeting turned in a crop inventory form. Marie White asked if some planting took place, was there any corn planted, she does not see any of that anywhere. She did not see any hay and harvesting happening.

Lorena told her that planting did take place, some planting took place in May and June, but we did not have enough water. The plan was to plow, level then plant, but most of the farms were not level, her field is like that. In her field the hay grazer was planted then she irrigated. Around the Tribal Fair she was told that her field was ready to cut and bale. She told them to go ahead then she did not hear anything, until during the joint meeting in Navajo, Emerson told her that it was baled and she was told she got 49 bales, but Emerson told her that 60 bales. When she went over there the bales were out on her field and were mold, dark, it looks like it had rained on it and there was 60 bales. We don't have communications with the WUA. There is not enough water for everyone. Marie White said she did hear that there was not enough water for all the farmers and she saw the field in Tsaille that the WUA really worked on and that on seems to have turned out real good, then the hay was cut and baled. She wanted to know how many bales they got from that field and where did the hay go. That field was subleased to the Farm Board she has been watching to see if the hay is stored at the Chapter but no hay has been hauled into the barn at the Chapter, so where is it, at the Litsons? The Farmers are just being cheated. She said there is no leveling done. She is wondering why the Farm Board and the Water Users don't have their meetings together anymore, the plans are not the same anymore.

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

Lorena explained the Wheatfields project and the proposal that was put together to get some funding to help all the farmers to revitalize their farmland. The proposal was a revitalization, sustainability and self-reliance. From the beginning we wanted to know why no one was farming anymore so there was a survey that was done and the number one problem was there was no equipment and the second thing was no money to buy seeds. With that, we put a proposal together to seek funding, we had applied to the Sihasin Funds, but it did not go anywhere although we did presentations to the Standing Committees and we were asking for I believe it was 3.5 million dollars. When the Permanent Trust Funds Income came about, Nelson Begaye presented the proposal to the committees and we were approved for 5 million dollars for five years. Once we were approved, we were asked to do a Fund Management Plan, which we did, then we were told to do an Expenditure Plan and we did that also. Next was a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Navajo Nation and the Water Users Association. The MOA was put together with the help of an attorney name Ed McCool and the MOA was signed on March 6, 2017 by the Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye and WUA President Aaron Begay. At that time we as the Farm Board were working very well with the Water Users Associations. We received the first drawdown on July 14, 2018 in the amount of 1.7 million and in that drawdown we were to hire staff, purchase equipment, a vehicle and fencing. Once

the money was received, the Water Users said they are a Non-Profit Organization and that the money was in their bank account so the Farm Board really did not have a say so in the whole operation. The Personnel Manual was developed and in there it says no nepotism and since Lucinda was a certified assessor with the Navajo Nation, she assessed the applications, but without the Farm Board's knowledge the Personnel Manual was revised by the WUA and to this day we have not received the revised manual. That is when Aaron Begay, Dorthea Litson's husband was hired as the Farm Manager. At that time Dorthea Litson was a Farm Board member and she was also the WUA Board secretary. She then resigned from the Farm Board and the WUA and her husband was the Farm Manager, her two aunts were on the Water Users Association Board. Then her sister Elvira Litson was hired as a Grant Writer, and we have been working with Dine College Land Grant Office and that is run by another family member Benita Litson. The Board Vice President, Anelda Kedelty is Dorthea Litson's aunt and so is the Board Member Amelda Benally that is how this just became a family organization. In the MOA it states that we are to do quarterly reports to turn in that would report how the money was used and balances, but even that became difficult to do now since we have no access to the funds and balances. The last we know is there are over expenditures in four areas which are vehicle purchase, personnel, insurance and consultant, they were supposed to fix that before another drawdown was to take place. On August 12 there was a meeting on how to fix the invoices again, but we don't know what happen at that meeting.

Marie White said it is obvious the project is not going right, even at the WUA meetings it is just the family that approve things which is not right. The equipment that has been purchased are why too big for the farms we have here. What is this going to be is it going to be a business for the family, that is probably what their plan is, that is what most of the farmers are thinking that is why they don't come to the meetings. Lorena said that the last time we tried to have a joint meeting here, the WUA was having a training and after that we were supposed to have a meeting but when I got here the WUA were here and I outside to get my stuff when I was on my way back in Dorthea, her mother and family were going out and Ophelia was following them so I asked her where they were going we were supposed to have a joint meeting and Ophelia said they were having their own meeting and they all left. TJ Holgate use to come to our meetings, he said he was talking for the farmers that don't come to the meetings and afraid to express their thoughts, but he was also told he is just a trouble maker, but he just ask legitimate questions regarding the projects. We had a meeting and some of the WUA were here and at that time we suggested an audit and it was approved through the Farm Board meeting and was submitted. It has been approved by the B & F committee to have an audit, we don't know when the audit will take place, but it will be happening soon.

Leslie Allen asked, so if things don't go the way it should who will be responsible for the money we received should it have to be paid back, will it be the farmers, the Farm Board, the Chapter or the Water Users Association. The Farmers information on their Land Use Permits were used to get the funds. What happens, the way things are going now it does not seem like it is for the farmers but for a certain family. When

the project started, we were all excited and were out there when the fencing started, but when they fencing just stopped and only two strand of barbwire are new the rest are the old rusted one that are put back up. In Lower Wheatfields the fencing was not finished and they said they ran out of funds. The gates were just taken off and they were never replaced. Now we are told to buy your own gates and make sure it is wide enough for the equipment to go through, the equipment are way too big for our farms. Upper Wheatfields only certain ones were plowed and planted, there is not leveling like the proposal said. Who is really benefiting from this funding? What is really happening?

Lucinda explained that the agreement (MOA) is with the Navajo Nation and the Water Users Association. But, again the 127 farmers were supposed to get assistance with this funding. Just a hand full is benefiting from this money. My field was plowed and planted and to this day no one told me about my farm. I just saw areas that are getting green so I guess that means they planted my fields. Zeta is the one that had her field plowed, planted, cut and baled. The plan was to fence all the areas then plow and plant. At this time the equipment are starting to break down, where we will get the money to repair them we don't know. An audit will be done for sure, only one delegate is telling us that we need to reorganize in order for this to work. San Juan Farm Board and Dineh Water Users Associations have an agreement so they are working together. I think this needs to happen here.

Lorena reintegrated what Lucinda said and she explained the percent the Farm Board were supposed to take when they work on your farm depending on whether you helped or not. We are supposed to have transparency, and accountability.

Wesley Begay talked about his aunt's farm that has been subleased to the Farm Board and that is the only place the WUA have been working all summer, but how much they got from that field we don't know. His family are asking if he sold that farm.

Danny John had concerns on the project, he says all the farmers were just used to get the money and now they are just being cheated. Does the WUA even think of the farmers? What do the farmers think? He wants to make a motion to do a resolution to the Budget & Finance Committee to do something about this. Even the O&M cost his high and we cannot afford the fees they are putting out there, now there is a fee that they are implementing to work on your farm. That is outrages.

Leslie ask what Danny John is talking about and Lorena explained that we saw a draft agreement on all the charges on plowing, planting, harvesting and irrigation. Afterward we just heard that it was approved by themselves.

Lucinda told the group that she so happen to come into a meeting where they were talking about, but we just told the people not to sign anything that they are not sure of. We don't know what is going on over there.

Leslie said who do we pay if we get charged, that is another question.

Danny John Jr. said they are a Non-Profit so they are doing whatever they want but they are not supposed to be making money. They don't listen even when you tell them something, what they say goes.

Leslie Allen said what is their motive, is it to start taking farm away from the farmers just because they worked on the field. Eventually this family will own all the farms and start a business, he thinks that is the motive.

Lorena said it is up to us here, what do we want to do, one Delegate says to restructure the organization, we also agree with that. They need to help the farmers equally. Lorena asked Dortha what the motive is, they are educated and her husband is the farm manager, her aunts on the board her sister as a grant writer. She just said I was harassing her. Another farmer said that they are trying to start a business with all the farmers. They will be saying you are not working on your farm so they will be taking the farm under their ownership, just like what Leslie said.

Jimmy Wilson said they have not received an invoice, but now he heard that they owe money. WUA were asking him what he will be planting and he told them there is no water and the growing season is way off so it is hard to say what you will be growing and selling along the road.

Lucinda will be writing the resolution. Danny John to motion to write a resolution to Budget and Finance, second by Malinda Kenny.

Vote: 14 – 0 - 1

B. Fencing

Fencing is not finish in Lower Wheatfields and Upper Wheatfields have not started. Tsail only the one that was subleased to the Farm Board is fenced, but don't think it goes all the way around.

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

The training is still going on being put on the by the Land Grant Office. Even that, the training has a play in the percentage. If you don't go to training, then they will take more hay. This is just information for the farmers.

**2.** Agriculture Infrastructure Funds

The main office is Navajo, NM. The Grant Writer submitted a proposal for 1.8 million. It was a huge proposal we had suggested to do 4 small proposals, but like everyone said they don't listen. There will be a review team that will be reviewing the proposals. Danny asked what kind of training is it.

Lorena explained the types of training and it's mostly conservation plan.

Motion to accept 1 & 2 report by Angie Wilson and second by Danny John, Jr.

Vote: 13 – 0 - 2

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.** ALUP

- a. Lula /Malinda Kenny  
Lula gave her land use permit to Dorthea Litson about 4 years ago and she never got it back. She said she gave it to BIA for them to redo the survey. BIA is supposed to re-survey their farm since part of it has houses on it. It is about 80 acres and that is why their O&M fees is too high. Lorena told her that if it is being resurvey then they will give her a new permit with the correct or changed acreage. Lucinda will check with BIA on this permit and find out what the status is.  
Motion to have Lucinda check with BIA for T-10 and T-11 by Angie Wilson and second by Rena Charley. Votes: 14 – 0 – 1
- b. Allen Begay  
Allen Begay wrote a letter to the Water Users Association to explain his plans for the farm, but the Farm Board was in receipt of it, so the Farm Board will forward it to the Water Users Association, Aaron Begay.  
Motion by Carlene Charley, second by Marlene Charley. Vote: 14 – 0 – 1
- c. Freddie Sarracino  
Freddie did not show but Angie Wilson was there to represent him. She explained that their father, Billy Sarracino wrote a well and the farm was given to Freddie. Freddie then asked Angie and Jimmy Wilson to help him work on the farm, but since then Freddie misplaced the permit so they don't have. This permit is now a quit title, they would have to go through court in order to change the name on it. They will be put on the next meeting agenda, maybe Freddie will find the permit by then.  
Motion by Lula Kenny and second by Wesley Begay. Vote: 14 – 0 – 1
- d. Rena/Carlene Charley  
Rena explained that she and her sister Carlene were on the permit, but Manuel Charley is the one that is working on it. This past summer she ran into some problems with Paul Yoe, whose field is next to theirs. The farm has been survey way back by an individual from BIA who has passed. Manuel knew where their farm starts and it is for 7.10 acres. Manuel was going to work on the fencing and Paul told him it was the wrong place so he asked for resurvey by BIA and they moved the fence toward the Charley's. They had two surveys done and each time they keep moving the fence toward the Charley's which is making their farm smaller. This is in T-17. The Farm Board will ask for BIA to redo the survey and look for the old survey that was done. Charles Chee has a GPS also maybe he can check also.  
Motion to redo the survey by Malinda Kenny and second by Marlene Charley.  
Votes: 13 – 0 -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. None

### III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. WUA Financial Report  
No one showed

IV. RECEIVING REPORTS

None

V. CONCLUSION

- A. Next Agenda Items  
Same as before, just add on Allen Begay and Freddie Sarracino
- A. Next Meeting  
October 14, 2018 at 2 pm
- B. Adjournment  
Adjourn at 6:43 pm