

Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 23, 2024 PM, 1:00 PM-4:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

Voting Board Members Present: Katharine Servidio (designee for Danielle Fitzko, Commissioner, Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation); Charlie Hancock, Vice Chair; Alisha Utter; Donna Young; Bob Lesnikoski; Alison Low (departs 1:20 PM, re-arrives 1:43 PM); Brooke Gladstone; Will Belongia, Alan Calfee; Chris Castano; Megan Camp; Jon Ramsay (departs 2:30 PM)

Voting Board Members not Present: Alyson Eastman (Deputy Secretary, Agency of Agriculture – designee for Anson Tebbetts, Secretary), Chair, Tyler Miller, David Hubbard, Marisa Mauro

Non-Voting Board Members Present: Ellen Kahler (Executive Director, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund); Sarah Isham (Vermont Economic Development Authority; designee for Cassandra Polhemus, CEO); Liz Gleason (designee for Gus Seelig, Executive Director, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, arrives 2:00 PM)

Non-Voting Board Members not Present: Gus Seelig, Executive Director, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board

Staff: Elizabeth Sipple, Kristina Sweet (departs 2:09 PM), Laura Ginsburg, Diana Ferguson, Abbey Willard (arrives at 2:00 PM), Trevor Lowell (arrives at 2:05 PM, departs 3:15 PM), Kristen Brassard (arrives at 2:05 PM, departs 3:10 PM) (Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets)

Guests: None

Members of the Public: None

Elizabeth Sipple calls the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

MOTION to approve minutes from the December 19, 2023 Board meeting – Alisha Utter motions, Brooker Gladstone seconds

MOTION passes by unanimous voice vote

- Alison Low and Bob Lesnikoski abstain

Program Updates – Elizabeth Sipple

Elizabeth Sipple provided an update on current and recent grant applications, impact report development, upcoming legislative hearing, service provider contract activities, and the new WLEB webpage for board meeting agendas and minutes.

Administration Updates – Elizabeth Sipple

Katharine Servidio, FPR

- Final stages of completing Forest Futures Roadmap development work – will be submitted to legislature in upcoming weeks

FY24 Business Grant Review Process Reflections – Elizabeth Sipple

Elizabeth provided an overview of the pilot elements from Business Enhancement Grant review process, and invited WLEB members to share feedback.

DISCUSSION

Presentation on Trade Show Assistance Grants and Agritourism Development - Kristen Brassard

Kristen presented about the Trade Show Assistance Grants (TSAG) and agritourism work through VAAFM and across the state.

DISCUSSION

Business Enhancement Grant Review Reflections, continued – Elizabeth Sipple

Elizabeth facilitated a continued discussion of the Business Enhancement Grant review process.

DISCUSSION

Other Announcements – none

Public Comment – none

Meeting is adjourned by Elizabeth Sipple at 4:01 PM.

Meeting Materials

- *Working Lands Enterprise Board Minutes Draft 12/19/2023*
- *Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Agenda 1/23/2023*