

Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Minutes

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

Microsoft Teams

Voting Board Members Present: Alyson Eastman (Deputy Secretary, Agency of Agriculture – designee for Anson Tebbetts, Secretary), Chair; Charlie Hancock, Vice Chair; Bob Lesnikoski; Chris Castano (departs 3:18pm); Jon Ramsay; Alisha Utter; Will Belongia; Megan Camp; Alan Calfee; Alison Low; David Hubbard; Donna Young (arrives 1:12pm)

Voting Board Members not Present: Tayt Brooks (designee for Lindsay Kurrle, Secretary, Agency of Commerce and Community Development); Oliver Pierson (designee for Danielle Fitzko, Commissioner, Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation); Tyler Miller; Marisa Mauro

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

Non-Voting Board Members not Present: None

Staff: Elizabeth Sipple, Clare Salerno, Diana Ferguson (Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets); Katharine Servidio (Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation)

Guests: None

Members of the Public: None

Alyson Eastman calls the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

MOTION to approve minutes from the March 19, 2024 Board meeting – Charlie Hancock motions, Chris Castano seconds

MOTION passes by unanimous voice vote

- Alison Low, David Hubbard, Alan Calfee, Brooke Gladstone, Megan Camp abstain

Decision Making Overview – Elizabeth Sipple

Elizabeth provided an overview of the Supply Chain Impact Grant and ARPA Primary Producer Impact grant review process and decision-making plan for the day.

Supply Chain Impact Grant Decisions – Elizabeth Sipple

Elizabeth updated the board on the high demand for the Supply Chain Impact Grant and informed the board that there were 14 applicants with a total request of \$2.2M, which is an oversubscription of \$1.5M. Elizabeth informed the board that currently the reviewers are putting forward eight applications for discussion and that those eight applications represent an overspend of \$400k.

Reviewers provided an overview of the eight applications currently recommended, including the business and project overview.

DISCUSSION

MOTION to fund the slate as presented by the board – David Hubbard motions, Donna Young seconds

MOTION carries with unanimous voice vote

- Bob Lesnikoski abstains from voting on LSF Forest Products. Bob discloses that Myers Produce is a customer.
- Jon Ramsay abstains from voting on Champlain Valley Grain Center.

ARPA Primary Producer Impact Grant Decisions – Elizabeth Sipple

Elizabeth Sipple informed the board that there were 11 applicants requesting \$1.6M for the \$812,991 in available funds. Elizabeth Sipple informed the board that grant reviewers are recommending funding for six applications, which represents an overspend of \$31,807.

Elizabeth reminded the board that farmworker housing requests were steered to this pool.

Reviewers provided an overview of the six applications being proposed by reviewers.

DISCUSSION

MOTION to fund the slate as presented by the board– Jon Ramsay motions, Charlie Hancock seconds

MOTION carries with unanimous voice vote.

- Brooke Gladstone abstains from Machia Brothers Dairy.

MOTION to not fund the remaining slate – Will Belongia, David Hubbard seconds

MOTION carries with unanimous voice vote.

- Brooke Gladstone abstains from Machia and Sons Dairy.

Follow Up on Supply Chain Impact Grants – Alyson Eastman

MOTION to not fund the remaining slate – Charlie Hancock motions, Alisha Utter seconds

MOTION carries with unanimous voice vote.

Administration Updates

Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets - Alyson Eastman

Other Announcements – none

Public Comment – none

Meeting is adjourned by Alyson Eastman at 3:54 PM.

- Charlie Hancock motions, Bob Lesnikoski seconds

Meeting Materials

- *Working Lands Enterprise Board Minutes Draft 3/19/2024*
- *Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Agenda 4/23/2024*
- *FY24 ARPA + Supply Chain Impact Grant Full Review spreadsheet*