

Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Notes

Tuesday, May 16, 2023 at 2:30 PM

Microsoft Teams

Voting Board Members Present: Alyson Eastman (Deputy Secretary, Agency of Agriculture – designee for Anson Tebbetts, Secretary), Chair; Charlie Hancock, Vice Chair; Tayt Brooks (Agency of Commerce – designee for Lindsay Kurrle, Secretary) (departs at 3:48PM) ; Katharine Servidio (designee for Danielle Fitzko, Interim Commissioner, Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation); Bob Lesnikoski; Alison Low; Donna Young, Marisa Mauro, Tyler Miller, David Hubbard, Alisha Utter, Megan Camp, Alan Calfee

Voting Board Members not Present: Will Belongia

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

Non-Voting Board Members not Present: None

Staff: Elizabeth Sipple, Clare Salerno, Diana Ferguson, Kristina Sweet, Abbey Willard (Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets); Randall Szott (Agency of Commerce and Community Development)

Guests: None

Members of the Public: None

Deputy Alyson Eastman calls the meeting to order at 2:33 PM.

MOTION to approve minutes from the April 18, 2023 Board meeting – Charlie Hancock motions, David Hubbard seconds

MOTION passes by unanimous voice vote

New Board Member Introduction

Alyson Eastman introduces Alan Calfee, a licensed and professional forester, as the newest WLEB member.

Farmer/Farm Worker Housing Panel

Elizabeth introduces the panel discussion with the purpose of informing WLEB's future funding decisions related to farmer/farm worker housing, including the following panel members:

- Josh Hanford Commissioner, Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development
- Julie Curtin Director of Homeownership, Champlain Housing Trust
- Seth Leonard, Managing Director of Community Development, Vermont Housing Finance Agency
- Jim Bradley, Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC)

Panelists introduce themselves, explain their relationship to farm worker housing, and respond to questions related to this topic and the most meaningful role WLEB could fill as a supporting entity.

Program Updates – Elizabeth Sipple

- WLEB Symposium – June 28th from 9 AM-4 PM at Bread and Butter Farm in Shelburne
- WLEI 10 Year Celebration – August 1st from 4-7 PM at Lareau Farm in Waitsfield

Presentation on Beef-on-Dairy work Supported by WLEI – Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund (VSJF)

- Kevin Channell – project lead
- Mark and Elaine Brisson (farmer)
- Chris Wagner (farmer)
- Roger Osinchuck (project advisor/vet)

Kevin, Mark, Chris, and Roger discussed work to date under VSJF's Beef on Dairy contract and how farms have been impacted.

Administration Updates

- Department of Forests, Parks, Recreation – Danielle Fitzko
- Agency of Commerce and Community Development – Tayt Brooks
- Agriculture, Food & Markets – Alyson Eastman/Abbey Willard

Other Announcements – none

Public Comment – none

MOTION to adjourn – Tayt Brooks motions, Tyler Miller seconds

MOTION passes by unanimous voice vote

Meeting is adjourned by Alyson Eastman at 5:04 PM.

Meeting Materials

- *Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Minutes Draft 4/18/2023*
- *Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Agenda 5/16/2023*
- *Final Report from Beef on Dairy Contract – Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund*
- *Alan Calfee Biography*