

## **AgEP Committee Meeting**

**January 26,2022**

**9:AM**

Present for the meeting Rick Abel Supervisor, Jim McDonald Supervisor, Ed Utterback Supervisor, Jean Conley Associate, H.R. Scott Associate (Video), Andy Price Associate, Chuck Cienawski Supervisor, Sigrid Teets Conservation Specialist, H.R. Scott (Video) Associate Supervisor, Mark Myers (Video) Supervisor, Art Mouser (Video), Chris Ellison WVCA(Video), Jeremy Slayer WVCA(Video) and Dee Altman WVCA

### Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by Chuck Cienawski @ 9:42 AM

Chuck Cienawski stated that getting materials at this time is hard due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. He went on to request that the committee grant an extension to the three cooperators that had applied for Greenhouses, until October 1,2022. Also, that the district pays out of their own funds, with proof from the cooperators of placing the order for greenhouses.

This was followed with an extensive conversation: Rick Abel ask if will still have access to the AgEP funds. Jeremy stated the AgEP funds would be available until the current deadline of May30,2022. Ed Utterback stated if they do not complete their greenhouses, they would just have a pad sitting there for no reason. Jim McDonald stated he would like to opt out on his greenhouse, at this time. Sigrid Teets explained at this time the deadline for completion in May 20,2022., with no extensions. She went on to state that most people just cancel then re-apply the following year. Sigrid stated that one time in West Fork, an extension was granted, and it was not a good thing.

Chuck then stated that we have \$30,000.00 already approved. Mark Myers then stated that we overextended ourselves and we need to be careful with our funds. Ed Utterback stated sometimes cooperators get discouraged and then do not want to work with the districts. Chuck stated that if we do not work with cooperators, this will deter them from coming back to the districts next time. Art Mouser stated he feels we should stay with what we have in place at the current time. Art also stated he does not feel we should use district funds, for this. HR Scott asks what was said by ART and Mark. Rick then paraphrased that Mark feels the money comes to hard and it will open it up for other cooperators to come back on the district for other extensions. Ed Utterback stated that not all districts have funds to complete extensions and pay for them. He also stated this is not fair to all cooperators. Jim McDonald stated that even if he ordered his greenhouse today, he could not have it completed by the May 20,2022, deadline.

Chuck stated that all districts do not have the funds, but this one does. Andy Price stated you do not grow your if you do not use your budget. Rick stated that the completion rate historically is 50-60 %, so this plays into next years budget. Mark Myers stated that he agrees with Sigrid, and to go with what she thinks. Rick stated at this time that all six supervisors are in

this meeting, and all three associates. Rick stated at this time this board has already approved \$117,000.00 dollars for payments. Rick stated how do we get the greenhouse practice up and running, how can we make this work? Rick asks if we can quick start the next year? Jeremy then stated it is still a new application and the ones involved may not rank as high next year. Which this program makes it fair for all. Rick stated the forms need to allow for weights to help cooperators. Jeremy mentioned that maybe MCD have just a greenhouse fund, and not depend on State Funds for that. Ed Utterback stated maybe the MCD set aside a specific dollar amount for AgEP and nothing else, and once that fund was depleted that would be the end. Andy stated he thinks there should be a clause in the agreements to allow for such delays, like supply chains, shipping, etc. Rick stated that NRCS already has a plan in place for project completion. Mark Myers stated that we should set aside 10 or 15% of what's in the actual bank account. Chuck Cienawski then ask if we could extend the deadline for building the greenhouses or use the CDO funds? Ed Utterback suggested to have them cancel and re-apply next year. Andy Price stated we should never have an excessive amount of funds. This needs to be addressed at the state level oof AgEP. Jeremy stated how state funds work for all fourteen district and how AgEP enhancement fit into the programs. Jeremy stated that maybe greenhouses do not fit into AgEP enhancement, but maybe it fits in another avenue.

Chuck Cienawski asks if anyone would like to make a motion to extend the greenhouse deadline. Hearing no motion, this died.

Chuck stated there is one AgEP Payment up for approval that being:

Jordan Lantz for \$ 3,600.00

A motion was made by Jim McDonald, seconded by Ed Utterback. Motion Carried

Sigrid then reviewed all ranking forms, and documented the proposed changes, she will forward them to the state committee for approval.

Art Mouser made a motion to adjourn the meeting @ 12:41 PM.