PMNRCD Board Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2025 – **3:30 PM**
PMNRCD Zoom Number (https://zoom.us/j/9041299305)

Meeting called to order at 3:38 PM
Present: Don Markie, Darryl Kuehne, Katy Crumley, Olivia Carlson, Hilary Solomon, Averie Noble, Sadie Brown, Jaden Groff, and Vicki Pattison.

Absent: Jennifer Alexander and Whitney Burgess (attending conference in Syracuse)

August and September meeting minutes were both approved with no corrections (overview led by Don and Katy). Darryl motioned for their approval which was seconded by Katy. All in favor accepting.

Financial Summary

Hilary presented the FY25 Year-End Report, including graphs and charts showing the categories and amounts of funding and spending with comparisons provided for FY24. This was a follow-up to the end-of-year financial report given in September when the final P & L amounts were presented. Overall District income remained strong, supported by state and federal grants. Federal grant income was lower compared with FY24, which included a large one-time dam removal project. FY25 marks the final year of Pur Projet (private funding) which supports planting projects. Additional income came from nursery sales and Slate Valley Trail rent, and other miscellaneous fees and reimbursements.

FY25 expenses differed significantly from FY24, mainly due to implementation of larger projects, and the addition of two F/T staff members. Personnel costs and project expenses are projected to increase again in FY26 reflecting staff retention, scale of projects and increased investment in training staff. Comparison of projected versus actual FY25 budgets showed higher-than-anticipated grant activity and wage costs, partially offset by lower equipment expenses.

Financial Reporting for Quarter 1, FY26: This report focused on the first quarter of FY 26 (July – Sept, 2025). Hilary reviewed the status of data entry and reviewed data that has been entered up to now. Payroll is up to date and Hilary and Vicki have been working together inputting other non-payroll data into QB. At this point, funds from unpaid invoices (unpaid by our funders) showed a high profit, but the funds (which are expected to arrive slowly over time) should be used up through payroll as they come in, negating actual 'profit'. We are on track to have the next quarter's bookkeeping completed by the January board meeting.

Katy thanked Hilary for her work preparing the financial reports on behalf of the board.
Motions:

- Motion to approve the **FY25 Final Financial Report** (Katy; seconded by Don). *Approved unanimously.*
- Motion to approve the **FY26 Quarter 1 Financial Report** (Katy; seconded by Don). *Approved unanimously.*

Partner Reports

Olivia Carlson (NRCS) – Olivia provided an update on the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NRCS, which updates the 2014 agreement and formalizes locally led partnership expectations (in practice since 2022). Although, in her words, it introduces little new content, it clarifies coordination, promotion & support for Farm Bill programs, outreach, customer service and regulatory consistency. The intent is to further strengthen an already effective partnership.

Olivia also reviewed the Unfunded Cooperative Agreement (UCA), which defines where the "District resides" for ag work and would provide ag staff with access to NRCS Federal office space, shared vehicles and a government laptop to enable secure access to NRCS systems. These resources are intended to support efficient customer service and outreach. Katy requested additional board review prior to moving forward on this. Hilary suggested summarizing key elements of the agreement for circulation to board members for review. Olivia offered to meet with the board to discuss further. **Action/Deadline:** Signed agreements are due to Phylicxia Moore by December 19, 2025 (this has since been extended). Olivia offered to organize office hours with Phylixcia; Hilary felt this was not necessary.

Current VAAFM Ag CWIP RFP: Hilary brought up applying for AgCWIP funding for review by ag staff and the board. In particular questions were raised regarding how this funding compares with e.g., NACD grant funding, including allowable activities under each program.

Angie Allen (DEC) – Not present - No report.

Katie Stiles (RNRCD) – Not present - No report.

Brief Staff Reports

Averie: Averie reported on winter nursery "buttoning-up" activities and preparation of 2026 timesheets. She provided an update on plant sale planning, including tree selection and sales logistics. Averie will manage the Square online store this year and reviewed the nursery website and Square platform with the Board, outlining features such as plant listings with information, online ordering, a mailing list sign-up, and a general merchandise section (e.g., calendars, hats, t-shirts, gift cards). This more automated, updated system is expected to streamline sales and reduce staff time required for nursery operations. Paper orders will still be available for customers who are unable to shop online.

Jaden: Jaden reported on final reporting for summer programs and project activities, including Lake Wise and AIS. Reporting is progressing well; the WCN report requires minor edits and will be completed shortly. The Lake Wise final report is in progress and pending information from the Lake Association.

Vicki: Vicki – Vicki reported that she has been working with Hilary to complete QuickBooks data entry and financial reporting for FY26 Quarter 1. She also provided an update on education and outreach activities, noting that UVM student projects have been successfully completed. Current efforts are focused on completing project outputs for outreach associated with WUV and LCBP staffing grants, including outreach to conservation commissions, town committees, and forest headwater landowners. Upcoming work will also include the South Lake Access Grant and using education and outreach to support Tactical Basin Planning goals.

Sadie: Sadie shared that fall planting projects based in Castleton, Dorset and Fairhaven were completed successfully in November with 1475 trees planted in total. While planting went very smoothly overall, some site-specific constraints were encountered due to changes in staffing (e.g., seasonal staff transitions) and the very short planting window due to the weather. Sadie also worked with Averie to winterize the nursery. Current work includes completing grant metrics for planting projects, conducting plant inventories and preparing for the upcoming spring plant sale with Averie. Sadie has also been

working closely with Sage from Structural Integrity on nursery financial forecasting. They have developed different expense models under multiple scenarios (e.g., entering bids and expanding contracting work, changing staffing). Sadie will create a summary memo for the board and staff to review.

Old Business
Hilary reported on recent improvements to the credit card purchase system which have been implemented, including a centralized purchase log and receipt retainment process to improve tracking and documentation. Looking ahead, Hilary noted the need to strengthen financial oversight and follow-up reporting, with shared responsibility across staff. This is particularly important in anticipation of a potential financial audit next fiscal year as requested by DEC. Dave Dore from Structural Integrity will help PMNRCD put in place improvements and prepare for the audit.

Hilary – Project Updates

- **Fair Haven (FHV-06 Project):** A 33-page invoicing report has been prepared and is under review with RPC. It is expected to be approved next week, enabling final payment to Davenport LLC. Hilary noted Ryan Davenport was a strong partner on the project.
- **Flower Brook:** All fieldwork and data collection are complete. Final reports are pending receipt of conceptual designs for priority projects (seven in Pawlet, six in Danby).
- **AOP Funding:** PMNRCD was successful in receiving funding for the removal of three dams in Fair Haven. Hilary suggested considering additional applications for similar projects.
- **Project Development Potash Bay Grant:** Work continues in collaboration with Rory at Otter Creek NRCD.
- **Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP):** DEC now requests invoices within 30 days, requiring updated timesheets to ensure accurate reporting. RPC turnaround will also be quicker, meaning quarterly reports may need revisions after initial submission.
- **Financial Review and Audit:** Chris R. (DEC) recommended an audit. Katy and Hilary are conducting a financial review, with support from Dave Dore (SI) to prepare for the audit and strengthen HR systems, potentially including a new HR-specific staff role.

New Business

- **Staff Reviews and Position Descriptions:** Staff were asked to review their position descriptions and current grants/projects to ensure roles accurately reflect their work. Hilary noted that contracts will be updated as needed and encouraged staff to share any desired changes or new responsibilities for consideration. A tentative goal is to get the ball rolling on staff reviews by the next Board meeting, with completion in February.

    - **Tech/Website:** Looking into getting the website hosted by another party. Hilary has now received an invoice from Infinity so we can work with PowerShift and/or work with Sage on different options.

Board meeting adjourned at 5pm.