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SPECIAL FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The special meeting was called to order at 4:32pm on Tuesday, February 11th, 2025.

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Shannon Brines, Chair
Hannah Weber, Treasurer
Maegen Gabriel, Secretary

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Matt Nolan, Vice-Chair
Tom Shanahan, Board Director

OTHERS PRESENT

Deborah Shad, Finance Administrator (virtual)
Summer Roberts, Executive Director
Brandon Henes, Elected Director
Patricia Denig, Elected Director (virtual)

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None

OLD BUSINESS

1. Budget/Staffing Scenarios Due to Federal Funding Pause
 - a. TOPP
 - i. Operating without a 2025 contract
 - ii. On 2/6/25, alerted that Q4 Payments would be made and Jan 1- Jan 19 invoice was submitted as requested on 2/7/25
 - iii. Alex and Kim have been using PTO/reducing hours to limit additional liability to WCCD
 - iv. Program is ahead on deliverables
 - v. Alex asked about applying to Seasonal Position; Summer encouraged her to talk to Doug and apply if interested/worthwhile
 - b. MCSFP
 - i. As of 2/10/25, Paul and Anna have moved to other WCCD positions not funded by federal dollars. Megan has been using PTO to limit additional liability to WCCD
 - ii. Program is ahead on deliverables
 - iii. All reporting and invoices for Q4 and January have been submitted, but the NPO cannot process the payments

- iv. Mentioned in Advisory Committee meeting on 2/10/25, stopping work completely may violate contract and give the Federal gov legal grounds to terminate the grant (catch-22: no funds to do work, but can't stop)
- c. Examined 2 scenarios with different timelines for offering staff "leave of absence"/resignation options
 - o Both options pull dollars from Reserve (scenarios are assuming we eventually get paid for work performed; if not, reserve funds are further depleted)
 - Summer to check on COBRA with Corporate Benefit Solutions
 - o Larger organizations are lawyering up to fight in courts, but WCCD doesn't have that capacity
 - o EGLE SHIP grant is moving ahead – some dollars for Admin, but mostly pass through cost-share dollars
 - o NACD funding for Kristen – still in place, DEI component moving forward has been removed, but our previously submitted match will be honored
 - Some concern about NRCS being in a position to do a Cooperative Agreement as planned, but a lot could develop in next 6 months (Kristen is funded through end of FY25)
 - o NPEM
 - Vendor registration has already occurred, can't change fees
 - Can work to get more sponsors and try to bring event as close to net neutral as possible
 - o WCCD Farmer Cost-Share
 - Farmers are already feeling dupped by federal programs pausing payments; keep these if possible
 - o Executive Director will be taking (mostly) un-paid maternity leave this summer; will alleviate some cashflow/budget pressure; would be good to have more support at Admin level during this time
- MIClass Reserve
 - o Started a few years ago because WCCD had over \$250,000 at bank (FDIC only insures up to \$250,000)
 - o Total in Reserve is \$258,768.31
 - o Do we regularly replenish the Reserve? No, past few years we have used interest from Reserve to balance FY budget
 - o Purpose of Reserve – how should these funds be used?
 - Mostly millage dollars, so need to review millage language (Summer will add to Google Drive for Board to review)
 - Holding a reserve is being fiscally responsible – programs and services don't just stop if we hit a rough patch
 - o How to fund in future years?
 - Keep interest in the Reserve
 - Friends of WCCD 501(C)3
- Legislators/Partners
 - o Summer heard back from Georgia Frost, Debbie Dingell's local agricultural aid, who had more questions than answers. She reported that agencies have been instructed not to talk to congressional aids and/or they didn't know/have any information. She said she would keep digging.
 - o Most other CDs don't have as many Federal grants and don't have Reserve funds

- Summer to check with Koffi at GTCD about TOPP; As of 2/10, heard that GTCD was not planning to make any changes to their TOPP position
- Other Climate Smart Projects met to discuss impacts
- Action Items:
 - Board supports 2nd, longer-term option for keeping programs running and shifting staff into other positions
 - If programs do not resume, revisit internal policy about hiring procedures
 - Summer and Deborah will bring a budget amendment to the regular February BOD meeting on 2/20
 - Summer will draft and share leave of absence language with BOD and impacted staff
 - Summer will draft and share Grant Admin position description

NEXT MEETING:

Monthly Board Meeting: Thursday, February 20th at 7:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT: 5:54pm.

THESE MINUTES STAND TO BE APPROVED.

MINUTES APPROVED

2/20/25

APPROVAL SIGNATURE: _____

