

SnoValley Tilth
February 22, 2021 - Zoom
Board Meeting Minutes



6:30 Call to Order, minutes approval from January 2021 (Petrina)

6:37 Meeting called to order

Dave Glenn, Petrina Fisher, Lindsay Warshaw, Bruce Ford, James Berntson, Alice VanderHaak in attendance. Vince Caruso joins at 6:40, Dave Casey joins at 6:45

Lindsay moves to approve the minutes as written, James Seconds. Unanimous Approval.

6:40 Public comment (Petrina)

Patrick Lehr emailed in asking for SVT public comment to bring to light the farmer strikes in India. Petrina suggests coming up with a general statement related to farmer issues to refer back to for such events & the Communications Committee establishing guidelines for the future when things come up.

6:50 Directors Report (Dave)

- Member Services & Programs
 - Dave spoke with Deepa Iyer, the New Roots Program Manager from International Rescue Committee where they work with immigrant & refugee farmers. Their farmers are hoping to do some exchanges with established farmers especially around issues related to farming in the floodplain.
 - Reminder about the AUCTION
 - Farm Services - Bruce Ford gave tour and happy hour of Molly Bear Farms. He will also be sharing in a lambing intensive.
 - Looking for hosts for virtual farm tours.
 - 20 candidates for the Farm Services Manager Position. 3 interviews already complete. The position won't be offered until approved by the board. The plan is to do a brief second-round interview with the 2 top candidates.
 - Buyer's site - weathered the season well. March 8 USDA & Tilth Alliance tour to highlight work at the site
 - Advocacy
 - New SVPC executive director is on FFF. Dave continues to attend meetings and Libby Reed serves on caucus
 - Organizational Strength
 - Grant prospects and reporting
-

-
- Received \$32,000 in PPP loan.
 - Dave G hopes to raise an additional \$50k in 2021 to meet our needed goal.
 - Biz Impact Northwest wrote SVT into a grant with King County for \$5,000 for technical and biz support for farmers.
 - Membership Campaign kicking off next week through the end of March to grow membership roster.
 - Send 1-3 sentence quote about importance of SVT membership to you and farm biz WITH a photo (for social media)
 - Review the list of current/recent members. Thank current members and invite lapsed members back into the community
 - Lapsed members have received notice that they are lapsed
 - Will receive an email directly from Dave
 - Membership Goal: 12 new members, 12 renewals
 - Will need to vacate office space in September/October

Did not receive KCD funding this round (\$20,000)

Invited to apply for second round of the Specialty Crop Block Grant (due March 22nd) to support education work and Buyer's site. Grant focused around season extension

3 grants submitted since last board meeting (4 total in 2020) with no word on these yet.

Questions:

Dave C - wondering what current membership is at. Currently 61 on the list.
Petrina asks about member benefits & Dave G shares the new member services coordinator will help improve offerings

Petrina suggests members can list job openings - non members could pay for listings.

Dave C suggests a member-only log-in page on the website to minimize emails but this may require a different website platform

Bruce Ford - suggests launching a drive and hitting it home on all our platforms.

Dave G shares plans for social media & email

7:05 2020 Finances (Dave)

- SVT able to reduce expenses below what was budgeted in 2020. Below on income by \$40,000 and down on expenses by \$100,000 which put us in the black by about \$53,000

Questions About the Budget:

\$191,000 in the bank today (with PPP loan disbursement)

Petrina - asking if we have or need an official reserve policy for times of surplus.

Dave G. feels that would be a good step for the organization and in-line with other non-profits that keep 6mos.-12mos. operating expenses in the bank.

Dave C. suggests formulating a board resolution

Bruce Ford - suggests looking at current monthly spending rate to determine 6 month & 12 month spending to come up with a draft plan. Will bring findings to the next board meeting.

Vince clarifies that we're suggesting coming up with a specific reserve related to operating expenses. Brings up need to create a policy around regular review to ensure reserves stay up to date as spending changes over time.

Dave G shares that a policy will be helpful tool to further explain finances to potential and/or current funders.

7:50 Board goal setting (Petrina)

Revisit personal goals for participation & the auction

Overall goals - board fundraising contribution & committee participation

Creating a check-in schedule to follow-up

7:25 Committee reports (Committee chairs)

- Fundraising Committee - Lindsay
 - Auction - Virtual Auction (June 3rd - 6th)
 - Online Auction - bid on items
 - Participatory Live event for folks to attend
 - Idea for member/seattle restaurants to team up with farmers
 - Cooking class/event
 - Revisiting "Table Captain" verbiage, but thinking about how folks can host their "pods"
 - Requests from board members coming soon
 - Recruiting sponsorships
 - Donating Items to the Auction - Petrina
 - Check-in with Petrina
 - Petrina will be following up about past donations
- Board Development Committee
- Communications Committee - Alice
 - Working on setting up an initial meeting with Dave G & Petrina to discuss goals & objectives for the year
- EFP Committee - Dave C.
 - Waiting for Sean to get back to work to begin committee meetings

-
- Suggests members of EFP serve on the committee as well as whoever is working on the KCD grant.
 - Livestock Committee
 - Bruce shares that Christeena Meerzof will join the committee
 - Dr. Laura has agreed to present in September
 - Petrina suggests putting together a 2-3 sentence description about each committee, and a meeting schedule.
 - That can be shared with the list-serv
 - Set up a few goals that can be achieved this year

8:05 Office Space Discussion (Dave)

Background: Carnation city hall will be deconstructed and then rebuilt. Will need to vacate space in September or October in 2021.

The intention is to rebuild a 3 story building with the second story earmarked for community space. The city hopes the tenants of the second floor come back after construction. Current plan is for second floor to be “gray space” with the tenants doing their own build-outs to suit their individual needs. The same square footage would be available. Do not yet have financials on cost of build and scope of build-out. Lease terms are not yet set, but their intention is to keep it below going rate.

Learning more about the new space and exploring new options. Petrina suggests the Executive Committee convene to discuss the long-term plan.

There is some urgency to create a timeline and stick to it. It could be budget impacting if the space is more costly. The current lease is \$175 for 800 square feet including electricity, heat, and water.

Send any thoughts or space suggestions to Dave G or the executive committee

- Revisiting the Farm Services Manager Position:
 - Dave poses to the board if we’re comfortable hiring for that position in March given our current budget and financial projections - All board members present are in support of moving forward.

8:15 Beyer’s Site Lease (Dave)

Anticipated lease still has not been provided by King County

8:20 Updates from partners
(WID, SVFC, KC Ag Commission, CCF, Carnation Farms, SCD, FFF, Oxbow)

SVPA - Looking at what programs they'll be undertaking in the next years. Opportunities for collaboration
Potentially interested in a temporary partnership in office space

KC Ag Commission - Presentation on King County Farm Land lease program which included Buyers' Site
FFF - this coming week

8:30 Adjourn

Meeting Adjourned At 8:08

Next meeting: March 22, 2021

Location: Zoom

Time: 6:30-8:30pm