



NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

10 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-3201

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD MEETING **TUESDAY, August 9, 2022** **11:00 am**

Board Members Present by Phone:

Sabina Haskell, Chair; Brad Aldrich, Vice Chair; Steve Larrabee, Member; Andrew Collier, Member

ABSENT

Don Turner, Member

Staff Present:

Alison Stone, General Counsel; Jenny Ronis, Associate General Counsel; Aaron Brondyke, State Coordinator; Katie Emerson, Legal Technician

Members of the Public:

Thomas Weiss
Ellen Czajowski, office of legislative counsel
Annette Smith, Vermonters for a Clean Environment

The Vermont Natural Resources Board convened at 11:02 a.m. via Microsoft Teams, Chair Sabina Haskell presiding.

I. 11:02 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

Members of the Board and staff introduced themselves.

II. 11:05 a.m. Opportunity for public to comment and agenda and non-agenda items.

Annette Smith spoke about quarries and staffing concerns. She said that she regularly hears from neighbors to quarries who are frustrated about filing complaints that never seem to go anywhere. Ms. Smith brought this issue to the board about a year ago. Ms. Smith has also heard from people that district coordinators are difficult to reach by phone. She has concern about staffing issues and the program being overwhelmed.

Chair Haskell addressed changes in staff this year, there were several internal promotions. While there is currently only one enforcement and compliance officer, the second round of enforcement officer interviews are taking place next week. The NRB also has approval for three limited-service positions (two district coordinators and one executive director). Staff are in midst of those interviews. Hope to bring two district coordinators on board in next 30 days.



The level of permit applications is consistent with past years. Staff are preparing for an increase in applications with federally funded projects coming down the pipeline. District coordinators not reachable by phone is something we are working to address.

Ms. Annette Smith reiterated that when quarry related cases are brought to enforcement, the neighbors don't know what's going on. Compliance in the past happened regularly and prevented some issues from escalating. Problems with quarries threatening neighbors. She emphasized that the NRB is the only entity that regulates blasting, so we are the only avenue for relief.

III. 11:18 a.m. Review and action on Minutes of July 12, 2022

A motion to approve the minutes of the Tuesday, July 12, 2022 meeting was made by Mr. Andrew Collier and seconded by Mr. Brad Aldrich. However there was not a quorum of board members who were present at the July meeting so this was tabled for the next meeting.

The draft minutes on the website were not available due to a broken link. It will be fixed shortly.

IV. 11:20 a.m. NRB office and budget updates

Chair Haskel has been meeting with external stakeholders: Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC), Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB), Evernorth, District Commissions. Staff are also starting preliminary work for the two legislative studies. The study on agricultural on-site businesses is due January 1, 2023. Chair Haskel has been meeting with colleagues at the Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets (AAFM).

The study on necessary updates to Act250 is due December 31, 2023, staff are just starting conversations with the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD).

V. 11:24 a.m. Discussion of appeals, enforcement, and attorney-client memoranda

There were no legal/enforcement matters requiring the board's attention.

VI. 11:25 p.m. Adjourn

At 11:25 a.m., Mr. Brad Aldrich made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Andrew Collier, and unanimously approved by the Board.