

**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
DRAFT MINUTES
APRIL 15, 2024**

The April meeting of the State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order by Chairman Edward Wengryn at 9:37 A.M. Mr. Minch stated that the Open Public Meetings Act requirements have been met. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. adequate notice of this meeting was provided by giving the time, date, and location and to the extent known the agenda of this meeting. At least 48 hours in advance this notice has been posted on the front door of the 200 Riverview Building in Trenton; mailed to The Star Ledger, the Courier Post and filed with the Office of Secretary of State.

The Flag Salute was recited.

Call of the Membership Roll indicated the following:

Members Present

Edward Wengryn

Joe Lomax

Sylvia Kovas

Louise Davis

Dr. Stephanie Murphy (rep. L. Lawson)

Dennis Contios (rep. S. LaTourette)

Ray Cywinski

Cormac Morrissey

Mike Rigolizzo

Erika Boyland, NRCS

Frank Minch, Division Director

Diana Diaz, SSSC, NJDA

Tim Fekete, SSSC, NJDA

Sara Mellor, SSSC, NJDA

Tim Thomas, Freehold SCD

Ines Zimmerman, Freehold SCD

Matt Ward, HEP SCD

Rick Dovey, C/A SCD

Mike Kent, C/A SCD

C. Raabe, Ocean SCD

Jean Baluski, Ocean SCD

M. D'Alessandro, S/U SCD

J. McCulloch, Morris SCD

J. Rekesius, HEP SCD

D. Caldwell, Burlington SCD

Craig McGee, Camden SCD

M. Bonham, C/S SCD

J. Hill, Hunt. SCD

P Califano, Freehold SCD

MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2024 MEETING

On motion by Mr. Rigolizzo, second by Mr. Lomax, the minutes of the March 11, 2024 meeting were approved.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Secretary Wengryn introduced himself to the State Committee and reviewed his agriculture background and education.

DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Minch reported on the following:

1. **Camden Supervisor Appointment-** On motion by Ms. Davis, second by Mr. Lomax, Christopher Martin, an engineer from Haddon Township, was appointed to the Camden County SCD Board. Mr. Rigolizzo abstained.
2. **Supervisor Renominations-** Letters will be sent shortly regarding expiring terms. The information must be submitted by the end of May for consideration at the June meeting.
3. **District Audits-** Ms. Díaz reported there were 4 audits outstanding (Bergen, Freehold, Hunterdon and Ocean). These audits are in the process of SCD review or just submitted to SSCC staff review within the last few days.

SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT

1. **2:00 Rules-** A summary of the updates, changes and modifications was distributed at the March SSCC meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Kovacs, second by Ms. Davis, to submit the updated rules for internal legal review.
2. **Engineering Report-** Mr. Showler's report provided a brief overview regarding some of his recent activities including District and engineering assistance, Standards update and agricultural assistance to the Freehold SCD.
3. **Exempt Municipalities Report-** Several reports have been submitted but SSCC staff is still awaiting the balance.

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)

Ms. Boyland reported on the following:

1. Solicitations for RCPP proposals are due July 2, 2024.
2. A selection has been made for the RCPP coordinator.
3. A selection has been made to fill the Woodstown District Conservationist vacancy.
4. The NRCS Chief and Regional Conservationist visited New Jersey and participated in a roundtable discussion, site visits and farm visits.

DISTRICT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

Mr. D'Alessandro reported on the following:

1. The March 14th virtual meeting was well attended.
2. Paul Califano will be conducting Plan Review Training on April 17th. 14 individuals have signed up for the training.
3. Quarterly training sessions are being planned.
4. On-line virtual meetings every 2 months have been proposed.

NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (NJACD)

Mr. Dovey and Mr. Cywinski reported on the following:

1. The DC "Fly In" was held on March 20th. The NJ delegation met with various Congressional offices.
2. Regional meetings are taking place this month.
3. The NJ Envirothon is being held May 18th. The Freehold District is hosting the function. To date, 16 teams are participating.
4. Mr. Cywinski reported there were 39 applications submitted for Urban and Community Conservation Grants. Reviewing and ranking will take place this week.
5. NACD requested from Congress \$1.2 billion funding to NRCS and fully funding the 2025 Farm Bill.
6. On April 3rd the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture announced a \$1.5 billion investment in conservation and climate solutions through RCPP.
7. The N.E. Regional NACD meeting is scheduled for August in Boston.
8. The NACD Legislative Committee is looking into how co-located SCD and NRCS offices can stay open during Federal government shutdowns.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Contois reported that 4 Environmental Engineers have been hired. The newly appointed Camden County SCD Board member is one of those hirees. The Coastal Regulations are being worked on and are not completed.

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Dr. Murphy reported on the following:

1. A Climate Summit was held at Duke Farms on April 10th.
2. The 33rd Annual Turfgrass Symposium was held on March 14th.
3. The deadline to register for the 28th Turfgrass Research Golf Classic is today.
4. The nationwide release was held for the Fertilizer Recommendation Support Tool (FRST), a decision-aid that provides an unbiased, science-based interpretation of soil test phosphorus and potassium values for crop fertilization.
5. Rutgers/Ag. Field Day is scheduled for April 27th.

PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS

Ms. Davis introduced the new Morris County SCD Manager, Jennifer McCulloch.

Ms. Raabe reported the Barnegat Bay Roundtable is scheduled for April 17th. Approximately 75 individuals have signed up.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 AM. All actions were by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted. The next SSCC meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Minch, Division Director