**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

 **MINUTES**

**TELE-CONFERENCE**

**JANUARY 11, 2021**

The January meeting of the State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order by Chairman Douglas Fisher at 9:33 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**

Secretary Douglas Fisher John Showler, SSCC, NJDA

Joe Lomax Tim Fekete, SSCC, NJDA

Matt Ward Mike Kent, Cape Atlantic SCD

Julie Hawkins, NRCS R. Reitmeyer, Burlington SCD

Dr. Stephanie Murphy (rep L. Lawson) Louise Davis, Morris SCD

Ray Cywinski Mike DePalma, Hunterdon SCD

Sylvia Kovacs Christine Raabe, Ocean SCD

Tony DiLodovico Glen Van Olden, HEP SCD

Mike Rigolizzo Mario Tridente, HEP SCD

John Kocubinski Lily Mehl, NJACD

Mike Haberland (rep. B. Schilling) Jim Hill, Hunterdon SCD

Keith Stempfel (rep. S. LaTourette)

Frank Minch, Executive Secretary

 **MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 9, 2020 MEETING**

On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Mr. Ward, the minutes of the November 9, 2020 meeting were approved.

**CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS**

Secretary Fisher reported on the following:

1. Thanked Dennis Dougherty for his effort and hard work as President of NJACD. Louise Davis will succeed Mr. Dougherty as NJACD President.
2. In December NJDA moved from downtown Trenton to Riverview Plaza (Several buildings from Arm & Hammer Park aka Mercer County Waterfront Park).
3. The U.S. Congress acknowledged the loss of a hero, NJ native, Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick, in the tragic storming of the U.S. Capitol Building on January 6, 2021.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Mr. Minch reported on the following:

1. Officer Sicknick was the brother of former SCD employee Ken Sicknick. Mr. Sicknick worked for the Morris, HEP and Ocean SCDs. The NJ State Soil Conservation Committee offers its sincerest condolences to Mr. Sicknick on the loss of his brother.
2. **SSCC 2021 Calendar**- On motion by Mr. Ward, second by Mr. Lomax, the 2021 SSCC meeting calendar was approved (The SSCC will meet on the following dates, Jan. 11th, March 8th, April 12th, June 14th, Sept. 13th. and Dec. 13th.).
3. **Supervisor Performance Standards-** The recommended changes to the Supervisor Performance Standards and Nominating Committee were distributed to the Districts for review and comment. To date, three formal responses have been received. The proposed changes to the Nominating Committee include the make-up of the Committee (rotating Committee persons and broadening the scope of participation). Attendance to annual meetings and Business meetings will still be required but the point system has been eliminated. The District will have 12 months to fill any Supervisor vacancies. If not filled within that timeframe, the SSCC will fill the vacancy. On motion by Mr. Ward, second by Dr. Murphy, the comment period has been extended to the end of February. The motion was amended by Mr. Cywinski to state any approved revisions to the Supervisor Performance Standards would carry an effective date of July 1, 2021. A roll call vote was taken, Ms. Kovacs, Dr. Murphy, Mr. Cywinski, Mr. DiLovidico, Mr. Haberland, Mr. Kocubinski, Mr. Lomax, Mr. Rigolizzo, Mr. Stempfel and Mr. Ward all voted yes. Mr. Ward suggested the Supervisor Performance Stands be reviewed periodically to ensure they’re up to date and working.
4. **Hunterdon SCD Supervisor Appointment-** A lengthy discussion was held regarding the Hunterdon SCD Appointment. On motion by Mr. Ward, second by Mr. Lomax, the Hunterdon SCD Supervisor appointment was tabled due to procedural questions. A roll call vote was held,

 Ms. Kovacs (yes), Dr. Murphy (yes), Mr. Cywinski (no), Mr. DiLovidico (yes), Mr. Haberland (yes), Mr. Kocubinski (no), Mr. Lomax (yes), Mr. Rigolizzo (no), Mr. Stempfel (abstain) and Mr. Ward (yes).

SSCC MINUTES- JANUARY 11, 2021- PAGE 2

 **SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT**

1. **Engineering Report-** Mr. Showler provided a brief engineering report regarding some of his recent activities including district assistance, especially to the Bergen, Freehold and Upper Delaware SCDs. A task force has been assembled to review the current version of the Standards for the purposes of determining how changes might be made to allow the Standards which deal with offsite erosion and infiltration might be updated so as not to be in conflict with NJDEP rules and BMPs.

**CONSERVATION EDUCATION**

Mr. Minch reported that the Freehold SCD is in charge of the 2021 NJ Envirothon which will be a virtual event.

**NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE**

Ms. Hawkins provided an update on NRCS programs and, also, reported on the following:

1. New Jersey NRCS received 450 EQIP applications in the fall of 2020.
2. New Jersey NRCS has been allotted $3 million for the ACEP Program. Applications are being accepted through February 5, 2021.
3. Personnel- Dave Lamm and Dan Mull have retired. Christine Hall has been chosen to serve a 2-year detail as the National Innovation Director, working with NRCS leadership to develop a multi-year National Innovation Strategy. Evan Madlinger is acting State Resource Conservationist.

**NJ ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

Ms. Davis reported on the activities of the NJACD including the following:

1. **Regional Meetings-**It’s hoped the 2021 regional meetings could be held in person, possibly in April or May.
2. The NJACD Meeting will be held after the SSCC meeting.

**RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

Mr. Haberland reported on the following:

1. Rutgers Cooperative Extension is holding their annual conference this week.
2. Extension classes are being held predominantly on-line.
3. Most Extension programs are being held virtually.

**SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**

Dr Murphy reported on the following:

1. Teaching continues remotely.
2. There are limited “in person” classes.
3. The University is facing a severe deficit. Furlough programs are being enacted.
4. A webinar will be held by the NJ Turfgrass Association on February 10th.
5. Several webinars will be held January 19th, including Assessing Soil Health: On-Farm Economics.
6. Rutgers Department of Environmental Sciences was named winner of the 2020 Governor’s Environmental Excellence Award, in the Environmental Education (Educator Led) category.

**PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS**

1. Mr. Cywinski reported that the NACD Annual Conference will be held virtually from February 1 to February 10th. Registration is $50.
2. Mr. Ward expressed his gratitude to NRCS for championing urban agriculture.
3. Anyone calling into the SSCC meeting who hasn’t been identified by name, please notify Mr. Minch to be included in the meeting attendance.

SSCC MINUTES- JANUARY 11, 2021- PAGE 3

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 AM. All actions were by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted.

The next SSCC meeting is scheduled for March 8, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Minch

Executive Secretary, SSCC

SSCC MINUTES- JANUARY 11, 2021- PAGE 4