**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

 **DRAFT MINUTES**

**SEPTEMBER 12, 2022**

The September meeting of the State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order by Chairwoman Sylvia Kovacs 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** John Showler, SSCC, NJDA Sylvia Kovacs Tim Fekete, SSCC, NJDA

Joe Lomax Sara Mellor, SSCC, NJDA

Julie Hawkins Matt D’Alessandro, S/U SCD

Louise Davis L. Tessieri, N. Jersey RC&D

Mike Haberland (rep. B. Schilling) Mike Kent, Cape Atlantic. SCD

Dennis Contios (rep. S. LaTourette) Lily Mehl, NJACD

Mike Rigolizzo Tim Thomas, Freehold SCD

Ray Cywinski John Kocubinski

Frank Minch, Division Director

 **MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2022 MEETING**

On motion by Mr. Rigolizzo second by Mr. Lomax, the minutes of the June 13, 2022 meeting were approved with the following corrections: Ms. Davis indicated that the Soil Health webinar was held for legislators. Mr. Cywinski indicated the meeting was in-person & not a teleconference. Mr. Kocubinski and Mr. Cywinski both abstained.

**CHAIRWOMAN’S COMMENTS**

Ms. Kovacs announced the passing of Dennis Dougherty (Camden SCD Supervisor and SSCC Board member) and offered condolences.

Mr. Cywinski spoke about Mr. Dougherty and provided some words of sympathy and emphasized Mr. Dougherty was an extremely hard-working, conscientious, dedicated and sincere individual.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Mr. Minch reported that with all the various new initiatives, Secretary Fisher would like the NJACD to choose a subject to cohesively come together and to engage in a specific initiative.

Mr. Cywinski suggested NJACD survey membership and rank initiative options.

 **SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT**

1. **Supervisor Appointments**- Camden SCD- Ed Madden stepped down. The local Nominating Committee voted to nominate Mr. Fran Chismar to a three-year term to the Camden County Soil Conservation District Board. On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Ms. Davis, Mr. Chismar was appointed to the Camden SCD Board. A roll call vote was taken, all members voted yes with the exception of Mr. Rigolizzo, he recused from the vote.

HEP SCD – Mario Tridente stepped down. The local Nominating Committee voted to nominate Mr. Tobias Fox to a three-year term to the HEP Soil Conservation District Board. On motion by Mr. Cywinski, second by Ms. Davis, Mr. Fox was appointed to the HEP Board.

Ocean SCD- Gary Paxton has stepped down. The local Nominating Committee voted to nominate John Tiedemann to a vacant position to the Ocean SCD District Board. On motion by Ms. Davis, second by Mr. Rigolizzo Mr. Tiedemann was appointed to a three-year term on the Ocean SCD Board.

1. **Engineering Report-** Mr. Showler provided a brief overview regarding some of his recent activities including an early draft standard for managing erosion and stormwater on solar array installations. In addition, Mr. Showler has prepared and summarized comments and recommendations regarding the potential adoption of emergency rules for flood hazard and stormwater permitting. He has been asked to assist the NJAFM Stormwater Committee in developing comments both on the matter of the NJPACT emergency rules as well as ongoing discussions on the current state of research on stormwater management and modeling methods. Mr. Showler continues with district assistance, training and field visits.

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 **NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE**

Ms. Hawkins reported on the following:

1. NRCS will be holding a 3-day training session (October 18-20) at the Plant Materials Center. This training is open to SCD staff. The 2nd day will be devoted to RUSLE training and the 3rd day will be with SADC staff and discuss NCPP (National Conservation Planning Partnership) and a renewed emphasis on conservation planning.
2. Conservation Planner Certification training is planned for 2023.
3. Mr. Minch reported that he is working with the Training Committee regarding soils training for district staff. A tentative timeframe is to hold this training session in October or November.

**NJ ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

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

1. NJACD is working with Dennis Dougherty’s family and the Camden SCD to retrieve files and information that was in Dennis’ possession at the time of his death.
2. Livingston High School competed at the national level and placed 13th in the National Envirothon.
3. Financial and personnel support for the NJ Envirothon is lacking. This may result in the cancellation of the 2023 NJ Envirothon.
4. Mr. Cywinski reported on NACD activities including NACD policy rules review which is ongoing, organizational and structural changes to NACD including a change that will open committees to SCD staff. Four districts from NJ were represented at the North-East Regional Conference in Maryland. Several breakout sessions at the conference centered on urban agriculture. There is a growing interest and importance to the topic of urban agriculture,

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Mr.Contois reported that DEP has lost staff to more lucrative positions in the private sector. There are issues with backfilling those vacancies and training personnel that are hired.

**RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

Mr. Haberland reported on the following:

1. A new agent has been hired in Cape May County.
2. There are 6 candidates for the Somerset County Extension Agent position. Interviews are being conducted.
3. There are 4 candidates for the Morris County Extension Agent position. Interviews are being conducted.
4. The northern NJ IPM position has been re-advertised.

**SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**

Dr. Murphy was not in attendance but submitted a written report which was disseminated to SSCC members and attendees of today’s meeting.

**PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS**

Tim Thomas (Freehold SCD) reported that an effort is being made to revive the NJ Employees Association.

A skills inventory assessment will be sent to all SCD employees.

Mr. Cywinski recognized District Manager, Glen Van Olden (HEP SCD) who recently retired after 37 years with the district.

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The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM. All actions were by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted.

The next SSCC meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Minch, Division Director

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