**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

 **MINUTES**

**TELE-CONFERENCE**

**NOVEMBER 9, 2020**

The November meeting of the State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order by Chairman Douglas Fisher at 9:30 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 Health and Agriculture 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 D. Dougherty, Camden SCD

Julie Hawkins, NRCS Gina Berg, Burlington SCD

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

Ray Cywinski Matt D’Alessandro, HEP SCD

Sylvia Kovacs Christine Raabe, Ocean SCD

Tony DiLodovico Glen Van Olden, HEP SCD

Mike Rigolizzo Sandy Myers, Upper Delaware SCD

John Kocubinski Lily Mehl, NJACD

Mike Haberland (rep. B. Schilling)

Frank Minch, Executive Secretary

 **MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2020 MEETING**

On motion by Mr. Ward, second by Mr. Kocubinski, the minutes of the September 14, 2020 meeting were approved with the following corrections, Dr. Murphy represents Dr. Laura Lawson. In addition, Dr. Murphy submitted a short report to the SSCC.

**CHAIRWOMAN’S COMMENTS**

Secretary Fisher reported that the SADC is close to finishing their work on Soil Improvement Standards.

The Secretary also indicated that the work of the Districts is extremely important and has a positive impact on the environment.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Mr. Minch reported on the following:

1. **Annual Conference-** The Annual Conservation Conference will be held virtually next Monday, November 16th. Tomorrow a dry run on Teams will take place to ensure everything operates smoothly.
2. **Executive Order 192-** This Executive Order went into effect last week. This is guidance and protocol for public agencies operating safety during the pandemic and has been distributed to Districts for implementation.
3. **Supervisor Performance Standards Work Group-** The Sub-Committee has met several times and come up with three recommendations.
* Supervisors will be required to attend two Regional Supervisor meetings and two NJACD business meetings during their term of appointment.
* The point system will be eliminated.
* Districts shall have 12 months to fill a supervisor vacancy.

 On motion by Mr. Ward, second by Ms. Kovacs, the proposed modification to the Supervisor

 Performance Standards will be sent to the Districts for review and comment. The comment period

 will be 60 days.

 A brief discussion was held. It was emphasized that there should be a rotation of the Supervisor

 Nominating Committee members to ensure there is a fresh perspective. Districts should make

 Every effort to fill vacancies within 12 months. If not, it is recommended that the SSCC appoint

 a supervisor to fill the vacancy. For transparency, nominations should be made in accordance

 with Roberts Rules of Order.

1. **Executive Committee-** The Executive Committee is a sub-set of the SSCC. Its function is to

 discuss issues of concern and set priorities of matters to be brought to the full committee. The

members of this committee include Ms. Kovacs, Mr. DiLodovico, Mr. Dougherty, Mr. Rigolizzo, Mr. Lomax and Mr. Minch.

 **SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT**

1. **Permit Extension Act Update-** Mr. Minch provided an update regarding the Permit Extension Act which went into effect on March 9, 2020. There is a public notice in the NJ Register. Applicants have until December 2, 2020 to register.
2. **Engineering Report-** Mr. Showler provided a brief engineering report regarding some of his recent activities including district assistance, upcoming Annual Conference training and a new change at DEP being implemented is the use, and credit for, infiltration to reduce peak flows. With this adoption, NJDEP rules and NJDA Standards are not in agreement. On motion by Mr. DiLodovico, second by Ms. Kovacs, a subcommittee/task force is charged to review and propose amendments to the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Standards.

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**NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE**

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

1. New Jersey NRCS has received their 2021 allocation which is approximately $10 million.
2. New Jersey NRCS is managing approximately 1,700 active contracts.

**NJ ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

Mr. Dougherty reported on the activities of the NJACD including the following:

1. The Annual Conservation Conference will be held virtually on November 16th. NRCS will host the

 morning session and the Ocean SCD will be hosting the afternoon breakout sessions. All access

 codes will be on the NJACD website.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

Mr. Cywinski reported on the following:

1. The NACD Annual conference will be held virtually from February 1 through February 10th.
2. Mini grants ($2,500) are available. The information is on the NACD website.
3. Mr. Lomax reported that all resolutions must be submitted to NACD by December 31st. Resolutions must be submitted through the State Association

**RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

Mr. Haberland reported on the following:

1. Delivering programs during the pandemic has been a challenge. Extension is emphasizing soil health and conservation among other priorities.
2. Remote education will continue.
3. A County Extension Agent has been hired in Salem County. Previously, the position was vacant for 2 years.
4. A Program Associate has been hired in Burlington County.

**SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**

Dr Murphy reported on the following:

1. The NJ State Climatologist reported that the summer of 2020 ranked as the second warmest summer on record.
2. Rutgers University is facing the most significant and substantial shortfall in the University’s history. The deficit is projected to be at least $97 million.
3. Teaching and meetings are being conducted virtually.
4. The Task Force on Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience will be holding a virtual 2-day meeting on November 11 and 12th.

**PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS**

1. Ms. Kovacs reported on an article addressing the climate crisis published in the Smithsonian magazine.
2. Mr. Van Olden requested ID badges for 3 new employees. The previously utilized system is no longer supported by NJDA. For now, a letter signed by Sec. Fisher should suffice.

Secretary Fisher expressed a desire to have an upcoming meeting through Microsoft Teams.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:41 AM. All actions were by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted.

The next SSCC meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Minch

Executive Secretary, SSCC

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