**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

 **DRAFT MINUTES**

**DECEMBER 11, 2023**

The December meeting of the State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order by Assistant Secretary Joe Atchison at 9:31 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** Sara Mellor, SSCC, NJDA

Joe Atchison Tim Fekete, SSCC, NJDA

Joe Lomax Matt D’Alessandro, S/U SCD

Craig Chianese NRCS (rep E. Madlinger) Mike Kent, C/A SCD

Dr. Stephanie Murphy (rep L. Lawson) Christine Raabe, Ocean SCD

Ray Cywinski R Reitmeyer, Burl. SCD

Louise Davis Tim Thomas, Freehold SCD

John Kocubinski I. Zimmerman, Freehold SCD

Dennis Contois (rep. S. LaTourette) C. Buscaglia, Freehold SCD

Sylvia Kovacs Mike Bonham, C/S SCD

Mike Rigolizzo J. Baluski, Ocean SCD

Frank Minch, Executive Secretary C. Morrissey, C/A SCD

 Daniel Pace, Mercer SCD

 **MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2023 MEETING**

On motion by Mr. Lomax second by Ms. Davis, the minutes of the October 16, 2023 meeting were approved with the following corrections, correct spelling of Joe Atchison and Ms. Kovacs represents the Upper Delaware SCD.

**CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS**

 Mr. Atchison reported that planning for the NJ State Ag. Convention is underway. Also, the 3rd round of interviews to fill the NJ Secretary of Agriculture position will be held tomorrow.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Mr. Minch reported on the following:

1. **2024 Meeting Calendar-** On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Ms. Davis, the proposed 2024 SSCC meeting schedule was approved. Meeting dates are as follows: 1/8, 3/4, 6/10, 9/9 and 12/9.
2. **Annual Conference-** Ms. Kovacs (Upper Delaware SCD) was re-appointed as the northern region representative to the SSCC. Cormac Morrissey (Cape-Atlantic SCD) was elected as the southern region representative to the SSCC.
3. **District Review Manual-** The deadline to complete and submit the District Self Review is January 6, 2024.

 **SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT**

1. **Supervisore Appointment- HEP—**Due to personal and professional commitments, Tobias Fox has resigned from the HEP Board of Supervisors. The HEP District Supervisor Nominating Committee has put forth Geoffrey Allen as Mr. Fox’s replacement. On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Ms. Davis, Mr. Allen was appointed to complete the remainder of Mr. Fox’s term.
2. **Morris SCD Appeal-** Ms. Davis recused herself and stepped out of the room during discussions. Mr. Minch reported on an appeal request which was received late Friday. The appeal will be reviewed and evaluated and will be on the January meeting agenda.
3. **Engineering Report-** Mr. Showler’s report was distributed to the SSCC Board members. The report provided a brief overview of Mr. Showler’s recent activities, including Standards training on the proposed changes to the Offsite Stability Standard and proposed new Solar Array Standard, an analysis of the NJDEP Rule Adoption for Precipitation and Flood Elevation Increase and the issuance of the Revised Retention Basin Form.

 **NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE**

Mr. Chianese reported on the following:

1. Current number of applications: EQIP-632, AMA-50, CSP-10
2. EQIP and AMA signups ended October 30th. CSP signup ends March 29, 2024..
3. Local Work Groups are in the process of being scheduled.
4. NJ-NRCS has a new outreach coordinator, Tai Colon.
5. Evan Madlinger, Acting State Conservationist, has been extended as Acting State Conservationist until January 2024.
6. Morgan Devine has scheduled an Urban Ag. Subcommittee meeting for January 17, 2024.

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**NJ ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

Mr. Buscaglia, Mr. Dovey and Mr. Cywinski reported on the activities of the NJACD and NACD including the following:

1. Regional Supervisor meetings will be scheduled in 2024.
2. Results of the NJACD election are as follows: Rick Dovey- President, Matt Ward- 1st Vice President, Mike Rigolizzo- 2nd Vice President, Bill Engisch- Secretary, Jim Hill- Treasurer and Ray Cywinski- NACD Representative..
3. A budget for the upcoming year will be discussed at the NJACD meeting.
4. Discussions will be held regarding conference dates and locations for 2024.
5. NJACD is looking for funds to hire an Executive Director.
6. The NACD Annual Conference will be held in San Diego, Ca, February 10-14, 2024.
7. Scholarships for NACD meeting registration are available. The criteria for this scholarship is the individual must be an SCD Supervisor and never attended an NACD meeting.

**SCD EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**

Mr. D’Alessandro, President of the NJ Employees Association, introduced himself to the SSCC Board.

Andrea Farparan is Vice President and Courtney Davidson is Treasurer of the Association.

Training sessions will be scheduled in the near future.

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Mr. Contois reported on the following:

1. Flood Hazard Area regulations were revised in July.
2. Coastal Regulations will be reviewed and updated in 2024.

**SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**

Dr. Murphy reported on the following:

1. Last week of classes.
2. There will be a Soil Health Session at the Ag. Convention.
3. Jeff Everett’s research project has been approved and funded by USDA.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 AM. All actions were by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted.

The next SSCC meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Minch, Division Director

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